

THE PAINTED BRIDE QUARTERLY

vol.1/no
fall'73/10



THE PAINTED BRIDE QUARTERLY

vol.1/no.1
fall'73/100

editors

louise simons

r.daniel evans

special thanks

gerry givnish frank vavrika

the painted bride art center

527 south street

phila. pa.19147

CONTENTS

Henry Braun	3
Mary McGinnis	6
Nathaniel Tarn	10
Ken Bluford	14
Rebecca Wright & Maureen Owen	16
Joel Colten	18
Jim Penzi	20
Maralyn Lois Polak	22
Anselm Hollo	26
Jane Vacante	28
Barbara A. Holland	29
Dennis Moritz	32
Louise Simons	33
Peter Bushyeager	36
R. Daniel Evans	37
Michael Horovitz	40

Cover by Steven Feldman

COPYRIGHT © 1973 BY PAINTED BRIDE QUARTERLY, Inc

527 SOUTH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19147

Subscription \$4 00 Year — Single Issue \$1 00

Henry Braun

A BOY SENSES A FATHER

A boy senses a father
Bareing like all men
His Achilles heel
Lonely for the arrow
More slowly than anyone
Who ages around them
But as surely.
Their love is a shore
Every ninth wave of darkness
Reaches. It is a ground
Beyond words for a few words.
The biggest lie is speech
That breaks manfully out of silence
After its time.
Like this dervish poem
For the ear of the air.

THE OBVIOUS

The obvious needed years to find me

And now it wanders in

Disguised as an afterthought:

To have a second chance,

That grown joy,

Lose the first and learn

The art of falling by waysides

From the all

Which is not enough.

ANGEL OF THE WAR YEARS

The new angel was infolded among us
To share our daily bread and circus
And drink from the running cup.

Coming foreseen, he stood worn like a menhir,
Grass pate flattened by the rain,
In a neighborhood one generation old.

Small children at the heart of meaning,
With the dew still heavy on our customs,
We were not ready for an angel

But we took him in and none of us asked for wings
Or the tilt of flesh that breaks
A common sunlight into halos.

His gestures were familiar: tired shepherd
After the parables begin straying
Back towards the herd of what goes on.

With the quality of concern
One brings to a physician, we fed him,
Those famous days for the spirit,

Deep within the intelligence of our houses,
Where bookcases tower in the night,
Seen from the outside dark through lamplight.

We have an affection for our tiredness
Now he is gone in a small German car,
For our peculiar brand of sadness.

Mary McGinnis

RELATIONSHIPS

I have closed the house
To unsettling strangers.
The freedom of saying no
Has scared us but we like
Shaping our lonely beginnings.

What can I do for him?
I can feel his ribs through a shirt.
He says I am the only family
In his world.

Lonely beginnings
Come before finding out what we want
From one another.
How many friends
(not strangers)
Can we fit into our hug?

We will weave answers
Like tattered cloaks for ourselves
Made from secondhand materials.

COSTUMES

I resolve
To stop wearing masks and costumes;
If I'm angry,
You'll hear it in my voice,
And if I'm happy, I'll
Tell you about it unless
I think you're not really interested.
And
I don't have to dress up or dress down for
Anybody.

At the museum we
Wander into the room of costumes;
I'm hot and tired and don't feel like stopping
But it's too soon for going home;
I hold hands with the buckskinned Indian,
Fingering fringes;
He's complete--
They gave him a body to fit inside his costume.

It's the women's costumes that startle me--
Laces and velvets, silks and brocades

Capture my touch...
Skirts and long dresses for dancing or showing off in
A kimono hanging mechanically on a lifeless form
Mockery of make-believe shoulders
And brocaded shoes empty of feet--
Probably they pinched
Her unsuspecting toes.
Were these women comfortable inside their ruffles?
They've all been forgotten,
Already their softness and fire
Had been trapped in the silent struggle of clothing.

Standing in the quiet rain,

We examined

The textures of the pomegranate.

You made a beginning with your fingernail,

Carefully pulling away the tight outer skin.

Like Persephone,

I was unused to the food of despair

But moulding my mouth in a line

Tart as the fruit,

I soon grew envious of you,

My shadow-versed lover

Who said nothing to me of the bitter seeds

Poisoning these dark realms.

ROYAL TEA POEM

We clambour up roads
Outside of town
Away from too many cars
Picking the noble juniper berries;
I ask that their purple symmetry
Stain my sleep
With the power to rule over my dreams,
Directing them toward
New glorious happenings,
Also in purple

When I drink juniper tea with you
I ask about the color of this potion
Surprised at its fading quality,
And I want to imagine and perform
A ceremony
Smoothly leading us from tea drinking
To drowsiness and love and forgetfulness.

Nathaniel Tarn

THE CREATURE

for S.S.

I woke
drowned in a tide of light
calling her name.

Yesterday
I cd. not call the Lord
for doting on the beauty of his creature.

But she became his address in my mind.
"Where there's a will, there's a way" she sd.
Lady. you do not know what will you have awoken,
nor whither way it bears you in a lost God's name.

PROVINCIAL MORNING

for M.

You left a mark on my neck size of a deer's eye
and yet you told me to meet with other women.

What were you trying to do:

mark me for hunting season?

We had never expected each other, out of old friendship,
it was like moving out of some hope forgotten more than once
and remembered the same, and forgotten again.

You bled that day, I could have sworn it.

This morning it is not your eyes you open it is mine
this morning tho you sleep in the city you are provincial
and you wake to these trees falling of too much blood

I kiss the cups of your brimming body.

You said, you said:

I have gone into another life
a life too full already, trying not to die

I have disappeared into liberty
gone back to the city in a torrential cloud.

What you hold is a fall in the hand.

TO CERTAIN, MAINLY YOUNGER, WOMEN

for Rainbow, cause she aint that way.

You say: you don't like being a MUSE.

"That radiance" (that radiance) "you see in me."

"It aint me, it aint I, it aint me."

Exclamation voice. Grimaces

spoiling a woman's face

here indicating: "personality."

Do you know

that it is at least a possible model of history

that you will have existed

because I have existed

and very unlikely at this point

vice versa?

(not only male oppression:

the number of excellent women poets

grows almost hourly.)

You come to an older man
"tired of your peers among boys"
allegedly to "learn from him."
Once here you gabble on for hours
about yr. mums & dads & shrinks & egos
dragging me down into the nest.

(can't get a word in edgeways
apres quoi, cunnus, if that IS nest,
one in ten.)

All the while,
buried so deep I couldn't find it in years,
the voice which should be speaking to me,
saving me from this boredom,
rescuing all the lives I've (really) lived,
the wondrous archaeology!

It is not to be known that we ask, but to be recognized

Ken Bluford

Half amazon, half goddess

you've gone beyond Mom and Dad

to pain -- pain grown thin and limp

hair grown beyond just tallness

and scalp, to skull and breast.

Your hair has gone beyond its ends

-- a roll extending, nape

to crown, also called a twist

this loveknot that we called ours

had bounce and swing. The scissors

cut it and you tucked the ends

up, scalp to skull, in Vermont.

SONNET

Your heart, barraged by flames
inhabits foreign parts of its own amazement
as though some arsonist dreamt of heaven
strafing the dream's innocent earth.

A beautiful woman
wears your face. Your beauty moves her to love
the dream
of becoming you, her own amazement
burning out in my heart's grotto.

My own innocent amazement
barraged by dreams; the blitz become her grace
that is foreign to your nature, inhabiting
devouring elements.

Flames. And some arsonist
who wears your face, gracefully moves my heart
to love.

Rebecca Wright & Maureen Owen

the point of departure is always a fantasy really
and then again fantastically real

leaving like this unprepared, nothing

really packed or ordered, and the time not right

stealing out at midnight

for the piers for the tungston mines for the Orient!

carrying the broken heart in a suitcase badly
fastened

luckily to hurry is not necessary now

we will arrive at the appointed time regardless

it doesn't exist in fact.

to think that i might arrive!

but no this passing through, oceans and strangers

open like the red sea and allow me to pass

there's no encountering this passing through

eternally on the way now walking backwards on the

speeding train descending laterally the yellow
plastic

escalators leaning & laughing towards the top
we see the sky & beyond that more escalators in gaudy
greens
& reds/on time and late and almost early and too soon
and before that passing beyond this world
which smoulders for closeups

into what, now beyond usefulness, beyond pleasure
O energy you have tempted me too far this time
and I close my eyes prepared to perish for another
ideal

but when I close my eyes

I see you

now a stranger to me, my point of departure

Joel Colten

YESTERDAY MY SENSE OF
ADVENTURE
WAS WHETTED BY AN EXOTIC
ZIP CODE

* * *

I BOUGHT SOME "HURT BOOKS" AT
THE BOOKSTORE SALE
AND SAVED MYSELF THE TROUBLE OF
TORTURING THEM MYSELF

* * *

HE IS YOUNG
JUST A FEW YEARS OUT OF HIGH
SCHOOL
AND HE WORKS AT THE MENTAL
INSTITUTION
HE HAS LET HIS SIDEBURNS GROW
AND THEY POINT SHARPLY AT HIS
NOSE

* * *

THE VASELINE AND BIC PENS SIT
ON THE NIGHT TABLE
WE WATCH TELEVISION

I REMEMBER THE DEW ON MY
GRANDFATHERS LAWN
AND THE SUNDIAL AT THE END OF
THE ROSE BUSHES
IN THE AFTERNOON I WOULD
PRACTICE ARCHERY
LONG BEFORE I HAD HEARD OF ZEN

* * *

WHEN YOU CRY
I CONSIDER CHROME PLATING MY ARM
SO THAT IT WILL NOT RUST

* * *

WHEN LIFE HAD BECOME A FORMALITY
AND LOVE AN INSIDE JOKE
I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BELIEVE
EVERYTHING THAT EVERYONE
HAD TOLD ME

* * *

TODAY I HAD FORGOTTEN THE
FUTILITY OF ALL ENDEAVOR
AND THOUGH MY MEMORY FAILS
I ACCOMPLISH LITTLE

SUBway

before i do not write a comma
or a period
let me cough
i ve scratched my tonsils raw
from biting my fingernails
i m aware of my teeth
the bottom row crooked
and turned
like tombstones
in a cowboy movie
i pick these scenes
from my nose
i remember
my great aunt
in the coffin
in her favorite dress
the one for
special occasions
like weddings
or christenings
that too white dress
that she seldom wore

because it might get dirtied
the whole family was there
and she never did talk much
it was like-life
her hair: stiffer
than her
smile
nazi bored
i had to kiss her
on the lips
(i wonder if they brushed her teeth)
and she got more cards
and flowers
than on her birthday
and it could have been christmas
and crouched
at the side of her casket
i couldn t help but
spray paint
COOL EARL

Maralyn Lois Polak

BIRTHDAY PRESENT

1.

How many times
have I given
birth to myself
this year
telling and retelling
my story
colored like a lifesize
comic
strip to you
curious reader
filling in balloons
of speech
with your own
mouthings

2.

We see each other
at the zoo
It is not enough
that your body
fills my spaces
When we talk
it is only
to disregard the rule
against feeding
the animals
I want to know
what is real
Hollows or outlines
We are caged by
indifference

3.
If I forget
your name
or what day it is
or how we came
to lie
next to each other
last night
it is because I suffer
from what I call
Present Shock
and Mike calls
Reality
Nevertheless it
is probably only
a passing
fancy

ANOTHER BEGINNING

By now I
should be an
expert
at endings
I've lived through
so many of them
We all must
be experts at
something
I was never one
at tennis Scrabble
poker or telling jokes
but give me a book
and before it
has settled
into my hands
I have ripped through
to the last
chapter to see
how it turns out

That is why
I've prepared
a Post-Affair
Questionnaire
before we meet Please
complete it truthfully
to the best of
your ability Of course
you will remain
perfectly anonymous your identity
known only to me
It will all be done
by mail If I cry
it is purely
in the interest
of science or art

I am not
too concerned
with beginnings
Once you get them
over with they
are easily
forgotten like
shaking hands
on the street
exchanging names
at a party
having sex
with a stranger
or stretching
after five hours
of sitting at a
desk Oh no it
is the endings
of things that
preoccupy me

Anselm Hollo

the soul is not a little man
operating in the heart or head
all right but who is that little guy

* * *

well let's just stay right here &
dig the ethnoastronomy
it bashes about fairly senselessly
yes, yes that's true

will the short catalogue do?
no no, we want the big one

life is a day at the beach
one big identity crisis

but you are the bee's knees

on my way to the high street i pass
many doorways & courtyards
in the corner of my eye
a giant scots terrier!
intuitively speaking
his name is wudswooth or hoobsbum
'mcbuth: c'est un nom écossais?'

* * *

the last empress of china took all the money

in the photograph, she looks tough

Jane Vacante

STEPS TO A CERTAIN PLACE

Rosey, I used to love
the borrowed black leotard
making me a slight Giacometti sculpture
white feet, white hands, white face---
witness to the nothing body's dance.
You've been hurled
past nothing now.

Near the extinct volcano, Ixta---
at the castle of Cortes
I am the first, the only pilgrim
to this shrine.

There is no beautiful Indian
in the mural;
there is no presence
on this altar.

The needles of sunlight
jab me, darkling
against the whitewashed wall
my body, sun-blackened
my spirit, bleached.

OUT OF MY HEAD

I want to be rid of you,
so I can see you.

I want you out from behind
my forehead and between
my eyes. I want to have an end
of the crush of you against
that interior bone,

of the swelling and shrinking
ache in your throb
of expansion and contraction;

agony of your brilliance
in my over-stuffed skull.

I want to be done with your presence;
with mass action of all
my nerves and tissues
to expel you; with the urge
to singe your name across the night
with torches; with the bung
which you loosen, but never
knock from my face.

I want you clear out of my head
for once; as a fain in three dimensions
and as loss of impacted truth.

THE CAPRICORN TAPESTRY

Out there in the darkness
bushes wink up at him.

For us, they are enlivened
by fireflies, but to him
they are cover for marauders.

The telephone sits, guileless,
on the table, saying nothing.

Let its silence
be tapped, for silence listens
to unspoken guilt.

Call out the goon-squad!

That one-man vigil
across the street, crashes
through drawn blinds and the message
on his swaying placard,
in the ice-blue of unwavering light,
reads its repeated accusation
from every mirror.

A sinister white sphere,
now resting beside the herbaceous border,
has been lit with leprous
malignancy by the moon,
and is bound to explode.

Even the surface
of the moon is scouted by astronauts,
looking down here,
plotting something.

Order them back! Quickly!
Throw them a banquet.
Anything, to keep them from getting up there
to spy on the chimney.

Who knows
what danger may seep
down the flue?

We honor our love in the breach
not married we live in this apartment
lie two in a bed
cook wine beef on noodles
split economy
argue and assess:
you owe Acme
I.T.T. is on my neck.
The dishes grow mouldy
as we fight in our complexity
and the grey mouse
the cat forgets
drops its hairs and trail
in the plastic salad bowl.
In the morning we wake, groggy,
spattering spite
and then...
laughing hysterically, we see
love break out like a river
under our feet.

My mouth turns full of money.
Dollar bills go falling out
from behind my teeth
every time I try to speak.
This happens
because after months of talking
I finally visit a woman doctor.

I go into the waiting room.
They are waiting for me.
Um hum, just what I expected.
Come in, they say.
I enter and lie upon the table,
my legs up.

She is quick and thorough.
There is no small talk.
I do not have to open my mouth
and expose my condition.
She says, You are okay.
The Pap smear was done automatically
while you were walking in.

Next she wants to see into my heart.
She cannot look down my throat
because I will not open my mouth.
She has to look up again.
She looks all the way up this time
and sees my heart.

It is black, she tells me,
and filled with malice. Good, I say.
Money falls out. You were worth it.
I grin wickedly
flashing my silver teeth.

DEATH WATCH

"Just watching someone shoot a hog
brings your death upon you."
--Clarence Major

We rode out together to visit you.
Howie said, Put your teeth in, Dad.
All right, you said. Without looking
you reached beside you to the little plastic box,
brought your hand back to your face,
and cupped it over your mouth.
When you took your hand away there were still no teeth
in the middle.
Why are you pretending, Dad, we said.
I put them in. I'm wearing them, you told us.

No one can ever go out.

The Lord is my Shepherd, the rabbi said.

There's blood in the urine because he pulled
his catheter out last night, the pretty nurse said.
He WHAT, I said, my stomach a fist.
Mr. Simons, you're a naughty boy, she said.
Now don't do that again.
He smiled out at her from watery eyes.

The death watcher watched.

I shall not want.

That's Castor, you taught me a long time ago.
You showed me how to find Pollux,
mapping the heavens in a hot summer night.

beside the still waters for His Name's sake

Even while we were holding the service for you
and people were coming into our house,
a neighbor died
beautiful and blonde like a Scandinavian star
the script from a bad movie
alone in the end
to die in his garden, outside his house

Yea, though I've walked through your shadow

No one can go out

I say no one can go out.

Life and death abide with me, at my house.
I watch them from inside.
I record the living on reels and tapes
to prevent anyone from going out
who was within.
We sit at our table, prepared for us.

The death watchers watch.

No one can ever go out.

Peter Bushyeager

My voice swirls in these motel bedsprings.

I am a lonely salesman masturbating and
these rubber sheets sadden me.

The room is piney like a suburban child's playroom.

TV is on a pink tile counter.

Words come through the walls but
they are muffled like someone's mouth
full of candy.

I am in touch with constant pain like a
diligent German camp doctor. People are
bent in chosen shapes.

Someday my discipline will be complete.

I will love until you glow like vitreous china and
make wet eyes like Mary.

I will give you a glimpse of the pain of Christ
hung on a cross just as proud as
a spangled cloth Sacred Heart in a
widow's bedroom.

THE SILVER HAND

It appears that there is something between us
a silver hand and arm
that ends in a little cartoon-strip cloud
This hand has a life of its own
When I sit and read
drinking iced tea on hot summer days
and suddenly recall a line of mine
you quoted, it offers me the glass
When you see my favorite cookies in A & P
and decide to buy them for me
the silver hand tousles your hair
gently plays with the puppy tail
strands at the back of your neck
Best of all
when I think of you in bed
lying on my stomach
at night and you're not there
the silver hand juts up between my legs
gooses me and gives me a silver hardon
so that I want to grasp down
raise the hand to my lips
and kiss the silver fingertips

THE ARTIST IN HIS STUDIO

The studio is empty.
The room flooded with Vermeer light,
I paint a nude.
Before the paint has dried,
she steps from the canvas,
then bends with the movements
of a dancer.

I paint another figure,
this time a male nude.
He too steps from his canvas.
I feel great pride watching him flex
his powerful muscles.

Afraid of tearing this cloth,
I do not talk.
They don't either, but
walk silently around the studio
curious yet already used to their new life.

Then they see each other:
they touch each other.
Their bodies become one subject
in the pattern of lovemaking.

Before she can conceive,
I paint on another canvas
the figure of an infant.
The other two disappear.

In revenge, I paint the baby
horned, deformed, skin green.
Then hearing a faint, first
tentative howl, paint
out the infant altogether.

Now my canvas is again pure white,
my mind sky blue.

GLIMPSE

muffle of hooves

cracking shrubs

stirring grass

awakens me

to pale dawn

fram'd huddle

- red deer

pausing awhile

in our glade

- then - at no signal

- but all-at-once

- fleetfoot it away

through the brush strokes

of sunlight

deeper in-

to their forest -

