PULSE
Spring 1969       Vol. XI
Number 2
Lamar State College of Technology

Staff
Editor ............................ Joy Crenshaw
Associate Editor ..................... Terry Lee Morrison
Art Editor .......................... Ed Parsons
       Assistants
Linda Morrison      Joye Smith
Nancy Driver       Dr. Winfred Emmons
Sponsor .................. Dr. Winfred Emmons

Judges

POETRY
James deGeorge
Erbel Perkins
Dr. Henry B. Rube

SHORT STORY
Dr. Blaine Thomas
Dr. Robert C. Olson
Brian Sumrall

ART
Jerry A. Newman
Ruth V. Warner
Joseph R. Madden
Robert G. O'Neil
Glenn Bill Williams

Awards

COVER DESIGN  ............. William Powell
1st PLACE DRAWING .......... Nelson Flanagan
2nd PLACE DRAWING .......... Nelson Flanagan
ELEANOR POETRY AWARD
Murder in the Bookery ...... W. W. Pratt, Jr.
PULSE POETRY AWARD
Idea ................................ Mark Pittel
2nd PLACE AWARD
Navaho Poem .................... Terry Morrison
3rd PLACE AWARD
About Adolescence ............ Sherry Ward
PULSE SHORT STORY AWARD
The Visit ........................ Jacqueline Ponder
2nd PLACE AWARD
Portrait of a Silent Departure  Debby Hackaman
# Table Of Contents

## Poetry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carole Barbay</td>
<td>Spring Planting</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda S. Bennett</td>
<td>The Gulf Coast</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Epps</td>
<td>A Canticle for Charlie</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles F. Goode, Jr.</td>
<td>I Am Strangely Tempted</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Helter</td>
<td>Id Music</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Hopkins</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Of Me</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I fell asleep in the same Russian snow that froze aunt may</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Hutson</td>
<td>To Be</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Gibson Hynes</td>
<td>Neurotic</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oriental Magnolia</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly Jackson</td>
<td>The Mandeville Market</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The most excellent king</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Morrison</td>
<td>Song of the Old Man</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Navaho Poem</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In an English Garden</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two, with Unsunned Arms</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Song of the Elf of Joy</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December Love Song</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shallow Waters Beach</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Pittel</td>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For Cleopatra the Whore</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Present Year</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iambic Transperencies</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sonnet Written after Having Seen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seas</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. W. Pratt, Jr.</td>
<td>Murder in the Bookery</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Clock</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science Fiction to George O</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zesper: through the green windows</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Ward</td>
<td>About Adolescence</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Art

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nelson Flanagan</td>
<td>11, 20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Powell</td>
<td>8, 19, 28, 32, 38, 40, 35, 37, 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Shofitt</td>
<td>1, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Spurlock</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Eleanor Poetry Award
Sponsored By Mrs. Eleanor Weinbaum

Murder in the Bookery

I'll tell you about Ellen, Sharp Ellen,
You all know her. She's an all-around fact.
For everyday she wears a sweatshirt inscribed
"Intramural Champs
Men's Doubles."

Aurora Sensualis. "Quiet" signs in the library
Sweat. Whisper across isles of references.
The books all hold their breaths. Poem collections
Make silent inferences.

Sharp Ellen, Stretch All American Pants Ellen,
On a stroll in the non-fiction section,
After a book on grammatic construction.
My eyes bounced away from my Toynbee.

Glandiloquent. We all not looking stared, The magazine lady
Straightened her hair, tightened her sternness.
Freshmen peered from paperback shelves.
Scholars, recently thrilled by a phrase,
Researched themselves.

W. W. Pratt, Jr.
SONG OF AN OLD MAN

I am a little leather
of an old man
tanned against life.

all time has turned to darkness
like decaying leather.

my eyes
are grapes grown old against the skies,

my breasts are dried prunes
hanging from a peccant pole.

a tree is a twisted candelabrum,
its branches burn in fall.

I am old—I cannot be young
that’s all.

a broken winter bough
lying leafless on the ground.

all the meaning of my past
is put in seven pictures:
yellowed, cracked, and curled
like fallen leaves,

an old man has fallen
far enough;
becomes a body of dark water.

At night pools of water sleep
between the sidewalk and street
like smooth black mirrors.

the moon rises above
its forest beard;
reflects its bosom,
and crooked branch
in a mirror of black.

and salvation begins.

Terry Lee Morrison
The years
Whisk the calendar pages
before me
With the rhythmic finality
Of steel wheels snapping a rail joint

Standing between the steaming rails
I watch the red lantern
Of my life
fade quickly
Into ever expanding darkness

Gordon Hutson

A Canticle for Charlie

Who winds the clocks as the snow melts
And the crystal flow trickles to carve
Its path of scars in the landscape?
The pendulum swings for the glass gods
Who lost their usefulness, unknowing,
Uncaring of the empty sullen faces.
The old man sets the ticking -- begin;
The holocaust was just an accident,
Or so they told the newspapers -- yesterday,
And today, and so they will tomorrow
In the year of the dying.

Dennis Epps

The Clock

Fact of a worker clock --
Tenuous click of inexpensive gears,
Metering the promise of a mainspring.
The metallic diverter,
Pointedly chopping its children, seconds,
Struggles with neotime,
As if it were a job to be circumscribed.

W. W. Pratt, Jr.
Pulse Poetry Award

Idea

A random Greek standing in a doorway,
Face shaded and sun on his back,
Smiles and waves his hands and the handmaid
Listens, tells him twice to go away
For the mistress is bathing and won’t be disturbed,
(Least of all for the half bald young teacher)
And will give no time for further receiving,
The books and flowers are shamed, perturbed;
They stare away from the sun and into the dust
As they hang from wrists lying sadly on thighs.
He leaves an ornate message for the pretty lady
And the way he smiles back liquid shame
Makes sad little curves in the still air
of Athens.

In the house of a friend he drinks grape wine,
Philosophizes, makes light of the woman.
"There are yet whiter skins, and finer eyes,
And women of scent and satin in lands
Faraway. Why pine for the tawdry whores
When perfection lives somewhere untended?
All things have meaning beyond meaning;
Reality lies in shadowy tones.
Gray is the flesh of my unkind lady
To the skin of the one we cannot know
Forget you have begged for petty pleasures,
And seek the perfect, absurd, in all things."

He has had an idea, so he drinks till he falls
As the scholar’s reward. Though he appears again
Before a courtesan’s door, both poetic and needful,
Yet he scorns the base images that dance before
The fire and cast shadows on the ball.
Understanding only tells us when we are foolish;
It is shame that makes us not foolish too often.

Mark Pittel
of me

there was a hairy rat squashed on the railroad track and it nauseated me but I peeled it off anyways, blessed it and threw it in the weeds.

and near the side of the road I vomited.

it was a beautiful Finale.

Susan Halter

NEUROTIC

She set a fruit tree in her yard,
But no fruit did it bear;
She slipped a cutting in its place --
Its blossoms withered there.

The sap that might have brought new buds
The mother stock sucked dry;
The empty bole remaining then
Could but delude the eye.

Now all the burning, barren years
Have left her only this:
Remembered sight of shining leaves,
Bleak ashes of their kiss.

Margaret Gibson Hynes

ORIENTAL MAGNOLIA

Yesterday, East's bare-limbed child;
Today, in virgin pink,
West's garden bride.

Margaret Gibson Hynes
The Present Year

The present year, a bubble with handles
At either end, waits to be pulled apart
And burst into disconnected circumstance
By the flowering daily disharmony.

Those people who have so frankly loved you,
Will they recall the wistful wanderings
When you rode the handlebars of passion
Softly doled out, all itself receiving?

Come down to the river and see bubbles
Sliding near the surface, rising to sink
Back into the almost compensatory
Junkyards of gloomy lives that have been led.

From the darker dreams of morning you know
That no deeper meaning lies incumbent
In the breaking of sad and soapy bubbles;
Directions are spirals leading nowhere.

Mark Pittel
Rubbing the back of her neck, Ary Young walked to the edge of the wide back porch and called, "Fredda... Fredda Mae! Come on up to the house now, Mama's ready to fit your dress." While she waited for an answer, she stretched and arched her back in an effort to ease the dull ache that always plagued her when she sewed. She shaded her eyes and scanned the long green rows in hopes of spotting a bright pink bonnet that was supposed to be somewhere in their midst. Impatiently, she called again but in a louder voice, "Fredda! Come here!"

"She can't hear you Mama," a small voice quietly commented beneath her. Ary leaned over the side of the porch and saw her youngest child, Janie, squatting by the water pump, making mud pies.

"Why can't she hear me?"

"Because she ain't there."

"Ladies don't say ain't... Where is she?"

"Out yonder," Janie said, pointing a muddy finger towards an outhouse a small distance away.

"How long has she been out there?"

"I don't know, Mama, she left the garden long time before I started making pies," she explained as she dumped the red gooey contents of the lid onto a cord that was almost covered with muddy lumps.

"Run and get her for me, Janie. I'll bet she's reading another book. Tell her Mama wants her to come here right now. What am I ever to do with that red-headed child. She'll be the death of me yet..."

"I'll get her for you Mama," Janie said, carrying the tray of mudpies back to the play-like house she had outlined with rocks under the huge Black Walnut tree. Seeing the playhouse, Ary recalled fond memories from her own childhood. "Playing-like grown-ups seems so exciting," she thought to herself, "if little girls only knew the weary truth... I guess it's best they don't know." Seeing Janie wipe muddy hands on the back of her dress interrupted Ary's day dream. "Don't do that. Hurry up Janie. Mama's got a lot to do."

"Yes Mem" she said as she walked carefully thru the doors of her imaginary house before she started running towards the toilet.

Fredda's world had improved considerably the day when she found that the knot-hole could be unplugged to provide a beam of light just bright enough to read by. When ever she could slip away, Fredda would head for her secluded retreat, unplug the knot-hole, lock the door from the inside, place the Montgomery Ward catalogue against the sack of lime, and reclining there between the two solemn holes of the jugh, she would read her books and dream her dreams. She was almost to the best part of The Girl of the Limberlost -- the sad part that always made her cry, when Janie's persistent banging at the door interrupted her.

"Are you in there, Freddi Mae? Mama wants you right now. She needs to fit your dress. Do you hear me?"

"I hear you, I'll be right there," Fredda said taking her feet down from
the door. She put her foof in the empty bucket that was supposed to be filled with peas for supper and covered the book with her detestable pink bonnet. When she opened the door, Janie was waiting for her.

"You sure are going to get into trouble when Mama sees that you don't have anything but a book in that bucket. Freddie's going to get a whipping," she began to sing over and over again.

"Janie, take the bucket and pick some peas for me while I'm getting my dress fitted, will you?"

"I don't want to."

"Please Janie, I'll do something for you sometimes."

"No. I'm not going to do at."

"Oh yes you are, or I'll tell Mama about the kitten!"

"Freddie, you promised you wouldn't tell. I didn't go to do at. Honest, I didn't mean to. Please don't tell her. I'll pick the peas."

Janie's big brown eyes welled with tears and her face looked so pitiful that Fredda wished she hadn't brought up the terrible secret. "I won't tell her this time," she said giving Janie the bucket, "but you better not take anymore kittens to bed with you. Give me my book and the bonnet. I'll come out and help you as soon as I can. And you'd better not call me Freddie ever again or you'll be sorry."

"Yes Fredda," Janie replied, completely submissive, then she added brightly, "it sure was a beautiful funeral though, isn't it? If another kitten dies... can we have another funeral, huh?"

"Another kitten better not die. Now run and pick those peas!"

Ary was still waiting on the porch when Fredda walked up to the house.

"Fredda! Put on your bonnet. You'll be a pretty thing with a face full of freckles. You know better than to walk out in the hot sun without protecting your face. When you get my age your face will be nothing but wrinkles! All Southern ladies..."

"have beautiful white skin. I know. But Mama, that bonnet is so hot." Fredda said as she followed her mother into the house, "besides, I'm always going to have freckles whether I wear that bonnet or not. All red-headed people have them."

"You are going to wear that bonnet, and no more back-talk from you missy. Pull off your dress. When I'm finished fitting your new one, I want you to run to the store for me and get another spool of thread."

"But Mama, it's over a mile to Tinnsmen. Do I..."

"Yes you have to. Now stand still so I can get this hemline straight."

"Does it have to be so long. All the girls are wearing their dresses shorter now."

"I don't care how short the other girls are wearing their dresses, your hem will be a lady-like length. You know your Papa would have a fit if you came out looking like a hussy in a short dress."

"Papa's so old-fashioned. He just doesn't understand."

"Hush that, I won't listen to that kind of talk. Papa just wants his girls to be lady-like. All men are like that Fredda. They want their women folk to be respectable and lady-like... there, the hem's all pinned up. While you change your dress, I'll get some money for the thread. Hurry or I'll be up half the night sewing."

Fredda had disappeared behind the curve in the road before Ary found the pink bonnet lying under the dress. She snatched it up and ran out of the house, calling, "Janie, come quick. Catch up with your sister and give her this bonnet."

About an hour later, Ary heard the sound of a motor over the whirr of her
sawing machine. She quit peddling and listened to hear if the car was just slowing down for the curve or if it was stopping. Pating her hair into place, she walked to the front window just in time to see a black Model T Ford pull to a majestic stop by the gate and after a minute, the long, lean frame of the Baptist preacher emerged from the car with the Bible clutched under his arm. "Oh! Me! The house in a mess and not a thing fit to eat—why did he have to pick today to come a-calling?" she mumbled to herself as she opened the door. "Brother Johnson, how good of you to come to see us. Won't you come in and have a cup of coffee?"

"Good afternoon, Sister Young. Is Brother Young at home?" he asked in a deep solemn voice as he entered the house.

"I don't expect Mr. Young to be i until late tonight."

He pulled his watch out of his vest pocket, clicked open the lid, and looking at it said, "I expect I've time for a cup of coffee. Hello Sister Jane, have you been a good girl since I saw you last?" He leaned over to pat her on the head but she moved completely behind her mother's skirts. He straightened back up and followed Ary into the kitchen making small talk while she heated the coffee up. When they were drinking their coffee, he began to tell her about the reason for his visit. His face was filled with righteous dignity when he explained, "Sister Young, you know that I don't approve of gossip, but when I see with my own eyes, one of my own flock start to stray from the straight and narrow path, it is my Christian duty to stop evil when I see it.

Ary's hands started to tremble so that he cup clattered on the saucer before she could put it down. "What has happened?" she asked.

"Well, this is really a matter that I prefer to take up with the man of the house, but since this matter needs immediate attention, I'll tell you... even though it is somewhat of a delicate nature."

By this time, Ary's face had become white with fear and her heart was beating furiously. "Go on, Brother Johnson."

"First, I think you had better send the little one out of hearing. This isn't a matter for such young ears to hear."

Ary sent Janie out to play and when the child was out of hearing, the minister continued. "Well, Sister Young, this concerns Fredda May."

"My goodness, what's that girl been up to now?"

"Well, when I was about visiting the sick and making my regular rounds yesterday, I passed by that house of sin on the outskirts of town and who did I see sitting on the steps and talking and laughing with those scarlet women but Freddie May. There she was, just as big as life and with no shame to her, talking to those jezzbells in the broad light of day. I'll tell you, Sister, my heart gave a leap to see your daughter sitting in the lap of sin. Well, I went home and I guess I've prayed all night and day about what to do. My duty became clear just as your's must be clear to you... you and Brother Young must chastise that girl before this evil goes any further."

"I will, Brother Johnson, I will. Fredda's just fourteen and I'm sure that she just didn't think about what people would think... I'll talk to her as soon as she comes home. I hope you won't speak to Mr. Young about this. He is so strict with the girls and this would upset him so that he might punish her terribly."

"Sister Young, I don't understand your attitude toward your daughter's disgraceful action! I do believe you don't even intend to speak to Brother Young about it. Sister, do you realize that one of those whores is a Nigger?"

Ary sat there trying to get a grip on her composure and decide what she should do. She remembered how Stanton had once whipped their oldest daughters with a buggy-whip because they were holding hands with boys.
There was just no telling what he would do to Fredda when he heard about this. How could she stop the preacher from telling him. All at once it dawned on her... the only reason the preacher could have had for going down that dead-end road was to visit the whore house. It is the only house on that road! Ary stood up, and turned her back to the preacher before she said, "I must have your promise that you won’t tell Mr. Young about Fredda."

"Sister, you certainly don’t have my promise that I won’t speak to your good husband about this matter. I feel it is my Christian duty to speak to him."

"Then, Brother Johnson, I might point out to Mr. Young that it is sure peculiar that you would be a visiting down that road because only the Madame and her girls live there. Mr. Young and the other elders might be curious about who you were visiting and feel that it’s their Christian duty to ask you a few questions." The minister jumped up and grabbed his hat. "Sister, I... I... I bid you good day."

"And good day to you, Brother Johnson."

The preacher rushed indignantly out of the house, got into his car slamming the door behind him, and roared away in a red dusty cloud. Amy was still sitting at the kitchen table resting her head in her hands, when Fredda returned from the store. "Mama I hurried as fast as I could. I’m sorry I took so long. I ran most of the way back. Mr. Harold didn’t have any more thread the exact color, but I think I got a pretty good match. Look, what do you think?" she said, holding the thread out for her mother’s approval.

Ary lifted her head and looked into her daughter’s eager face, freckled and flushed from the long hot walk.

"You didn’t wear your bonnet," she said, "You will never be a lady, will you?" Then in a sudden burst of anger, she slapped the spool of thread out of Fredda’s hand and screamed, "Why did you go to the whore house?"

Fredda gasped, "Who told you?"

"The preacher told me he saw you there yesterday. Why were you there?"

"It’s a short cut from school to here, Mama! But, I didn’t see the preacher’s car—he must have been walking."

"You are going to drive Mama to an early grave. You just don’t think, child. A girl’s reputation is all she’s got and once it is ruined—Fredda, a good man will only take to wife a woman he’s proud to be seen with. He won’t marry a girl the whole towns talking about. A bird don’t fly so high that its tail don’t follow and a girl that has a bad reputation can’t go far enough to lose her bad reputation either. What do you have to day for yourself young lady?"

"Nothing, I guess."

"Why did you stop to talk to them—you knew people would talk?"

"I just didn’t think about that. I’m sorry Mama."

"You knew that respectable people don’t talk to them."

"Yes mam, I guess I did."

"Well, then why in the world did you?"

Fredda felt so guilty—so ashamed. Her throat began to lump up and her eyes began to fill with tears and she bowed her head to avoid her mother’s accusing stare.

"Answer me, young Lady! Tell me why you did what you did! Look at me!"

Fredda slowly raised her head and with tears trickling down her cheeks, she answered her Mother in a choked whisper, "They always look so lonely Mama. Nobody else in town will talk to them. I stopped to talk to them because I felt sorry for them. That’s all, Mama, that’s all!"
Science-Fiction: to George O.

Zero one-hundred hours.
Noon revitalization over,
And group age twelve,
(The pre-pubescent boys)
Amuse themselves
With cybernetic toys.

"Prepared Ova in Cubical,"
By ninety-seven Dalí, decorates
The walls. A new Amusical,
Entitled "Quadrilinears,"
Runs amorphous in the halls.

On the walk the worker-drones in files
Are shuffling to assignments
With acquiescent smiles.

For an instant a negligent Administrator
Pauses for a breath by the environmental filter.
The eminent glow of red from the radiation shield
Outlines the wrinkles on his face,
Like legends of the Mars-canals.
In his pause
He remembers the air around sunrise,
Seasons. Fresh rivers. Summer storms.
Caterpillar Days.
The Administrator is reverent.

W. W. Pratt, Jr.

For Cleopatra the Whore

Restless comes the night in Matamoros
And scorns to know her own debauched children.
Sweaty hands take dolares, adore us,
Suntanned phantoms in sneakers and teeshirts.
Carta Blanca beer hardly tastes like anything;
It’s cheap and lets you stay and talk to whores
You can’t afford. To this edge many cling,
Despising their lives, selling, buying love.
My friend has engaged one with stiff bleached hair;
He retreated still staring at Cleopatra,
Who’s talking to me, a coy Latin teacher
Of life arts. She said eight; I said—for love—
At which she patted my arm and told me
That love is dinero. I want more of
Each, I said, and buying another beer,
Watched her search for luck’s gift. Her powdered neck
Twists; she leaves to answer the dollarred back.

Mark Pittel
3rd Place Award
Poetry

About Adolescence

A straggly-haired tomboy with a chaotic soul hurls
savage screams at her brother,
Then turns and with peacock poise walks away
Laden with the fury of childhood and the promise
of other passions.

She speaks a language misunderstood by all who
know her -
Except for Charley the Mockingbird or Harvey the
Armadillo or all the creatures that lie under
the yard
Who were loved to death and buried with tears.

Screeching laughter and watery sobbing must have
sought a common dwelling place,
Paid the rent for a while,
Then engaged in endless battle -
Vacating the premises for rare moments,
Mournfully leaving tranquillity in their place.

Sherry Ward
OFFSPRING

Cardinals, bees, gold-budding trees;
A shimmering light athwart the porch;
A zephyrus, a transient breeze,
Pale butterflies, be-ruffled peas;

Young fiddle-fern, snowdrop demure,
Dutch iris' slender, ice-blue torch;
Alfred, crowned; azaleas sure;
Pearblossom bride's white-lace allure; --

Conundrum this, to teach, to tease:
Drab February gave us these?

William Powell
Zerospect: through the green window

1.
The giant certainty of the noon-hour,
   Seen from the downtown diner
Through the green tinted window,
   Is diffused. Clouds, like tossed-off nylons
Floating in the chemical water of a fountain,
   Become a collection of greens,
   Like the walls of institutions.

Through the green window in metered steps
   Minted faces of hurriers after produce,
Maidens, relentless to become consumers,
   Children anxious to learn shopping.

I am the one in the corner,
   With his elbows sticking on a vinyl tablecloth.
I am a King of Sorts amid the slick decor
   Awaiting sandwiches and soda —
Assuming hues from dull rays
   That filter past on coffee stains
   In ashen greens and greys.

2.
   Once I was the center of the Universe
   In Time beyond my eyes, I ruled
   with decrees that were monosyllables
   And a pair of buttery thighs.

   I was deposed. With comrades
   I was seated at the round table
   To the left of the King.
   I became Gawain on a noble jag,
   Adventurer,
   But still inside the ring.

3.
   Later, when my own insights betrayed me,
   I became Alfred, shrinking inside my trousers,
   Or a suspended Jesus when he forgot himself
   And almost became a man, and cried out.
   But I made no sound
   As I looked at Death under my own hat,
   And unutterably despaired.

4.
   Should I leave my vantage point behind the green window,
   Or should I wait for a Sign?
   I wait, and ah, my likeness, a Sign comes.
   True light slid over a stranger’s shoulder
   As he opened the door of the diner,
   And I saw you, Mon Semblable, in the glass,
   And there was pinkness in your flesh.

   A short glimpse that was not green
   Looked inside the diner and said to me,
   “Identity.”

   W. W. Pratt, Jr.
2nd Place Award
Poetry

NAVAHO POEM

In spring, the planting season,
we sing and dance
as the ancients did,
and ask the God of Corn
to grow yellow grains in green shucks,
while the lizard lies sleeping in the sand,
and tumbleweeds travel the path of the wind.

At night, by our blue and yellow fires
we ask of heaven
and the wise ones say
that it is life in the sky that is
as smooth and blue as the stones in our silver belts,
while the lizard lies sleeping in the sand,
and tumbleweeds travel the path of the wind.

Terry Lee Morrison
Spurlock

Hope
I must
Have/Hope

To Be

My Wife
Was filthy
With hope

Greedily
She sponged up
Every trace of its stain

And left

Gordon Hutson

Iambic Transparencies

These poems are iambic transparencies,
Projections of my life in ten beat lines.
A flickering bulb of memory throws
The outline up on a wavering wall,
Catching the folly in nakedest form.
The words are frames in hope strung together;
The lines are my picture postcards made from
Some amateur snapshots of existence.

Mark Pittel
The Mandeville Market
(First Day)

The casbah could be no less a mystique
Than the teeming market of Mandeville,
Guards outside by a dark enigma
Who pipes on a Hemeny flute.
He makes strange music with an enchantress
Who lures with her eyes and her tambourine.
A stranger and his shillings soon must part - verdad?
The sin blasts me as I am pushed inside
Amid a world made of noise and straw
Intricately woven into hats and baskets and dolls,
Their colors screaming to be bought.
Mosaics of red and yellow fruit activate my taste
While bins of blossoms make painted patterns on my mind.
"Oh Lady, buy from me, buy from me,"
Circe redoubled entreats.
Irresolutely I pass on to displays of gaudy trinkets
And objects which have no names,
Necklaces of seeds hanging all about like pagan rosaries,
And who knows what vices come from under the counter.
Scores of garments hang overhead like political drapery
Whose folds conceal sleazy dresses and suits
From my curious eyes,
Yet each item is precisely crowned and accounted for
By its pusher.
Gleaming black faces expand to reveal white smiles
Which surround me on all sides;
Luminous erbs that momentarily lock with mine
Seem to inquire, "mullet?"
Who are these people with live chickens under their arms?
And these with geats on strings?
And here a pen of orderly pigs- Ulysees' men?
I clutch my pocketbook tightly.
The impersonal shoving begins again,
The strong but not unpleasant odor of life rising
Upward from bodies pressed so close together
That one gigantic creature has been created
With 1000 arms and legs prepelling it forward
An inch at a time.

(Second Day)

The sights, smells and sounds are the same.
The only difference is
Me.
Today, I buy.

Beverly Jackson
IN AN ENGLISH GARDEN

In an English garden after tea
two strolled beneath the garden trees
and peeked about with pasty dreams.
One tree whose leaves were dark and green
with pointed tongues, spoke to them,
"I have the fruit where fruits begin."
The woman timidly touched the flesh
of this fruit of fruits. It came loose, fresh
and full of nectar. Fruit in hand
she nibbled and gave it to the man.
New dreams arose that were not weak
as the tinge of nectar touched their cheeks.

Terry Lee Morrison

TWO, WITH UNSUNNED ARMS

Two, with unsunned arms, walk between
the orchard trees with crooked charms,
and over last winter’s branches lying lean
and black on the ground unalarmed.

As April zephyrs thread the green sleeves
of ancient boughs, a blossom, white
and balmy, falls from among the leaves
like a feather-white dove adrift in flight.

The offering is taken, crushed between
their breasts as they embrace beneath
the knotty eyes of the orchard. Green
leaves fall; they laugh at every leaf.

Above, a white bird with black eyes
shifts his shadow across their forms.

Terry Lee Morrison
SONG OF THE ELF OF JOY

Place your tears inside this leaf,
and float them down the forest stream,
and let them turn and turn beneath
the moon until they turn to green.

Then lift the leaf out of the stream,
and place the droplets on your floor,
and count them one by one, and dream,
and I may knock upon your door.

Terry Lee Morrison
Sonnet- Written After Having Seen Romeo and Juliet

I know my whole life depends on my love;
There is no possibility, no chance,
And no reason that does not lie above
The sordidness that veils all, like a trance
Seeking to besmear the transcending beauty
With everday ugliness. My one hope,
To have my breathing ebb with her each sigh,
Flow and break on her joy. The telescope
That my love holds will locate my movement
In a kaleidoscope of fidelity,
Showing each future day a way to vent
My longing to belonging and be
A sometimes smiling man for whom all life
Rests with a fair one, a woman, his wife.

Mark Pittel

DECEMBER LOVE POEM

Lacking a jacket, I
wince at the steel shavings of
winter wind, and
shiver under
harshly cut clouds that
lie in the sky like
jagged blocks of ice
placed in a
hard polished porcelain bowl.

December weather sends me to
my love, who will hold me with arms
as soft and smooth as feathers
on the breast of a warm bird.

Terry Morrison
"SLAM!"

"Hell," he thought, as the pre-supper orchestra began to tune up, "so much lousy noise." He opened his eyes and closed them again, letting a vapor of dreams wash against the back of his eyes. He had slept all day, again, like yesterday and the day before. "How can you sleep so long, Grandpa?" Jeff had wanted to know. That's easy enough, boy. Easier to sleep with old memories than get up a fight a future. He had more memories than future now anyway.

The sun was burning its way into the horizon, bloodying the fields with daggers of orange-red flame. He watched the red haze roll into the room and wondered if hell looked like this, all hot and hazy with rusty sparks flying against a glassy interior. He glanced at the glass with his teeth in it and watched it turn from a golden cider to a red burgundy wine, with his pearly-whites grinning wickedly at him from the bottom of their bloody glass prison. He never knew why he bought them. They always made his mouth feel like he had been munching on ground glass. "Funny thing, though, what vanity drives a silly old fool to do." But Emy was right, he did look pretty hideous, like a dried up old yellow crab-apple with a hole punched in it. He used to scare the little ones like that, but now they were too big for that. Now they, like their parents, just shook their heads and clucked their tongues at the foolishness of an old man.

He held his hands out and looked at them. "Sure don't take long." Sixty years seems like six anymore. He traced the bulging blue vein quivering down the back of his hand. Their ruddy strength had long since given way to a yellow wrinkling and slim deterioration that gave them an almost effeminate look. "Look like they should have a flower in them 'stead of a shovel." He held them out straight in front of him and they shook a little, just a little. Then he knotted one into a fist. He looked at it strangely, as though that yellow wrinkled thing were a foreign form attached to the end of his bony arm. "A fist, Ha!" "A woman's fist, maybe," closed so weakly he could blow through it, "I can't even...," he heard a monotonous buzz and cocked his head sideways, like a sparrow, listening.

He saw a fly attach itself to the ceiling and still leisurely along upside-down in slow circles. He tried to imagine being so small and so fast and walking upside-down on a cracked old ceiling. The fly righted itself and made a three-point landing on the sheet. He watched it, so tiny and delicate, Waltzing vainly over his own bed, pruning its fuzzy antennae with infinitesimal black fingers, flicking out a sticky black tongue and rubbing its hairy hind legs together. Its cocky vanity amuzed him and he grabbed at it. He could feel its tiny tickling feet and inquisitive antennae exploring the
sweaty crevices of his wrinkled hands. Then, easily, it found an escape route and buzzed off in a victorious whine toward the ceiling.

He opened the fly's ineffectual prison and put it behind his head, then lay back again. Emy busily drummed out a tiny symphony as she worked. She always did that. Always smiled, too, like her mother, both so like little birds, always chattering, working, moving, never still or idle. She'd push that curl of mousey brown hair back from her snapping black eyes and flash a grin, like an angel with her slightly tarnished halo askew. Lately, he'd even taken to calling her Annie, her mother's name, but she pretended she hadn't heard. He watched the wispy darkness float in the open window, then closed his eyes. A light softness diffused past his eye-lids and wrapped around his thoughts.

The sun was nearly gone now, just barely tucked behind the trees with tiny golden wisps weaving through the branches. A gentle breath of night air ran its airy fingers through the soft lifeless white hair on the pillow and silhouetted the sheet, shroud-like, against the body, then sighed past the curtains into the starless dark night.

GATHERING

Old men, feet and legs outspread,
Joints eased in the sun
In league with soft-spoken stories
Of Calmer days;
Yet days of courageous deeds
Layed out in great detail –
Seldom single-tracked,
So many attractive sidings
Are passed each day –
All golden in minds...Misty minds.

Charles F. Goode, Jr.

Spring Planting

Gaping holes in the frozen whiteness
Bleed back soil.
The earth receives the seed,
Holding in her dark grasp
A seeming death.
Warmth and moisture seep
To touch the closed capsule
But the wounded earth heals slowly.
Green sleeps within brown --
Time must pass in generation of life.
Then pale roots will reach toward fruition,
The germ of harvest in their twisted coils.

Carol Barbay
"The Gulf Coast"

Baked by the sun;
Drenched by torrential rains;
Flat, unrelieved stretches of earth;
Billowy clouds, knarled, ancient trees,
Bent and twisted into eery shapes;
Brahma bulls and calves,
Grazing successors of the Long Horn,
Mesquite bushes, sandy vastness,
The Gulf;
Tempestuous, restless, old;
Beautiful in its savagery,
In its season spawning hurricanes;
Raging, tearing, in its furious path
To its predestined meeting with the shore;
Meeting in an orgiastic climax of death,
Passing on, leaving the earth torn, sated,
bruised.

Mrs. Linde S. Bennett
i fell asleep in the same russian snow
that froze aunt may

in the past cold we were allowed
to wear our socks to bed
under fancy patch quilts and i
got mickey mouse ears for christmas.
light bulb’s frame, a soapy portrait,
my white face catching a moth in a jar
and saving the prize
with a kink from a nigger’s neck.
i once swam the sandy creek with
booker t, washington booker.
the first time i saw a black butt. but
the last until the army got mine
and i got whipped for it.

we got a t.v. in ’51,
loud enough to shake the pines,
that year i walked into the world,
down to galveston from huntsville by bus,
i spent my last for picture postcards,
my youngman’s dreams in those cards.

had hell hitchhiking home
so hot, beer’s bottle foam.
the sun belched glare on chrome.
the sky was an inverted dome.
loud enough to shake the pines.
all words are lost in sound.
years past and

My Face is winter, summer, share cropped
and shows the ruts of its weathering.
my post cards pinned up a warping well.
three months cold, fifty year’s snow.
and i sleep,
caught like a fish in a duck’s gullet.

Charles Hopkins
I am Strangely Tempted

I am strangely tempted to affirm the historic truth
that, quite possibly exists abstractly,
perfect and remote in the imagination...
mellifluous optimism joins the fissures –
a windy attic is filled with lovely objects,
and a realm of impossible decisions;

to keep the invisible,

split the kernels of life

with dreamless dark,

dank and damp on the edifice

of philosophic notions.

plasma transfusions of unidentifiable type,
father an entire conglomerate of wasted visions,
devoid of the culture that spawned them,
monsters are born, hideous and blind,
in the twilight region of the blazing fire disk,
a dominion in eternity of the dark other –
vibrating on different tympanums, different frequencies,
Nothing is so lame as lateness,
all that is lacking is man.

Dennis Epps

Id Music

The horizon is a line --
a brink which is not, necessarily, an end,
the rainbow long sough beams as an apparition
of ghostly memories,
burning in the fires of ten thousand eyes.
the rosetta stone glows in carmethene,
illuminating cornered nooks which indicate nothing,
a rocket upward zooming, high atop a trail of wispish vapor,
splayed with soft tendrils of smoke,
seeking the ontogeny of our troubled times,
to recapitulate in the faces of future progeny,
opaque cloudiness of colloidal inconsistencies,
fertilized with the union of sperm and egg,
bears the generation of light, children of the morning,
and of the night.
a ceremony of birth exists only in the mind,
translated from an ancient language of term sibilancy --
a foetus in the womb, a shell of distropic dynasty,
helpless as the winged eye fleeing from the prehistoric bird,
as its constant heartbeat transmits the pulse,
that cups tomorrow from the thorn of air.

Dennis Epps
That most excellent king,
Oedipus Rex,
Had an aberrant thing
Regarding sex.

Beverly Jackson
effection

we spent our day in the grain,
with a color-creased sky of rice birds,
in pandoratic flight
like freckles, a speckled eye’s view.

we spent night before the screen,
with beveled backs, we saw sinatra
kiss maureen o’sullivan.
and shortly after, i kissed you.

Charles Hopkins

I would like to apologize to Mr. David Cammack
for the similarities in three lines of my poem
"The Snake is Long" to lines in poems
previously published by Mr. Cammack.

Dennis E. Epps.
Seas

Seas that stretch away, curving concrete walls
That hold the verdant saline waters fast
From the sorrowing land. And suns are balls
Of morning that shine on the many worlds.

A life is a drift onwards to rocking
Streams of yesterday’s wishes, all aflow
For the fast green ocean, minnows knocking
Noses of slimy silver on water roofs.

Only as lovers do the bright streams meet,
Dance above and below the dead ocean,
Fish and gulls are angels; a wing is fleet,
And fins are vessels of love, truly chaste.

If ever called upon to found a cult,
I would make the seagull my special god
And sacrifice to him with no consult
Youthy tears, sole shadows on the water.

Mark Pittel

SHALLOW WATERS BEACH

The children that come to shallow waters beach
watch the brows of the breaker waves
whipped white like cotton candy,
and with riant cries they clap their hands.
But I, being much older and wiser,
will laugh and think out loud:
This isn’t cotton candy, children,
But the salted tips of the sea.
But children are children and like the snails
(t heir shells being ages three thru six)
they will not listen to me.
Invariably, they ask me once or twice
why I don’t seine the sea
for fish as the fisherman do,
and I always tell them that
what I have seen on the surface
is sufficient to see.
And I direct them down the shore
safely away from the sea,
and we search for sand dollars
and other small things.

Terry Lee Morrison

- 39 -
Legacy

To you, for the night when I’m not there
I leave a fleeting leaflike remembrance
Of earlier joys and the notion fair
That I am again coming, now to stay.

And certain that a darker day will come,
We must touch each other more softly now.
Appreciation is forever born dumb;
Sorrow is the teacher that gives it speech.

It’s the prospect of being remembered
That delineates the way life must go.
We leave our most private things unintended
And look to perform more memorable acts.

So we are acting scenes for each other,
Creating moments which our memories
Will digest as todays, going further
Than the actors, who must grow old and die.

When gone, as one day I must surely be,
I will have left for you some images
Which will constitute a composite me
For your personal use in after years.

Mark Pittel