



**red cedar
review**

**7 east
lansing
poets**

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DARYL JONES

MARY DAVIS

DOUGLAS LAWDER

BARBARA DRAKE

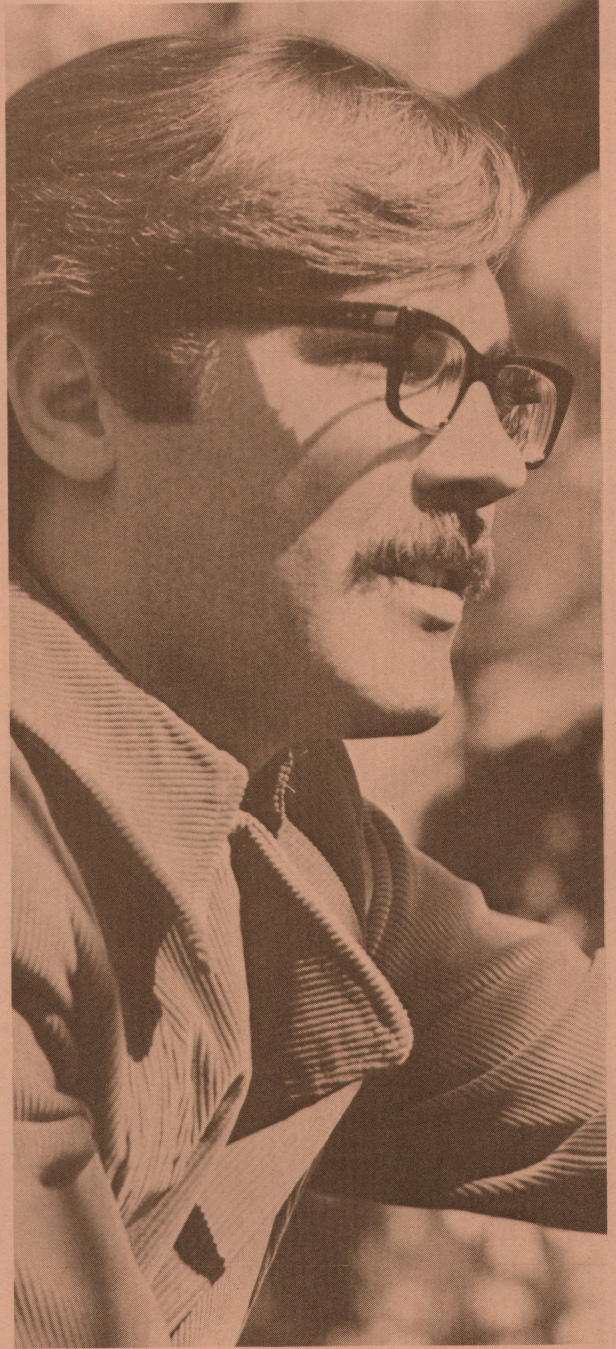
ROGER MEINERS

LINDA WAGNER

D.M. ROSENBERG

7 east lansing poets

daryl jones



DARYL JONES was born in Washington, D.C., in 1946, raised in Rockville, Md., and has lived in Michigan since 1964. He did his undergraduate and graduate work at MSU, and is now working on his Ph.D. He has published poetry in *West Coast Review*, *Western Humanities Review*, and other magazines.

MOLLUSKS

Their history is the sea's: a slow stirring
in darkness; a silence
hardening to lime.

Clenched like lonely women's fists,
they languish in dark chambers, tossing
on the sea's unsettled bed.

Some, like the blood clam,
bivalved,
or pearl-bellied oyster,
muscle into sand to thwart the moon.
It pulls at them like starfish,
pries them loose.

Others, like the periwinkle,
storied,
or spined queen conch,
hide in spirals to outwit the sea.
Its rhythmic urge, loosening,
courses deep in jellied vitals.

Sometimes, after storms, we find them
drying on the lip of a barren beach
like delicate pink cloisters, upturned faces
shining like a spinster's ear—
in each of them, something murmuring;
in each of them, something of the sea.

WAXING THE CAR IN LATE FALL

It wipes on clear, then turns opaque and dries.
I rub it off, buff circles round the sun
gleaming beneath my hand. The bottle says
"It gives a diamond luster that will last."
I wipe it on. It turns opaque and dries.

Each year the same old ritual: hoping
the snow'll hold off till I've waxed the car,
then buying wax and gathering soft rags,
and buffing, buffing till my arm goes numb.

Still, tiny stars of rust form in the chrome.
The bumpers flake like snow. Even the wax
itself turns white and powdery in time.
Already, something dulls the finish, clouds
the dark and swimming face the surface holds.

THE MINES

i.

All day the inexhaustible blue vein
runs before his headlamp's narrow shining
down into the black depths falling away
from his feet. Teeth and eyes
glance yellow, disappear, and muscled picks
bite and ring through the glistening shaft.
Soon, a weary figure cut from anthracite,
he will rise to the light – the red sun
resting on the slag heaps – heading home.

ii.

The earth, laid open like a scalp,
receives him, gives him back each night
to the woman framed in the pale light
spilling from the porch, cave-ins
deepening her eyes. It does not change.
Soon she will kneel on the kitchen floor
behind the steaming tub, his lean body
soaking slowly white, and gently touch
the throbbing blue vein in his temple.

CARP

We know them as logs,
shadows drifting under slabs
of darkness. They are large,
and weave through hanging cables
of sunlight, sunken cars,
and broken bottles—slowly,
a life among sharp edges.

Often, in roiled water,
we mistake a sunstruck can
for their dull flash. We seldom
really see them. They live deep,
almost beyond our seeing,
armored with the green-gold
fingernails of drowned men.

SECOND THOUGHTS FROM THE OCEAN BED

It's said men live for days beneath the sea
in great air bubbles trapped between the decks.
Close air, and damp shirts clinging to their backs,
they do not speak. Some weep, some silently
resent the measured breathing at their sides.
But all, dreaming, picture far horizons,
sunlight on blue water. They would rise up
from many fathoms, swim to future lives,
had not their separate deaths at some far place
crossed here, and tangled like sheets round their legs.

mary davis



MARY DAVIS grew up in New York and Philadelphia and has lived in Ingham County for a long time. She wrote one poem in highschool, one as an undergraduate, three when she was in love with somebody who couldn't talk, and dozens after being turned on by Carl Hartman when he taught in the English Department at MSU.

WEDNESDAY

We would go to the City
Early in the morning
Watching gulls dip
Flowering the sky
Surprised that they had beaks
Had solid eyes, had pitches
Harboring their throats
 Harboring our boat
 Droning its machinery.
We were pipers
Every wave we forced
Slapped our sides, we drummed
Our course, we shook small shakes
Each nautic inch, we moved
Between one island
And another
 Licking spray from faces
 In the summer, in the winter
We wore coats. We shopped
For gloves, our necks were wrapped,
Our feet not bare into the canyons
Streets when we were there
Edging our own progress
In the salted air.
 Each holiday
 We shared. We moved,
We walked in the last field
Of our own island, you told
Stories, did I hold your hand,
We often sat together, we saw
Everything in front of us, opera
Through our glasses, the woman
In a spasm on the floor
 Turn your head away,
 She is sick.

We always started out together,
We never met ourselves. We met
Who waited lively over dinner
For the heat, the color
Of the food upon the plate,
The clinking clattering
Of restaurant noise,
Strange people.

Where were you on Christmas
Quiet in your chair
By that time blinking
Holding your own face
Against the popping bottles
No taste for drinking
"I am tired," you would say.
You fasted. For lunch I ate
A pear, a plum, an apple

The omelet I practiced
While you watched. One day
You do believe in God you said
Into my laughing, no smile
On your own face. We had
Whispered together often
Patriotic songs, Schumann
Managing the Marseillaise.

Was it France you gave me,
Dates in the Iranian Pavillion,
Guavas in the north, the Scottish
Plaid I wore, the green suede vest,
The Indians I saw myself
Regenerating, did you never
Smile but at old histories, were we
No more than adult
Saying Sweetheart,
And a child.

1949 - 1971

Red hair, red hair,
Hanging from a head,
You were here, you were there
You were in your bed
The way you lay when you were small,
When your pajamas pale as cream
Were all that set you off
From rubies on your birthday
In a velvet case.

Red hair, red hair,
Swinging on your face,
I heard you sing, I heard you play,
I heard the wind, the race
You blew while you were running
Where you'd lie when you were grown,
When your red hair hot as the sun
Was all that set you off
From cold white on your birthday
In a velvet case.

PART OF A MASS

What shall we do this morning
In our middle. Have we risen
To the terror of supply, is this
The gait within, without ourselves,
Our hair the dress, and we
Organic in our matter.
Six times this morning in an alphabet
I sang, the mute of stars a rigor
In the space of our inordinate
Conclusion. I knew differences,
Forgot validities, the aftermath
Of kisses in a well.
There are crowds
Whose every stomach
Is performance of digestion.

Extraordinary friend, do you return.
It is ourselves, the formidable distance
Of some message we have never heard
Begins to move its energies,
Reminders of the present
In the past.

RECEIPT

The coffee warms my throat
As much as you did,
But I'm older now,
The lines that cross the paper
Are the paper as the bones
I never saw until a friend died
Are the friend. There are no pockets
For the body and the sounds
To hide in, we are not
In symbiosis, there is not
A laughter in our walk, our dreams
Go burying before we wake, and in the morning
What we know is little words,
Sometimes audible, and sometimes not.

This is hair, this is eye,
This is nose, this is mouth,
This is chin, the hand
To hold it spinning in the air
That everybody breathes as if he knew
Us when we walked the way an ordinary
Person walks without adoring what himself
Displaces in the pleasure of exchange.

That day I saw many pictures,
Every movement in the crotch
Of a note yelled "I am here,
 I am an electricity, there is
 No interruption, any shelf to house
 Its object
As we lavished
Where we looked, our images
The bursting of the kernel
Of a shell, our knuckles cracking
Their impatience to each other, felling
In the light we knew
Obstruction of ourselves.

I have lost my sense
Of where you are.
I do not smile
In distant places,
Never chant myself
In reaches, probabilities,
Surprises. When I eat,
The food is not the spoon.
I have grown
Into a woman on the table
Twitting gynecologists.
Yesterday a child tore to my room,
her Indian eyes largesse
Of her own terror while her mouth
Obscured my safety, and her color
For too long a time was simply pleasure
To my eye.

RIGOR MORTIS

I doubt that we will play again,
The way the wind blows and we shiver
Up against the glasses of our windowsills,
Remembering not daylight but ourselves
In all our tremor, isolate as fruit
Within the sugar of its glaze
On holidays, but not so stiff.

The jokes we played.
Were you the voice, the resonance
Of chamber out of muscle, out of milk
Thick with the fatness of itself, its cycle
Tourniquet to arms, to legs flailing their function
To the trunk, its laughing
In the sunlight
Unrelated to the leaves.

Shut, you say, up,
I grieve my own experiment,
Dispatch myself with wardens
Where the diver carries air.
I bend myself with bubbles,
With the sugars of the blood
In currents of the water where the mountains
Thrust their meeting
While the rest of us
Just wait.

douglas lawder



DOUGLAS LAWDER is Assistant Professor of English at MSU. A graduate of Kenyon College, he received the M.F.A. degree, with honors, from the University of Oregon. His poems have been published in *The Nation*, *Poetry* (Chicago), *Perspective*, *Chelsea Review*, *West Coast Review*, and many others; poems are forthcoming in *Southwest Review*. He has also published translations of the Peruvian poet, Cesar Vallejo. He has been managing editor of the *Northwest Review* and associate editor of *Northwest Folklore*. In 1968 he received a \$2000 grant from the National Endowment of the Arts, and he has also received a Carnegie Foundation grant.

POEM INSIDE A POEM

(For T.)

Night beetles thumped against glass
and tried to get in: red candlesticks,
wine and the crushed red beasts,
their rattle of armour
on the plate, but first,
you said, a poem like a prayer
before dinner,
so we wrote for your daughter,

... black sea tanks clang
their heavy limbs on
edges of the zinc pool.
Red antennae investigate the air
above listening to why they're
where they are after coasting down
10 million years inside the same
black case hearing the tide's
scratch and draw of sand outside. . .

And outside the black light
lacquered your dark-green battered car
that crouched on the bluff for the kill,
that later crumpled you up, but
—mirabile dictu—alive in its broken shell,
the moon swinging bright as a scale
eased back awhile on the crush
of all that weight which listens under the sea.

AIR AND BLOOD

Between us on the earth
and the sun it's an x-ray
—a few pieces of bone,
sockets joined by quicklight
drifting,

All the rest of him
a nimbus of light filling each
filament of feather a halo
of arrows around bone light
keeping him high
in the upper air,

But for the shadow
thrown down thick as a manta
cruising dark over fields,
preying over the land
hungry anguished his cry
is a pin scratching
the sky's blue glass.

Coming down to earth he skates
at a cant through a tunnel of air,
light goes out from
the clicking rush of feathers,
the beak is snapping for blood.

Then the body and the shadow
are joined on the arcing beast's back,
talons and wings together
finding the heart for a moment
forever.

TROLLING

*(Through the blue jelly of the eye
the ocean twists inland again.)*

Always out on the gulf on a half-busted skiff
even when rain lashes the water dark and waves
rear up to whack the old ribs of the boat
I troll waiting for a thick tug,
the thing to lean its weight against the line,
feeling the strength of it, the wit down below
and begin to pull a dark dripping shape into sight;

Or bring up dead lines head back to shore
drink out the night with wine
caught up in a slow-motion pitch
of long swells riding them into sleep
then into dreams of silver bass halibut
and the red pompano that swim every night
in slow rainbow circles just under the bed.

THE FIELD

Somewhere in the field
we have broken open a hornet's nest.
A cloud of them rises from the earth,
anger growing darker.
I feel the horse tighten
and step crab-wise. Her summer
coat has mellowed from its sheen
to a thick mat. She knows the carcass,
a dead deer the hunter never found
tangled in barbed wire at the woods' edge:
She panics and won't go near.
A cold wind springs like a whip
and snaps leaves off
and she leaps in fear.
Growing islands of lather
whiten her thoroughbred's coat
and her white breath clouds
the field which is growing smaller
smaller.

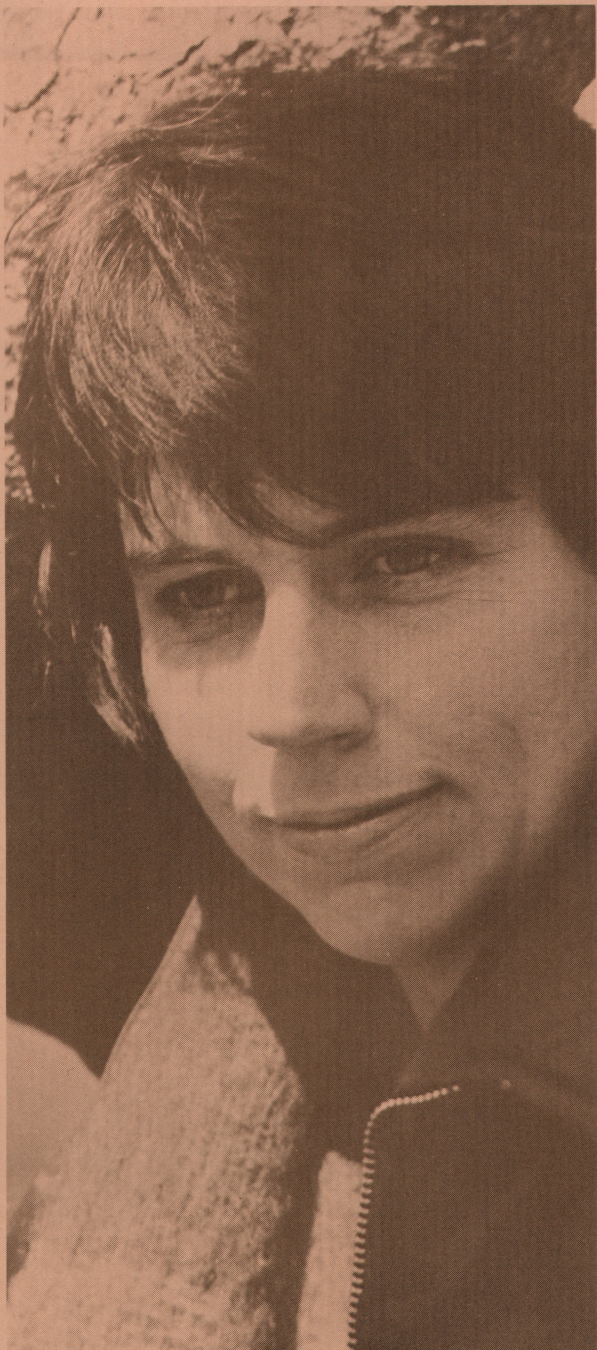
DEAD RACCOONS

in the morning they
are amazed
as when the lights
found them
in a well-meaning gesture
lifting a spidery and black paw
from the road
the quizzical smile a little drunk
from so much light in the head
the sudden blazing up
of a double sun

then struck
by knowing finally
they are not alone
in the dark
they thought they knew:
the distant whining
engines of the night
the thin and drunken lurch
of flashlights and the white
cry of dogs that circle
their first few thoughts
of sleep

pebbles grass trees stars
spin in an arc
all shouting something new
. . .to remember. . .

barbara drake



BARBARA DRAKE has published poetry, fiction, and reviews in many little magazines and quarterlies. She has received a National Arts and Humanities grant for poetry, and is one of the co-authors of a series of literature textbooks published by Holt Rinehart & Winston. Her work appears in the current anthology, *Best Poems of 1970*, Borestone Mountain Poetry Awards 1971.

YEAR TURNING

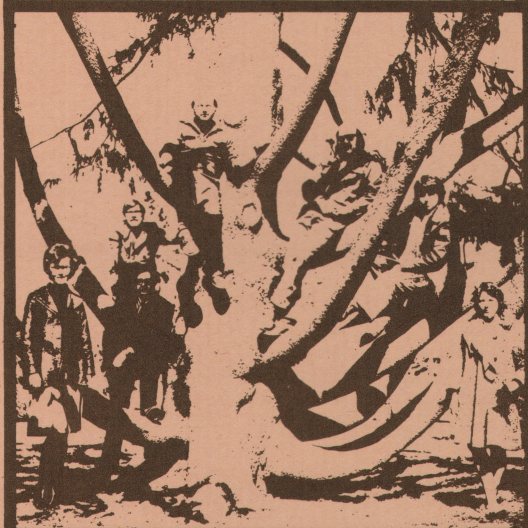
“Happy New Year, host.
That thing’s not real.”
For the marlin arched
Upon the gameroom wall,
A mildewed kiss.

Captain, our captain, eat your photographic proof.
That thing’s not real. Oh host, who’s at the wheel?
This boat rocks. Who’s responsible?
Adrift and submarine, the sempiternal partners whirl.

There’s always one to kiss, and one to cry,
And one to mourn, with her eyes on upside-down,
And one in black to bid us eat,
And one in white to urge us all to ping-pong.
This is an old boat. It won’t float dear.
But happy New Year anyhow.
That thing’s not real.

There’s one to doze, and one to dance,
And one to fall and wet his pants,
And one to whisper in your ear,
You are an olive in a glass and not the globe;
You are an ass as sure as they.
That thing’s not real.

But soon, we fell asleep.
It was an honest sleep and short.
We dreamed ourselves at home in bed and warm,
Each one an innocent among drunks,
Each one a world, vaporous, atilt among stars.
We dreamed ourselves at sea,
And then we woke, pursuing fish.





BOARDERS IN OUR LIVES

I see Joe's girlfriend
Who used to sit at our table
Drinking her interminable tea,
While he grew ruder and ruder
To her—she pedals by
On an American bicycle,
She and the bicycle, heavy & slow;
She's due any day now, married
To another. Joe's moved.
Table's bigger.

THE DAY THE MOVERS CAME

The dreams we fenced last night are gone.
Usurpers dally on the lawn.
A broken lamp, a wicker chair--are these
The dreams we fenced? Last night is gone
My love--we cannot please
Our demons with the chairs we sit upon
Or, on a floating carpet, take our ease
In dreams. We--fenced last night--are gone.
Usurpers dally on the lawn.

CLOCKWORK

Father, father,
you invented me.
Here in the
tick-tock dark
of your workshop
my brother and
sisters shine.
They have
golden faces,
mahogany cases;
they chime.
I am your
cuckoo clock,
your first spring
at life.

Among the rest
I keep your time.

THE FIRST PLACE

Marrying you
Was a short move upstairs.
There were other rooms,
But I moved there.
The building caved in
When we left,
Emptied by workmen
And life.
But some nights
I see those starred
And ugly walls,
Lit by cherry blooms
And left-over paint,
Rise shimmering
Like a mirage
In heated rooms.

ESPOUSERY

Admit it, husband,
today is dull—
Winter, the world's corpse,
has been bled dry
and color fled the air.

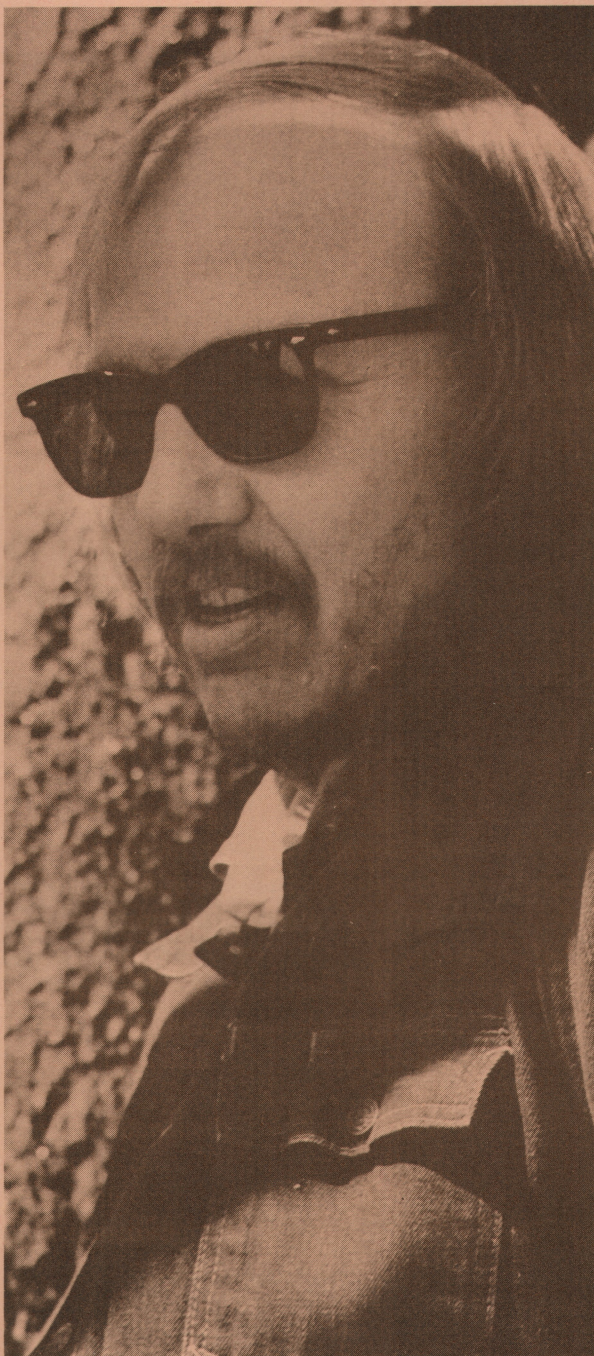
Do me a favor. Rise
before me tomorrow,
take a jet to—say,
Greenland, call
and say, love, I'll be
home for dinner,
in a week or two.
I want to see
what I'll do.

Or tonight
when I greet you at
the door, hand ready
for your non-existent hat,
extending a non-existent
martini, say,
Love, I brought home
my entire English 409 class
to live with us,
sleep, eat in our
moldy basement, reading
Thoreau and living
likewise.

That failing,
tonight let us write
names and addresses on envelopes,
sending here a spoonful of jam
wrapped in 8½ x 11 Eaton Bond,
there, a fried egg (to some editor).
To one old girlfriend
of yours, a lock
of your pubic hair,
an obscenity or two
cunningly put together
with newspaper headlines.

Then, at our wit's end,
let us prick
our fingers and become
blood one. Hang up a sign,
HIDEOUT, and then hide.

roger meiners



ROGER MEINERS is Professor of English at MSU. His poems and essays have appeared in such journals as *Sewanee Review*, *Southern Review*, and *Twentieth Century Literature*. He has also published two books, *The Last Alternatives*, a study of Allen Tate, and *Everything to Be Endured*, an essay on Robert Lowell and modern poetry.

ONLY I AM LEFT TO TELL THE STORY

(written in the margin of W. S. Merwin's "The Last One")

Well, then they began to press in on me.
And I began to look around for someone.
And I saw only my shadow.
So when I had discovered my shadow
It said to me, Come.
I scraped a hole in its head
and eased one foot through.
Not enough, so I scraped some more.
This time I got caught at the hips.
So I hacked away at the shadow
Until I cut everything away but the cortex
(and two ears stuck to the edges:
flowers trying to fly).
And then I stepped into the hole
And vanished through my head.
But I pulled my secret shadow on through.
All that's left is the shadow:
The bright shadow, with a hole in its head.

MY DAUGHTER, SLEEPING

Now after all these years
I know indeed that there are moments
when the Presence comes through
and tells the endless tale of origins.

The music begins.

The musician bends over his instrument
and, singing, a different face looks
through his eyes.

And there, on the pillow,
the face of my child in repose.
I can read there
the confirmation of reality,
word after word.

Now I can see the testimony
that in the depths
all is as it must be
and that all shall be well.
Can anything be disastrous
as my child turns aside into sleep
and, turning outward into the wide cone of reality,
brings back the news that all is well?

I must change my life.

TWO PRELIMINARY REPORTS FROM THE BOOK OF EIKAMPF

EIKAMPF WEARS STRANGE DISGUISES

No one there could say what inner need
brought Eikampf to spend his time pacing the hall,
or why he'd decked himself in hat and tweed
and peered closely at every door along the wall.

"I am checking patterns of egress,"
says Eikampf, to stifle their dismay,
while he, secretly, searches for a witness
who can testify that he (Eikampf) came *in* the usual way.

Now shifty Eikampf comes down the steps
wearing a cap and pushing a broom.
He looks to the right, looks to the left,
and hurriedly backs into the first room.

Eikampf opens the top drawer of the file;
he will get to the bottom of this game.
Now he reads the "E" folder from the pile.
"*Eikampf*: there is no one by that name."

To Eikampf's mind conclusions swarm:
if he has vanished, he must be free.
He goes to the desk, takes out a form,
and requisitions a new identity.

Smiling, Eikampf leaves the room,
walks smartly out with bowler and cane;
and one carrying dustpan, mop, and broom,
says "Good evening. Eikampf is my name."

EIKAMPF BROODS ON DEATH

Eikampf has conceived the thought
that when man is born he begins to die.
This so unnerves him that he is brought
to wonder on fate, and life, and destiny.

Eikampf takes to inventing puzzles,
arranging words to pass the time,
feeding caramels to dogs wearing muzzles,
inventing perversities, meditating crime.

Eikampf falls into deep despair,
ponders the cruelty of being born,
sees madness floating through the air,
accepts with grace his fate forlorn.

Learned Eikampf deals in wit,
takes pleasure in mocking the sublime,
proclaims the deep beauty of common shit,
finds no paradox too hard to climb.

Late one awful Thursday evening
God calls in drunken Eikampf's mind,
and worlds on worlds go their own way, spinning
out beyond the stars, leaving him behind.

THINGS TO DO AROUND BUFFALO CREEK, COLORADO
(for Bud Drake)

Read Gary Snyder and write friendly poems.
Transplant fir trees from where the bulldozer's been
 working over the mountain.
Plant crested wheat, nodding brome, and flax around the cabin.
Stare at Sagittarius from the hill and wonder how I
 ever came by my name.
Watch the swallows fly in and out of the holes in the
 loose stones at the top of the J. W. Green Mercantile Co.
Read Rudolf Steiner.
Feed dog food to tufted-ear squirrels.
Pet the stomachs of humming-birds if they'll let you.
Shovel ten years of shit out of the privy.
Throw the frisbee for the dog.
Look at the stars until they spell my name,
and muse on the names of God.
Caulk the flashing around the chimney.
Swear at Henry David Thoreau and get drunk on
 mad William Blake.
Walk with Lynn and the girls in the evening and try
 to see things I haven't before;
and try to talk gently.

linda wagner



LINDA WAGNER is Professor of English at MSU. She has published essays and poems in some eighty critical journals or literary magazines. She has written four books, on W. C. Williams, Phyllis McGinley, and Denise Levertov, and a collection of her own poems, *Intaglios*, has been published. Currently she is working on a book on Faulkner and Hemingway.

FOR THE MEMORY

OF WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS, MARCH, 1963

Just a little time longer—
and spring would have come.
Soon you could have walked again
outdoors: shrubs would have
flowered for you, trees
would have bowed.

Steps would have echoed on
bud-drifted sidewalks, no
fragment of color escaping
your eyes, still intent
on life's beauty after
many long winters.

The fog would have lifted
granting you an open place
where naked heat could
drench your back: the sun!
the sun! A poem
might have grown from this.

As loving as the youngest
child, you saw all life in
lover's terms. Despair would force
you in at times to write
of your own heart.
In spring you could look outward.

Just a little time longer—
and spring would have come,
the fog would have lifted.
Instead, the sky darkens.

Our spring will be late this year.
Our spring will be late.

TO CHERISH

Sharp, cutting tone of green
the glass with its square paneled sides
and heavy base
catches any light
and buries it.
It's a magnificent, austere thing.

I like these words, I'd like
to describe all the glass and the
chair and the lockets and the
pictures—all the heritage
of my grandmother
whose stern iron curls
only heightened her grand eyes.

I want to say
 somehow
what a sharp mind she had,
how she loved us with a fierce cutting tone,
how she lived thirteen years
 alone
past the man she had loved
 for fifty.
She never reproached him.
She never reproached us
 for forgetting her.
A magnificent, austere thing.

Sylvia, I should spend my days
snitching
chocolate cake, vying
with the kids for one man's
attention. You found all that
to be worth exactly
nothing
in the cold London mornings
as you huddled
alone
to write.

And the cold London morning
hovers on.

HO-HUM

I think of Creeley, sharpening his pencils,
and Hemingway, standing alert in an early
morning coolness, and I smile. Sharp pen,
a stack of empty paper, a quiet house.
We are all of us ritual-mongers,
waiting for the white goddess
who doesn't give a damn
where we sit
or how many
pencils
we eat.

CARNIVAL

1.

Lost.

One small white-shirted boy, gone, just a
breath away, faun-like, now invisible. Face
after face after face after face—no gap
in the legs moving steadily ahead. My
hands clench as head roars—then, he
whirls toward me, a splinter of direction
framed in shrieking faces. Hugging him close
as the crowd collapses, I lead him to his ride,
the merry-go-round is pure joy,
a brief floating circle
of shadowed love.

2.

Slant bodies tip, whirl as
dark shapes startle. Screams ricochet,
burst, at the empty tunnel's edge.
His small hand
wrenches mine
shooting thought through me,
what would he do alone, in
this God-damned fun house?

d.m. rosenberg



D. M. ROSENBERG is an Associate Professor of English at MSU. He is the author of several scholarly studies of John Milton, and he has had poetry published in *Epoch*, *Chicago Tribune Magazine*, *The Midwest Quarterly*, and other magazines.

WAXWORKS

With adoring accuracy
The eminent dead are reclaimed.
Lifesize, their gestures are preserved
For our gaze. We are mesmerised
By the incarnation of the literal.
President, astronaut, or killer
Startles us in tallow likeness.
The sightseers file past to view
Declamatory idols aloof
Within the vacuum of their pageant.
A comfort for the covetous,
This peepshow of fallen angels.
Time locked the vault in mock judgment,
And the constant assassin
Grips his gun to fire once more
At the dying anointed prince.
We behold the precise tableau
Without pleading for entropy.

IN PRAISE OF SABATINO RODIA'S WATTS TOWERS

Atoms twinkle and draw him to the yard
Of broken cups. Crouching, he gathers fragments
From slagheaps, and by the nervous thoroughfares
In exhaust and aridity, he collects
The smithereens of a restless world
That would give up halfway through. From rubble
Along the shore, this Noah stoops again
To save and piece together shell, and tiles,
And tinted glass, chromosomes for his towers.

Three towers, begotten, rise in Watts,
Out of mud they rise, luminous sightings—
The refuse, loss, and castoffs of last days
Ordered, recreated into scaffoldings
Spun with intricate filaments in space.
Towers, transformed, soar to gong and windchimes:
The benedictions of the interim
Calm and intense, with cadences even more sweet
Than the all-clear signals of the millennium.

TABLEAU AT THE BEACH

The figures on the shore do not see me
But looking down collect shells underfoot.
Waves roll in, inaudible, dragging with them
The flora of the sea, fibers streaming out
On the gleaming mud.

When shorebirds take flight,
The wandering gatherers do not stare up
Under their clangorous wings, but bent,
Devote themselves to sift out, gingerly, from sand
Piecemeal iridescence.

They pause, motionless, knee-deep in the shallows
Of the sea, or squat on caked heels to sort
And appraise the gritty shells near at hand.
They stand about, barefoot on unsure dunes
And, to mitigate their loss, will not forgo
The mementos of their father's estate.

Though I leave them scattered on the beach
In the heat lightning and faint evening light,
I must return searching at the edge
In patient sorrow, myself cast ashore
In these pastures of mutability.

LET THIS BE A ZEN GARDEN

Take the pathway of flat stones to the garden
And its matter of fact way gathers you in.
Bestow yourself once there
And you cannot be excluded.
If the bare stones are there, attend them
And let them, viewer, be
Containing as they are
In the incompleting garden.
Likewise obey them.
Give accord to the given of the garden's rocks.
Then each of them
The greater and the less
On the white gravel
Will, in its primacy, chasten you.
These, then, are immediate instances of stone:
In the middle distance is the basin stone,
And to the back the candle stone
On which to place a candle at night,
And on the right a pail stone
To place a pail of hot water on in winter.
Hence, each given point,
Each angle,
Each stone,
In its extremity is now here,
In the calmness of a garden completed,
In this moment of your acquiescence.

SILENT COMEDIES: EDENDALE, CALIFORNIA

I do not know where that town is
In downpour of snowy light
Where the bumpkin lifts his derby
& tends our country innocence
Like lambs, while the town rocks
On the sun porch wicker chair
Dowdy with her bleached flower beds:
Along the scorched boulevard
Of palmettos the flivvers
Careen as bustling dogs
& constables chug behind
A goggling high-rumped Herod
Soused from the village pond
Chasing our simpleton
Who sprints ahead with out-turned feet.
The hand crank gallops awry
Through summer's midnight light
And the Holy Family hears
In the electric theater
The hallelujahs of laughter.

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