

# Silhouette

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## Silhouette (Fall 1986)

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## *The Shawnee Silhouette*



*Fall*      **1986**

The Shawnee Silhouette is published quarterly by the editorial staff at Shawnee State Community College in Portsmouth, Ohio. Subscriptions are available for \$2.00 a copy or \$5.00 a year. The three issues will be published during Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters. Submissions are invited in the areas of prose (800 words maximum), poetry, art, and photography.

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## *Guest Editorial*

For as long as I can remember, I have been captivated by the sound and rhythm of American speech. Academics argue that it is crude and idiomatic, restricted by colloquialism, governed by slogan and disposable culture, marred by constant mutilation of proper English grammar. Indeed, a detailed examination of academic preferences, in evidence in college English courses, indicates a strong bias of Henry James' style over that of, say, Jack Kerouac. To the best of my knowledge, Visions of Cody, possibly the greatest experiment in American sound and rhythm attempted by an American author, has yet to be taught on any major campus in the country.

Furthermore, a writer has to overcome overwhelming odds to find a publisher for this type of material. William Carlos Williams, who revolutionized the use of American speech in poetry, has only recently been accorded his proper status in the poetry community, and his mentor, Walt Whitman, resorted to publishing and reviewing his own work in order to gain his initial audience. Look on the publisher's page of any book by Charles Bukowski, Hubert Selby, or even a universally-accepted writer like Joyce Carol Oates; chances are you'll find that most, if not all, of the book's contents were originally published by small presses.

Now I'm not suggesting that small or literary magazines, such as this one, are menial or secondary in importance to American literature (though I can be commercialistic to the point of suggesting that writers--unless they are hobbyists, independently wealthy, promoted by rich benefactors or grants, or otherwise employed--can ill afford to make full-time contributions to small presses); what I am



saying is that these publications have a history of producing interesting, creative and experimental work, often in violation of proper English manners.

I once asked Jayne Anne Phillips, whose collection, Black Tickets, is one of the most stunning contemporary examples of the American idiom raised to poetic heights, why she published so many of her stories in small press publications. Though predictable, her answer caught the heart of the issue:

"My work wouldn't have been published anywhere else. It wouldn't have been thought acceptable. It was either too innovative in techniques or subject matter. Stories like 'El Paso' or 'Lechery'--or even stories that were more conventional, like 'Home'--were simply too strangely written, too different, or their use of language was not something you see in conventional magazines, even by well-known writers.

"Commercial magazines have very specific ideas about their audiences. There are still a great number of magazines that don't publish certain curse words, for instance. They don't print certain explicit sexual themes, even if those themes aren't in the piece to make it sexual. There are only a couple of stories in Black Tickets that were published by commercial magazines and, in one case, they deleted references to nudity and things that aren't even risqué. It's good illustration of why not to think of an audience when you put together a book."

Such admissions by a major talent illustrate a deplorable environment in literature today. The time has clearly arrived for the traditionalists and modernists, academics and so-called populists... to realize that all forms of expression should not only be acceptable but laudable as representative of the diversity of the American people.

This should be obvious to anyone whose nose isn't out of joint from battling and defending a particular style of literature, but I am constantly reminded of the many dangers facing literature today as a result of such schisms--dangers which threaten to weaken and destroy free expression.

The greatest danger, of course, is censorship. In recent years, there has been a major push to establish new--or enforce old--laws, without exception written in vague or general terms, dealing with the obscene literature. Ironically, this huge battle, with all its implications, may be the easiest to fight, because the opponents are open and vocal. More disquieting are the battles fought behind the scenes: small-town libraries not stocking a book their minute board of directors may find offensive; publishers refusing to publish materials out of fear of possible court proceedings; book stores limiting their stock to books relegated to "star" status by book packagers or marketing agents.

Though we can applaud their efforts, small-circulation magazines cannot be expected to bear the burden of publishing diverse, unique American voices out of favor with the academics, any more than we can expect them to risk tangles with the high finances backing proponents of censorship. It is time for the literary community to cease paying lip-service to the concept of free expression, to quit battling over meaningless conceits of literary superiority, and consider all forms not only valid but essential.

I'm waiting to see Kerouac taught at a majority of universities.

I'm hoping my library will finally put on its shelves the works of Henry Miller.

I'm eager to read critical studies that treat Charles Olson as seriously as T. S. Eliot, Anne Waldman as seriously as Anne Sexton.

Unfortunately, I'm not holding my breath.

-Michael Schumacher

Michael Schumacher is a Writer's Digest contributor. Schumacher has interviewed many prestigious writers such as Joyce Carol Oates, Studs Terkel, Kurt Vonnegut, Allen Ginsberg, and Norman Mailer.



## *Lullaby*

Down the lane  
where the old house stood  
On the edge of the field  
next to the wood  
Between the two pines  
that reach for the sky  
together forever together they lie  
Close to the brook  
where the summer rains roar  
on top of the bluff  
not far from the shore  
Stands a marker with names  
of the lovers who've gone  
there side by side  
rest Jesse and Joan  
And now in the spring  
when all else is bare  
You can walk down the lane  
and flowers bloom there  
And the wind through the pines  
seems to sing as they're blown  
a sweet lullaby  
for Jesse and Joan

-Duane Dunham

## *Dreams Unfold*

Through dreamer's misty eyes,  
I looked on autumn's gold,  
As I stood and watched  
My fated dreams unfold.

-Mary Jane Wilburn



**Lori O'Dell**

## *Heroes and Cat Magic*

Dunder stood still behind the big, brown leaf, pressing himself into the groove of the bark of the tree and watching the cat stalk a salamander somewhere beneath the leaves. It was black with a red collar put on it by some human in the village down the valley. He could smell the musky, catty smell and knew if the wind changed the cat would smell him as easily. Dunder wished he had not come so far from home, so near that village of men, without his friend Talon. His small bow and arrows would be useless against such a monster cat. He felt the handle of his trusty knife but it too would be of little use. Dunder clutched his stout walking stick, as tall as he was, but still little more than a toothpick to the cat. He had an unpleasant vision of the cat doing just that; picking its teeth with the stick as it lay on its back, tummy swollen and Dunder's clothes in a heap, a ragged bloody heap, on the ground beside it.

Talon would laugh at him for being afraid of cats. And well he might. Talon was Dunder's age but he was stronger and bold. He had been down the mountain to the village of men. He had power over animals, even cats, whose magic, he said, was even deeper and more mysterious. He had proved it once, sort of, from the safety of a hollow tree, by dusting his hands together and making a cat freeze in its tracks for a moment before it went on. He had learned it from a wizard who taught him magic. Or so he said. Dunder's father had confirmed the village of men and told him to stay away from there, but was skeptical of wizards and cat magic. Even so, Dunder wished Talon was there now.

But he wasn't and so Dunder stood still, afraid to move lest he rustle a leaf and betray himself. The cat moved, head down, intent on the lizard moving invisibly beneath the leaves, and passed behind the tree where Dunder could no longer see.

"What if it comes up behind me?" he worried.

He saw a large leaf curled round like a rug rolled up for moving. As he thought of hiding there he envisioned the leaf crumbling beneath the paws of the cat and his own face peering up at those sharp jaws. So he stood still and waited.

Then he heard the sound of dry leaves beneath hurried feet! Nearer and nearer came the unmistakable trash-trashing of Talon's bounding pace coming through the leafy forest floor! Dunder looked about for him!

"Even Talon may not be able to work his magic on the cat if it takes him by surprise," Dunder thought.

And there he was, his gray cape flying behind as he vaulted over roots as high as the dreadful cat which lurked now, Dunder knew not where! His heart beat wildly as he decided.

"Talon!" he shouted, and "Cat!" pointing round the tree. Too Late! The silent, black shape flew overhead and pounced on Talon and held him there!

"No time for magic! I knew it. I knew it!" Dunder thought, clutching his knuckles to his mouth. The cat was eyeing its catch, hissing and yowling and rustling leaves menacingly with its horrible hind legs. "What to do? What to do?" Dunder fretted.

"Dunder!" Talon was calling, a horrible fear in his voice. The cat yowled again!



"Oh! It's killing him! What to do!" Dunder thought. Dunder silently threw off his hat and cloak and lay down his quiver and bow. He took his knife and began to sharpen one end of his walking stick.

"Dunder!" Talon called, more weakly now. The cat sounded vicious as if it were preparing for some final act! Quickly Dunder notched the other end of the staff and fit it to his bow string. He crept between the big brown leaves across the mossy ground toward the horrible cat. His heart pounded wildly so that he feared the cat might hear it and turn to leer with cold, sharp, green, vertical eyes! It switched its tail in idle pleasure, its yowling now low and evil, almost a purr, but evil. Closer and closer Dunder came and took aim. He drew the string back til the bow creaked and his whole body trembled with the tension! His mouth went dry! He let fly the shaft. It hit the cat right below the tail and sank deep! The cat whirled into the air so long that Dunder fell on his backside watching it and wondered if it was some magic of Talon's that kept it up there so long. He looked at Talon lying on his back, mouth agape, eyes wide with horror, his cheeks scratched and bloodied. The crotch of his pants was stained dark and wet.

"No magic there," Dunder thought comically.

The flying cat came down and bounded away still yowling without seeming to take a new breath. Its voice grew further and further away and silence refilled the forest.

Talon sat up and stared after the cat. He turned and grinned at Dunder.

"Thought you had magic over cats," Dunder said. Talon looked away, turned back, and his eyes shot up to the right and his mouth pursed right. Dunder saw a lie coming.

"Not when they come on so fast!" Talon said finally, looking back at Dunder. "Why I had no sooner..." Dunder's laugh cut him off and he laughed too. "You're the one with the magic!" he said. "What did you do?"

"Oh, just a little cat magic thing I learned from the dwarves," Dunder said casually rising and dusting himself. He turned and started toward the tree to collect his things.

"You know dwarves?" Talon asked, coming quickly up behind, dusting himself absently. Dunder smiled to himself looking sideways toward his friend. Their eyes met.

"One doesn't know dwarves," he said, mischievously. "One only meets them and shares a space and travels on," he ad libbed, gesturing for reality.

"Where did you meet them? When did you meet them?" Talon questioned eagerly.

"Why only today, as a matter of fact," Dunder fibbed. "I was going to the village of men, down the mountain. You made it sound so fun I thought I'd kill an idle day, but before I could get there..."

Dunder enjoyed his tale all the way home with Talon wide-eyed and full of questions and believing every word his hero said.

-Gary E. Andrews

She walked the cobbled London streets  
on a night in 1888.  
Her long frilled skirt, swaying  
with scarlet hooded cape,  
hid the worn expression of long hours.  
Horse-drawn taxis clicked rhythmically  
to the flickering flame gaslights  
that lit the sinister corners  
for the ill-fated.

Just a little further to the safety  
of her dwelling.

A tall dark figure wearing a Lincoln hat  
appeared with a cane mounting a  
silver-headed wolf.  
His ghostly figure sauntered toward her.  
Fear. She feared.  
Was it He? But he could be anyone--  
the one that rips out the hearts of young  
"ladies of the night."  
The hat shadowed his face as he  
strolled near her.  
She looked only with her eyes.  
Her voice quivered,  
"Good e'en, sir."  
The gentleman tipped his hat.

On a misty London morning of 1888,  
the cobbled streets shone from the  
dampness of early dew like shellacked wood.  
Dark corners were lighted by dawn.  
No fear lurking now;  
except for the dead heart  
torn from a blank expressioned girl.

-Catherine Elrod-Lidd1







## *The Woman Who Went Away*

My father watches through the limbs of the giant sycamore. The road runs downstream and far away. I want the moon to come up behind him and throw his shadow across the cedar floor, but the sky is low and clear. He stares, unmoving, indifferent to the soft blue of his own shirt, open below his throat. There is no looseness in his flesh, only fine strength, aged, luminescent. I see how his broad chest rises and falls evenly with each breath and heartbeat, moving, still. And I know again, suddenly, the way it felt against my cheek when I ran to him evenings after my bath and we sat in this wicker chair, waiting for the spring frogs and crickets to sound along the side yard fence, down to the edge of the hill and the stream. And with this far chorus, his own strong words in the gathering darkness, spinning out each story in light and shadows against the highest peak of the hills.

Inside the valise, my fingers know the shape of a small tortoise shell comb. Sometimes my mother fastened it in her hair. In my lap I hold my hand over it, remembering the soft silver of her curls. The inside of my hand glows and I am silent. Insects cry and drift away in darkness.

Summer mornings, I waited for her on the side yard steps, warming myself in the early sun, watching across the woodlot, up the valley and field, the flocks and fences. She brought back news: new calves and lambs, the condition of watering troughs and springs and pasture grass. And in her hand some seed or stone, some leaf or branch or blossom.

One May morning when the sun climbs high through the trees toward noon, she walks back through the rain-drenched meadow, carrying--like a wand before her--a branch hanging full of blossoms, pale pink flowers spraying out like clusters of tender trumpets of leafless woody stems.

Tiny beads of rain cling on every perfect petal. A faint fragrance like honey drifts over me. When I take the branch from her hand, one of the blossoms drifts down onto the step beside me. Raindrops fall against her wrist. I touch the flower with the top of my finger and wait.

"Your father carried a big bouquet of these in his arms all the way up Conner Creek the first time he ever walked home with me after church." She leans her head forward into the branch I hold before me and touches her cheek against the petals.

The night train cries through the leaves and my father raises his eyes as though to answer; he nods to me, as if in reply. As if there is nothing new or awful or final--only that our bodies are here, hearing the night train again, remembering the wild azaleas.

"Everything has a mother and a father," she says. "Even the flowers." She sits down on the step beside me and holds the fallen blossom, open in her hand. It is as though she has walked all the way home through the field to tell me this news, which she must have known a long time and only this morning remembered to say. "This pollen--the father part--must enter here." She studies the blossom as though she wonders at her own words. "This is the mother," she says without pointing to anything. "Inside this, the seed will grow."

I look carefully into the golden dust which lies on a circle of eyelash stems hovering over the miniscule darkness. The mother.

In silence of church she sits, looking into the flower. The sun is warm on my neck and I hear the bees in the woodlot. Under me, the stone step feels at once steamy and cold

"Pollination," I say, "is done by insects. They carry it on their feet--by accident--while they're looking for nectar."

She looks at me in silence. Her hands turn the flower on her knees.

"I read it in a book at school," I say, looking away into the garden.

"Not everything is in books," she answers, rising suddenly, handing me the flower.

I sit on the step for a long time. I can hear her working--moving dishes, putting away the milk; soon my father will come in from the fields for his lunch. Presently I hear him closing up the iron gate to the woodlot beside the kitchen. Then I hear his voice; he has gone up the opposite side yard in through the east porch door to the kitchen. They speak some moments in low voices and then the house is silent. I hear their step on the stairs. After a little while I open the screen door slowly, careful of the blossoms in my hand, walk softly into the sun-filled kitchen. It is almost noon and the light from the east windows pours down through perfumed air around the table full of wild azaleas.

"Cedar Grove," he says, "is not that far from here; I've walked it on a Sunday. Edwin lives the first house beyond the iron bridge."



"I don't remember!" he says, blue eyes wide, startled by his own loss of memory. "Nell," he adds, breathing out the wonder of the word's return.

Names tumble forth now. We have opened the era before the war. When he cannot remember their names--or the names of spouses, children and parents--I recall them, hearing again my mother's words: people I have never seen but who have been, nonetheless, constants in their lives. The McGraw's were a big family. Otto was the oldest brother; his wife was Claudia. And her sister, Helen Wyatt, married a McGraw, too. Their daughter, Mavis, is my age. Yes, now he remembers. Otto died young. Claudia never remarried. She was a cousin to Waite Lowe and that's why Otto McGraw went Waite's bond for the Watkins products.

I must look puzzled. He pauses to explain, looking not so much at me as much as at some envisioned audience suspended half way across the lawn. His hand is poised in mid air, as though to stay any doubt or disbelief, to say that in due time all will be made clear. Now I see three small clouds streak across the brow of Flannagan hill. Behind the clouds in the splendor of it silence rides the moon.

#### A Note from the Author:

Appalachians are especially atuned to their environment, to stars and grass and water, to leaves and sky and meadow, influenced by these elements in major and minor keys--and usually without self-consciousness. In a short-story-in-progress, I experiment with the interplay between these sights and sounds and smells and the counterpoint memories of a father and daughter who share a summer evening on the front porch of the family home only a few days after a sudden death....



Silhouette, Vol. 1986, Iss. 2 [1986], Atteley sort through the curious remnants in the small valise they have found behind her mother's--his wife's--bed. One by one, the "mute elements of the past" mingle with the fragrance and darkness of remembering: even beautiful--almost god-like--men and women must know the anguish of imperfect love. In this case, the knowledge of and fascination with her parents' imperfect love preoccupied the childhood and haunts the present life of a little-girl-grown-up who wanted more than anything, only love and goodness in her parents' lives. Though we know only the consciousness of the narrator, we are brought close--through her observations--to the ageless struggle of the grieving man: to focus on the concrete, on that which has been. And we are brought, through the physical world, close to the terrifying persistence of our most poignant childhood dreams and to our awesome life-long fears.

-June Langford Berkley



et al.: Silhouette (Fall 1986)  
*Dance of Life*

It isn't just  
any  
graveyard  
when two lovers  
dance  
as a car stereo  
plays  
on an  
easy afternoon.  
Tombstones  
smile  
as cold  
melts

in the warmth  
of  
two hearts  
on their knees  
collaborators  
free falling  
Death is only a  
metaphor  
when  
confronted  
with so  
much  
life.

-Abbra Gray

*A Journey*

Their separate paths met  
and they walked together.  
Gold light shone brightly  
as they shared wonderous joy.

No grasping, no holding.....  
Only enjoying for the moment  
then moving on .....  
To the fork in the path ahead.

-Betty Hoy

## *It Seems*

It seems...  
the sun shines brightly,  
the birds sing softly,  
    When you feel loved,

It seems...  
the skies are cloudless,  
the trees more green,  
    When you feel loved.

It seems...  
no sorrows last,  
no pain appears,  
    When you feel loved.

It seems...  
whenever I need you,  
I only need to reach,  
    Because I am loved.

-Marjorie Everman

# *Mech Mine Perfect*

et al. Silhouette (Fall 1976)

I was deeply saddened by the death of my Uncle David last spring. However, the estate and the fifteen million dollars that he left to me really helped to cushion the blow.

Before Uncle Dave died, I wasn't rich, but I had led a comfortable existence. Now I have the money to buy anything I want and I can not think of anything that I would like to have.

One day as I was walking around the estate, I suddenly realized how lonely I was. Living in this huge mansion miles away from town certainly had its disadvantages. The only time I saw anyone was when I went to work. "I really need a companion," I thought to myself.

I had been through a bad marriage and a nasty divorce, so I wasn't too keen on the idea of a relationship, but I did need someone. Suddenly it hit me; I had enough money to buy a mech complete with feeling and emotion, and that's exactly what I did.

It took two weeks for the shop to deliver Matt to me. When I unpacked him I thought he was the most handsome thing I'd ever seen. I called him Matt because he bore a striking resemblance to Lee Horsley, the actor that portrays T.V. detective Matt Houston. He had raven hair and a mustache that outlined his soft mouth and he had the most beautiful blue eyes. I was very impressed.

Fully uncrated, Matt stood about six feet tall and his muscular body would have put Mr. Universe to shame. He looked so real, so human. It was difficult for me to think of him as a mech.



Then I asked myself, "Why should I think of him as a mech?" He looks human. No one would ever know that he was a mech unless I told them, and I wasn't about to do that. I would create the perfect mech. Matt would be an ideal mate.

The very next day I began making arrangements to have Matt tutored by some of the most famous people in the world. I had the money to blow and Matt's education had to be the best.

I arranged for Dr. Carl Sagan to give Matt a crash course in astronomy, theory, and an in-depth look at outer space from a four-week stay at Kitts Peak Observatory. That cost a mere \$75,000.

Matt then received a course in English, poetry, and music from the one and only Rod McKuen. He was taught everything from verbs to verse to C-minor. This intellectual package deal cost \$250,000 for five weeks.

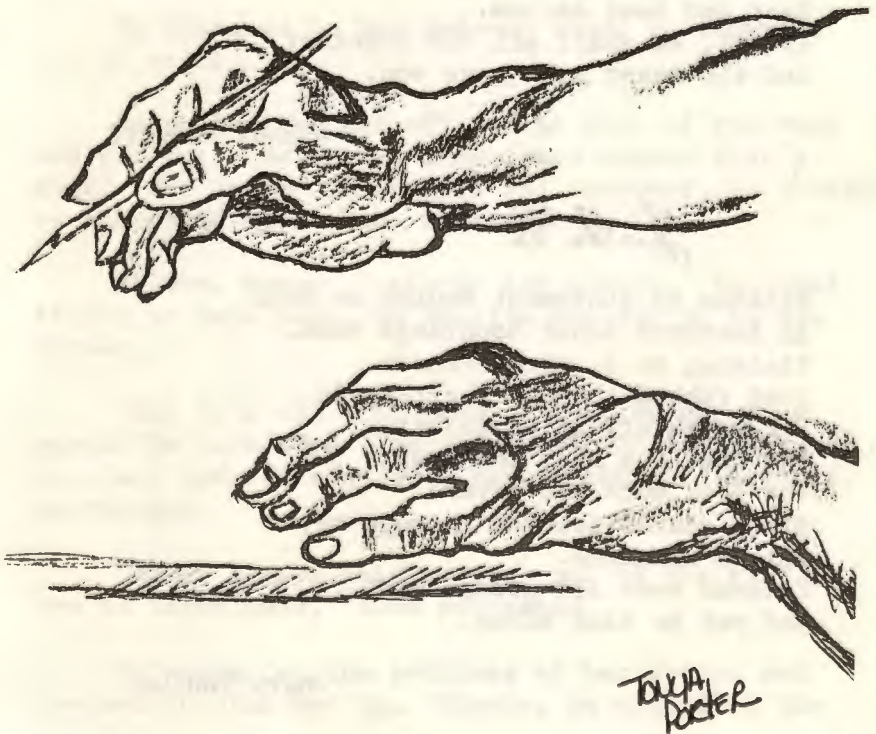
Next, Matt went to the Masters and Johnson's Clinic to learn about the birds and the bees. He caught on so quickly that he was released from the program after only two weeks, and was sent to Dr. Joyce Brothers for a refresher course in love, stress, and fear.

When Matt finally returned to the estate, he knew it all. I had spent over one million dollars on his education, and you could certainly tell it. He was the perfect, intellectual gentleman. He could impress and charm anyone. Matt was great for parties and nights on the town, but as for life, a home--well, that was a little different.

Matt was perfect, too perfect. His smooth face never had nubs on it. His raven hair was never out of place. He never had to exercise his magnificent body. We never had any disagreements.

What could there have been to disagree on? Matt knew everything imaginable. But the worst thing about the whole situation was his baby blue eyes. When he looked at me, I couldn't see myself reflection in those eyes, and I knew that Matt couldn't see me at all. His eyes were mechanical. They were just another device to make him look real, and when he put his arms around me, beneath all of that smooth muscular skin, I could still feel the wires and tubes that made Matt tick instead of beat.

-Teresa Lodwick



## *The Beast*

After the first blinding flash of light,  
When the terrible thunder has ceased,  
Day will turn into night, and the world shall  
Learn the true nature of the Beast.

He has no sordid claws,  
No fangs with which to kill,  
Only winds of fire and pain  
Which no power on Earth can still.

He's coming to visit soon.  
It could be any day.  
We must join together and stop this Beast  
Before He has His way.

We have to learn to live together,  
East and West as one.  
If not, we shall all die together  
And the Beast will have won.

-Danny Buzzard

## *J. A. C.*

Friends by statement truths do hold  
in tortured inner hauntings roam.  
Yielding to a vicious snare  
that robbed them of their souls.  
For momentary gains unjust,  
the cost was much too dear,  
The loss much too severe.  
Blank stares searing through me,  
voices monotone.  
Friends were all around him,  
and yet he died alone.

-Mary Tadlock



## *Rainsong*

Timothy lay awake on the hard mattress, staring at the ceiling. It had been ten years since he had last heard his Roan sing or laugh, or cry...

Ten years ago, on a rainy Monday evening, he had left work, and picked up Roan from the day care as he always did. He watched her as she gazed out the window, tracing, with her fingers the raindrops as they trickled slowly down the glass.

"Daddy," she began, "why does it have to rain today? I wanted to play outside, and now everything's all wet." She looked out the window again, not waiting for an answer, but singing softly to herself.

He listened to her made-up song; it reminded him of rain.

He pulled the car off to the side of the road and got out. He walked around and opened Roan's door. She looked so fragile and innocent, he thought, as she gazed up at him, blinking.

"C'mon, honey, let's go for a walk," he urged, trying to hold back the emotion welling up in his throat.

"But it's all wet, Daddy." She looked up at him while raindrops slowly darkened the hair around her face and trickled down her cheeks. Like tears, he thought.

"Mommy always said to stay out of the rain or you'll catch cold," Roan protested.

He winced at the softness of her voice, and reached to pick her up. Slowly, he walked to the

river's edge. He waded in until the water was up to his waist.

"Daddy?" she looked up at him questioningly.

"Daddy loves you, Roan," he whispered as he plunged her under the river's muddy current.

The empty pain of those moments burned within him hollowly and rose up in his throat while she struggled. Her body finally went limp and he lifted her out of the water, carrying her slowly to the shore. He brushed wet hair out of her face and held her lifeless form, sobbing for what seemed an eternity.

And he was sobbing now, lying on that cold hard bed in a dark and lonely cell.

"Roan," he gasped into his pillow, "Oh, Roan!"

He remembered her now as he would always remember her, her smooth ivory face, and her eyes closed like she was sleeping. He had given her that, the one thing he most desired, yet knew he could never have ... because he loved her. He had given her peace.

From deep within his empty cell, he thought he heard the rain falling, falling in rhythm to the rainsong of a child....

-Peggy Ann Wilburn



**Dona Frost**





**Dona Frost**

# *Scene From*

et al.: Silhouette (Fall 1986)

## *Night Cry*

### Act One ---- Scene One

It was a warm summer night, not humid but warm, enough that instead of running the air-conditioner this early in the season the windows were open slightly to allow what little breeze there was to enter the room. The sounds of the night could be heard entering riding upon a wisp of the night's breeze.

The sound was interrupted by a frightening scream from Tim, who was sitting up in bed soaking wet from perspiration and shaking uncontrollably from fear and possibly with the help of the chill of the breeze of night air. Beth knew what to do. She very carefully touched Tim on the arm, calling out his name...

Beth: Tim--honey, are you all right?...Tim?

(She continued to call his name with no response ).

Tim: Did we get them all? Make sure of it, John, you know how they are. If we didn't get them all, we'll have every Gook in Nam down on us.

Beth: (Trying to wake him again, shaking him gently).

Tim: John, did we have any casualties? What? Joey bought it? Damn. He was going home in forty-six days. Damn this war. Damn it. John, collect his personal effects. I hate this damn place. I hate it!

Beth: (Shouting) Tim! Tim! Wake up. You're having a nightmare. Wake up! (She shook him harder this time calling out his name).  
Tim!

Tim: (All of a sudden he woke up with a start and was breathing unevenly). What? What's wrong? What do you want? Something wrong?

Beth: You've been dreaming again and calling out names and you're soaking wet. It was Vietnam again, wasn't it?

Tim: I don't know. Yeah. Yes, I guess it was. It's so real I just can't shake it. I'm sorry, honey. I didn't hurt you or anything.. did I? I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Beth: No, you didn't hurt me, but I was scared. Not just for me but scared for you. Honey, please, do something about these dreams, please. I'm so afraid you'll hurt yourself or you won't be able to snap out of it.

Tim: I'm sorry. I don't know what I'm doing or what I'm saying. I don't know what's going on.

Beth: Tim, you've got to see somebody about this... to talk it out, to put it out of your system.

Tim: (Defensively) You mean see a shrink! I guess you think I'm crazy, don't you. You think I'm some kind of a war monger...a killing machine. I didn't ask to be this way. I...

Beth: (Interrupting) No, Tim, I just want you to put this experience behind you and forget it. I want you to feel better. I love you.

Tim: If you love me, then you'll understand. I'm not going to see a doctor. They never do anything about these problems anyway--just push pills at you. I'm not going to be a pill-popper. And, besides, what if they were to put me in some hospital or institution and treat me like some freak.. No. I'm not going. I'm no freak!



Beth: Honey, I just want you to get some help. Then you'll feel better.

Tim: Feel better? I feel okay. I'm not some leper or something. I just have a small problem. I'll take care of it.

Beth: How? Tim, you don't even know what you're doing. How are you going to take care of it? How?

Tim: Forget it! I'm not going to see a doctor or anybody else. I'll be fine... Just leave me alone. I'll be okay!

-Rick Bolin

This scene is from the play, Night Cry, written by the President of Student Government at Shawnee State University. This scene was performed in Beds and Boards, by the Shawnee State Theatre Department. The characters Tim and Beth were played by Ed Ward and Tamela Carmichael.

## *Dionysus Trapped In...*

Dionysus trapped in  
(four by four by four)  
columns arches indecisions  
and ancient prophets roam the deserts  
for a hungry god.  
Dionysus trapped in  
(three by three by three)  
foggy morning children rise for school and breakfast  
lose their notebooks where the mud runs,  
momma praying for her vision  
sends them off with hugs and lunches  
as the mushroom grows against the sky.  
Dionysus trapped in  
(two by two by two)  
under the moonlight  
god goes searching for his  
offshoot resurrected child,  
and the grapes of day  
die thick on vines  
to be eaten by dead  
who are always hungry and annoyed.  
Dionysus trapped in  
(one by one by one)  
drop like matchsticks charred and pointless  
into smelling heaps and husks of bone.  
curses chants and invocations  
calm the god who moves the sun;  
a dark girl breaking eggs on the sidewalk  
as her fair haired brother bleeds;  
hear the green god come running draped in olive,  
drunk again

-Ryan Hardesty

## *This Thing Called Life*

Darkness  
closes in  
on all sides  
and I lie  
in an  
embryonic  
state  
against the  
cold  
damp  
walls  
of this  
thing  
called life  
gasping for  
warmth.

-Teresa Lodwick

## *Searching*

Someday you will find me hiding  
under Autumn's hues or  
under dew misted showers  
above the daffodils.  
Across the shallow cornfields or in  
the brown sage grass around  
the snow flaked mountains  
or in the years to pass.  
Someday you will find me, but I  
won't remember you.

-Tamela Carmichael



## *Broken Strings*

You appeared in my thoughts  
again last night,  
pulling at memories  
one by one  
like dirty clothes  
needing to be washed.

As I woke  
to the emptiness of my bed,  
I could feel your presence  
about my soul  
squeezing it  
ever so tightly.

I almost  
broke down and cried  
yet pride saved me...  
or kept me  
from tears  
long past due.

-Rodney B. Cooper



**Dona Frost**

## *Death By Slicing*

The books were disturbing--  
I wanted to learn about the Mongols,  
about China and ancient civilizations.  
I should have been prepared, but all  
the hours I spent reading college Latin  
were not enough. I knew about the arena,  
the lions, and crushing chariot wheels, and  
galley slaves, but learning of death by  
slicing has depressed me--and yet,  
how far have we come?  
Not far, it seems.  
Death by slicing, slow death to punish  
cutting out tongues, severing other things--  
hard to believe-- but what of flame throwers  
used little more than forty years ago,  
atomic searing, and more?

Such knowledge compounds the sorrow  
I feel today for troubled members of our  
family--those very close to me. And  
the eight-year-old in the news, spanked,  
paddled black and blue in a  
"seat of learning," a public school.

Softness and love beaten down, life  
sliced away. I feel only defeat.

-Shirley Campbell



## *Shattered*

Printed messages on a wall of glass:  
Shattered, crushed, illegible!  
Were you walking toward an open door  
When you left me behind?  
Devoid, alone.  
I pick up the pieces,  
Clinging to each breath.  
Now, who will paint the sky in shades of gold?  
Who will dust the flowers till they bloom?  
Who will love me as I grow old?

-Sue Lashbrook



## *I Want My Spirit to Be Free*

When I die, I don't want to be buried in the ground. I want my ashes scattered so my spirit can glide freely on the wind.

A body trapped in darkness can't be free, can't see the light of day. I want to smell wild roses when they bloom. I want to speak the lines of a poem onto the wind as it rushes by in long gusts. I want to scatter honeysuckle along the path where children walk.

I want my spirit to soar like the hawk and feel the raindrops trickle down my face. A body locked in darkness can't smell roses laid atop the grave.

I don't want my body trapped in a vault under the hard earth. I want my ashes sprinkled on top of an eastern Kentucky hill, for I'm akin to the wind that blows across the open fields and whispers through the pines. I want to feel it always on my face. I want my spirit to ride on gentle currents. I want my spirit to be free.

-Mary Jane Wilburn

## Poetry Contributors

et al.: Silhouette (Fall 1986)

DANNY BUZZARD-is a programmer and installer at Charleston Cash Register Company in Charleston, West Virginia. SHIRLEY YOUNG CAMPBELL-is the former Editor of Hill and Valley. TAMELA CARMICHAEL-is a fine arts major at SSCC and previous contributor. RODNEY COOPER-is a local writer and guitarist and previous contributor. DUANE DUNHAM-a McDermott resident who is making his first appearance in The Silhouette. MARJORIE EVERMAN-Lewis County native employed by Scioto Memorial Hospital. ABBA GRAY-is a Columbus poet, author of two poetry books and previous contributor. RYAN HARDESTY-is a student at Morehead University and previous contributor. BETTY HOY-an annual participant at the Shawnee Hills Poetry Workshop at Greenbo Lake State Park. SUE LASHBROOK-a McDermott resident and beginning poet. CATHERINE ELROD LIDDLE-is an English major at Ohio University; she has several literary credits. TERESA LODWICK-is an English major at Ohio University and the author of two books. MARY TADLOCK- is a SSCC student and first time contributor.

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**Lori O'Dell**