



**NORTHERN LIGHTS . 85**

# NORTHERN LIGHTS

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Copy Editor/Layout: Karen Atwood. Faculty sponsors: Daniel Atwood, James LaMalfa.



*Cheryl Stank*

## QUINTET . betsy la malfa

It was one of those dark Chicago evenings as I ventured home on the El. Since it was after midnight, the car I entered was nearly empty. After choosing a seat along the periphery, I recalled the mundane events which had made up the day. As I did so, my thoughts were gently distracted by the pungent scent of oranges. A small, elderly rabbi sat at the end of the car quietly peeling his fruit.

The odor of the orange filled the air and diffused as a gas might have done. A mental chain of gases, fumes, trains, and Jews strung through my mind, but was dismissed by the jerk of the halting train.

The doors rolled open, and a blitheful couple swung up from the platform. They alighted on some seats nearby and proceeded to whisper whimsically into one another's ears, or so I gathered from the twittering and ogling that followed each kiss. I became embarrassed both for myself, being alone, and for them, completely oblivious that anyone else was in the car.

The rabbi was still sectioning his orange. The door slid open, and a fellow lurched down the aisle with the momentum of the train and took the seat across from me. He caught my eye, for I perceived in him the odd combination of a nonchalant demeanor with an intense gaze. That gaze came from a pair of deep-set azure eyes which reached from within as they penetrated the world. His body was lean and of medium stature. I was busily studying his handsomely chiselled face when he looked up at me. I averted my eyes to the floor where bits of refuse took on artificial importance.

The air hung heavy in the car. I could smell the dregs of the empty booze bottle wedged between the seat support and the wall. Stale cigarette butts and old gum wrappers were littered about. Sticky footprints wove a pattern through the debris. I chuckled to myself, imagining some great god on high looking down on earth, seeing these same remnants of humankind. I looked up again. The eyes of my quiet friend were still upon me--piercing me, as though he read my thoughts. He turned his attention to the amorous couple who were heaving contented

sighs amid sweltering kisses and then looked back at me. This time I felt I could read his thoughts. Seeing the question framed in his mind, I flushed, knowing the answer as he rose from his seat. He moved toward me, and I felt his warmth as he sat down. As though by some great instinct of nature, we turned to each other and embraced, swept away by a primordial passion. The pulse of the train was our musical accompaniment.

I felt the tempo slow. Consciousness rose in my mind. The train was approaching my stop. We unlocked arms and lay in each other's eyes until the final jolt of the halting train. I arose and took my leave with a fresh sense of promise. I happily noted the rabbi who now slept, fully sated, his orange peels beside him.

## FUNNY MAN . charles willey

Funny? I am!

A funny man they consider me,  
and to hear them laugh  
brings a joy to me.

Funny I may be,  
but to make them laugh,  
I sometimes make an ass of me.

Funny? Maybe, but then  
no one ever tries to see  
inside of me.

Funny, how no one can guess  
just how lonely  
I might be.

I hide it from everyone so very well,  
but trying to hide it from myself,  
that's hell.

## THE NEED TO BE ME . linda bergeson

I feel the need to be  
No one else but me.  
To let my spirit soar,  
To let inspirations roar,  
To let that little light shine  
Because it's only mine!

I feel the need to feel  
As only I can feel,  
To express myself as only I can do,  
And hope that others understand--  
That I feel the need to be  
No one else but me!

## THE REAL ME . linda linczeski

There is someone inside me  
Fighting to get out:  
Someone who doesn't want to be  
Daddy's Little Girl.  
Someone who doesn't want to be  
The Little Woman.  
Someone who doesn't want to be  
The Perfect Mother.

Someone who wants to be Just Me:

To be naughty when the urge strikes,  
To laugh when the joke is funny,  
To cry when the story is sad,  
To be just the real me.

## POETRY . sandra godleske

Putting what i feel  
into words  
any words  
placed any  
                  where  
                  -ever  
i want

no punctuation  
except maybe  
an exclamation point!

no one can tell me  
to capitalize my i's  
or avoid  
ineffective intensifiers,  
really!

i can d a  
                  n g l e my participles  
and use sentence fragments  
; if i want to.

poetry  
defies "proper" english  
and lets me be  
free  
to be  
ME.



*Diane Hoffman*

## MASTERPIECE OF DREAMERS · joseph gerend

When fearless French explorer Nicolet  
Cruised slowly by in 1634  
The site of Marinette along the bay  
To find a golden route to Western shore,

Did he foresee a campus near the sand  
For sons and daughters, progeny of those  
Who slaved to wrest a culture from the land  
And tamed a wilderness from all its foes?

Teeming with life and hope it lies among  
The oaks, and maples, the majestic pine,  
The masterpiece of dreamers old and young,  
A college wedded to a forest shrine.

From French explorer to the age of space,  
Then forward, brave new world, with strength and grace!

(Professor Gerend is a retired member of the campus English  
department.)

## LUNAR RISING · rita klein

Northern lights of shimmering silver,

The moon, a great golden globe,

Rising from the treetops,

Casting off the darkness like a robe.

## WHAT IS ART? . jon huer

A work of art must be aesthetically pleasing. Any work of art must appeal to the universal orderliness and symmetry perceived by the human senses. All sensory perception takes place within the finite limits of time and space in which our reality is made permanent and intelligible. Within these limits lie the inevitable sequences of expectation: one image in painting, one note in music, one element of plot in literature follows another logically. We are irritated by certain "art" works because expected sequences are crudely and consistently violated by seemingly illogical developments in images, notes, or plot.

The requirement that an art be pleasing to our senses does not mean that this is the sole or even dominant factor in aesthetics, for any work intended to please only the senses would become instantly monotonous and boring. Hence, the crucial difference between art and entertainment: the former pleases our senses by making a statement, whereas pleasing our senses is the exclusive function of the latter. In short, sensory pleasure is a means in art, but an end in entertainment.

A work of art must be publicly comprehensible. That an art is intended to appeal to the highest level of human perception and pleasure does not mean that it must be comprehensible only to an elite. On the contrary, one reason for Beethoven's enduring popularity is that his music, while aesthetically noble and pure, is almost spontaneously understandable. Especially in recent times, some artists have attempted acrobatics with images, sounds, and plot arrangements, often in the name of avant garde. While artistic advances often result from experimentation, one eternal obligation of art is that it must remain comprehensible. In the final analysis, any artistic endeavor must depend for its survival upon public acceptance.

A work of art must be a symbolic idealization of life. All works of art must represent, after all, aspects of life that are universally experienced or "experienceable." A work must embody some of the myriad questions, meanings, or values within the range of human experience. Sorrow, happiness, glory, suffering, joy, and wisdom, for example, are not the exclusive

domain of extraordinary individuals. Yet, common human experience itself is not art, for its very commonness is redundant and uninspiring. Life must be idealized symbolically. The artistic statement transcends the individual context and becomes a representation of universal humanity. Thus, the essential ordinariness of life may be transformed--even in despair and defeat--into an ennobling and heroic affirmation.

A work of art must reflect creative craftsmanship. All arts are indelibly marked by the individual character of the artist; the art and the artist are linked as an inseparable whole. Indeed, a work of art is impossible without a particular artist and his craftsmanship. A work of art is not an accidental or random happening. Contrary to popular belief, finger painting and basket weaving are not arts because anyone can perform these activities. Moreover, even a high level of craftsmanship is not a sufficient ingredient for art. Craftsmanship must be combined with creative originality to result in a work which no other person could have produced. For this reason, scientific or technological discoveries, which are often the results of collective efforts and resources, are not ordinarily considered "creative" endeavors.

Artistic creativity may be encouraged and stimulated, but it cannot be "mass-produced." Most creative artists in the past have been free practitioners outside any institutional bounds. And if we take historical evidence seriously, we see that the decline of artistic creativity has coincided with its increasing concentration in universities, government bureaus, and commercial agencies. Standardized rules and routine procedures are inimical, it appears, to artistic creativity and originality.

Creativity exists only in the realm of "ideas," and ideas exist only in art and philosophy. In an age and culture which emphasize "things" more than "ideas," art and philosophy tend to decline while their material counterparts gain increasing importance. Artistic endeavors are forced to take on a "thing-like" frame of reference. A musician, for example, may use the computer for composition. As a result, the nature of genuine art becomes ambiguous, for in the name of advanced artistry, every clever new display is defended as artistic. Thus, tech-

nique, rather than substance, gradually assumes greater significance in contemporary art.

Much of treasured human art was produced in periods of intense competition between conflicting sets of ideas, each asserting superiority. In their creative solitude, artists responded to the inspiration and inevitability of these contending ideas, and their artistic endeavors can be grouped together in particular epochs, traditions, or schools. Every work of art is a philosophical as well as an aesthetic expression, an attempt to immortalize a view, a statement, a way of life, as the artist sees it.

Today, the art world is institutionalized, commercialized, and technologically sterile; individual artists are doing their best to succeed with clever techniques rather than lofty ideas. With "ideas" giving way to "things," and idealism giving way to practicality, the very meaning of man's artistic experience faces an uncertain and unsettling future.

### PROMISE OF TOMORROW . mary ann van acker

North winds batter a  
leaf held fast atop an old  
oak tree clinging to  
yesterday . . . as buds slumber  
in promise of tomorrow.

(Van Acker's lyric is written in the Japanese verse form known as tanka.)

### FOR BACH . david giebler

Happy 300th, Johann Sebastian *D. Giebler*

17 March 1985 Marietta

### TAPS . lisa bell

Long, mournful sound:  
The procession moves by,  
Silver and gold arpeggios.



## **DESERT REMAINS**

**. janice erickson**

Aging bones picked clean  
Scattered along the desert floor  
Extinguished dreams.

## **ACTING . linda linczeski**

The speckled killdeer

limps with broken wing

to fool the hungry hawk.

## **SEAGULL . dianne smith**

a castaway  
relies

on a white sea  
gull

glistening with sun  
light

against the blue  
skies.

(Smith's poem is a copy-write of William Carlos Williams'  
"The Red Wheelbarrow.")

## **INSATIABLE MONSTER . pat rondeau**

The ugly monster eats, and eats, and eats,  
biting flesh, bone, and blood.  
It consumes the thoughts of  
family, relatives, and friends.

It devours days, weeks, and months,  
nibbling away at goals, plans, retirement.  
The hungry, unsatisfiable monster  
just eats, and eats, and eats.

## **GRAVE ANXIETY . steven demcak**

Entering the gate,  
Walking slowly,  
Flashlight shaking,  
Constantly looking back,  
Wondering,  
Has your moment arrived?

## **SUN SPARKLES . linda linczeski**

Bright morning sunshine

on the waves

sparkles like a handful of diamonds.



Jayson Heckel

## "THE VOICE" IN THE WILDERNESS . frances lashcraft

That winter while I was living a picturesque life at the end of an impassable half-mile driveway, my favorite part of the Village Voice was the back cover Bulletin Board. The birthday greetings, the announcements for "Jews for Jesus" meetings, and those romantic, hopeful "I-saw-you-in-a-phone-booth-through-a-window-of-a-train-going-10mph-and-can't-forget-what-your-eyes-said-pls-call" messages were the perfect contrast to my life in the drafty, 150-year-old farmhouse in Neshkoro.

No doubt that would have disappointed my friend, who having received my "build a boat and see God" epistles, sent the gift subscription in hopes that the Voice would ward off cultural and political atrophy and remind me that not everyone was enamored of boat-building.

The group with which I worked was pretty cosmopolitan (a philosophy major from Chicago, a mathematician from New Jersey), yet the talk at our many gatherings was mostly of boats, tools, and getting wood in. No one had a television set, the nearest cinema was 25 miles away, and the neo-pioneer life was a time-consuming routine. But we were surrounded by beautiful boats and exotic woods and inspired by a 78-year-old German/Greek master builder who never complained that the unheated sheds were cold. Who cared about politics?

There were no jazz clubs, no health spas, no dance concerts, no French restaurants. A night out meant a family-style fish fry--seconds and sometimes thirds of everything, and bowls of tartar sauce. Boots and stocking caps were de rigueur, and for me, showers were a once-a-week treat at a neighbor's house. What could I want at Macy's?

Skimming the World's Best-Read Classifieds with column upon column of "bike messengers wanted" and studio apartments renting for more than I made in a month, I realized how much more satisfying it was being poor in Neshkoro. Those sometimes outrageous, somehow sad personal ads made living with no anonymity almost bearable. Who needed to advertise?

Up the road a car could be heard coming, and if it slowed for the turn onto Chaffee Creek and then stopped at the end of the drive, I would have time to dress, wash a few glasses, and stoke up the stove. I could walk out the back door and roam the surrounding 100 acres on my skis, following deer trails through fields and thick pine forests, awed by such stillness. I could spend the day out cutting wood and not see a soul. I could leave my unplumbed house for the weekend and not have to worry about pipes freezing up. I did not have to lock my door or deal with traffic. "Out there," beyond Neshkoro, were telephones, hot running water, air travel, and Madison, an hour away. With all this, who needed New York?

Nine years later, the Voice arrives at my P.O. box in the heart of downtown Marinette. Even under Rupert Murdoch's ownership, the paper has changed little. I read the political articles with more attention, reassured that the "Left" (now somewhat fragmented) has survived my apathy. There are still critiques of bands and books I have never heard of, foreign films I will never see. I immerse myself in the diversity and then turn to the local paper, hoping that the movie fare has finally changed. Ah, wilderness?

## THE FREEWAY . shirley eklund

A string of diamonds . . .

Cars lined on a dark freeway

Going nowhere.



## LOVE IN THE KITCHEN . james la malfa

Harry Seagrave threaded his way across the kitchen floor, feeling a stranger in a strange land. Adversaries surrounded him. In the corner, the auto-toaster glared at him, seemingly ready to pounce. Next to it, the squat laser-oven glowered; its yellow cyclopean eye winked dully in the half light.

Did these intelligent machines talk among themselves, exchanging tidbits of gossip? If so, how far did their network extend--next door? down the block? over the entire city? Perhaps, Seagrave mused, these electronic serfs would rise up in rebellion someday, overwhelming their human masters.

He suppressed a sudden chill. Uneasy forebodings lapped at his consciousness like indolent waves from a fetid lagoon. He wandered disconsolately about the clinically-efficient kitchen. He noted the gleaming chrome that edged the neon-colored plastic appliances. Jack Fox, sales rep for the Magi-Mite Home Improvement Center, had promised Seagrave and his wife that THE KITCHEN could run itself. It proved to be no idle boast. If he made a wrong move in THE KITCHEN, Seagrave discovered, he would be corrected by a soft, maternal voice emanating from somewhere in the ceiling grill.

Just the other day, Harry had tried to make toast on his own.

"Don't put bread in my slot that way," the toaster admonished.

"Rotate each slice halfway through the cycle to obtain an even brown. Better yet, keep your hands off and let me do it!"

Seagrave had acquiesced.

Was it his imagination, or were the machines' voices changing? Somehow, of late, they seemed less patient, tinged with a metallic edge. No longer forbearing advisers, they had begun to demand compliance.

Harry recalled with distaste an encounter the night before. The vari-matic washer had insisted that he was putting too much soap in a load of clothes. It angrily punctuated its warning with a mild electric shock. The charge hadn't been painful, but it was a foretaste of things to come.

Seagrave nervously opened the plastic wrapper around a loaf of bread. He thought he detected a maternal sigh venting impatience with a clumsy child. He broke out in a cold sweat, fumbling with a slice of Mother Wheat's all-natural bread.

"Oh, Christ," Harry swore, as the bread slipped from his fingers. A raucous klaxon pierced the silence as a red beacon began to pulse over the Dial-a-Meal console.

"Alert, alert, alert," intoned THE KITCHEN's strident voice.

Seagrave turned and ran for the relative safety of a closet as any army of electronic mice poured out of an orifice in the wall. Like a school of ravening piranhas, the tiny robots attacked the errant carbohydrate, devouring it in seconds. As they dashed for the wall, a single bewhiskered rodent vacuumed the area, removing the last few crumbs.

Not until the alarm ceased its ululations did Seagrave dare venture forth. He sprinted for the back door, yelling over his shoulder.

"I'm leaving, Doris. Meet you for breakfast at McDonald's . . . As for you, KITCHEN, may you rot in hell. May your circuits short--and your diodes get cancer."

Laughing hysterically, he dove for the garage, vaulted into his car, and rammied the seatbelt home. Gunning the engine, he careened down the street. Over the sound of the racing motor, Seagrave could just make out the great motherly voice of THE KITCHEN.

"Naughty, naughty, Harry," it admonished. "You must control that temper or you'll have an accident . . . See you tonight, dear. Have a pleasant day."

**CHRISTMAS POTPOURRI**  
**. louise kovach**

Cathedral bells,  
Sweet tastes, woody smells,  
Colors of cranberry and evergreen.  
Midget lights twinkling,  
Store Santas winking,  
Little children's faces gleam in dreams.  
Hustle bustle, hustle bustle,  
Pray, what is the reason?  
'Tis the Christmas Season.

Flavors savored,  
"Spirits" favored,  
Store registers ring merry.  
Candy canes, cookie wreaths, mistletoe and holly,  
Parties, parties everywhere, making people jolly,  
Except for lonely souls, whose watchful eyes are bleary.  
Hustle bustle, hustle bustle,  
I see a multitude of reasons  
For treasuring the season.

Hearthsides glow,  
Warmed by love of family, friend, and forgiven foe.  
The world lies silent and glimpses peace.  
Treasured gifts come from the heart,  
Cherished thoughts of love imparted,  
All because of long-lost memories.  
Hustle bustle, hustle --  
Now I recall the solitary reason  
For the beauty of this season.

**'TIS THE SEASON . joan bearson**

Run! Push! Shove! Grab!

I got it! ah--

All this for a Cabbage Patch Doll!



*Christine Olsen*

**CHRISTMAS MORNING**  
**. mary ann van acker**

The presents all opened,  
the child plays intently  
with an empty box.

## **GIVE TO ME A SMILE** **. lori davidson**

Your smile embraces me  
and penetrates what I thought  
was impervious.  
Gleaming and glowing,  
it reaches down to my soul,  
warms its way into my being,  
and tickles my heart,  
just enough to create  
a rare moment's sensation  
of pure happiness.

## **FRIENDS FOREVER . charlene malone**

On the street below  
where the lights are dim, and the wind is cold,  
a young man is walking  
  
I stand near the window, watching  
with worried eyes, a young man in pain  
like a sad movie I saw long ago  
  
He's crying so hard, he looks  
so alone, so afraid,  
as though his world had collapsed around him

But now he stops  
as if to hear a voice . . . calling him  
He stares a long while, and I hear nothing

He starts to walk again, with a halting step  
He's holding out his hand . . .  
I think he'll be all right.

I remember myself  
on that same dirty pavement, years ago:  
how I cried, felt that pain

and fell, giving up  
and how, for long moments,  
I asked God

to please take my life,  
like he took my best friend's  
in a cruel way, a wicked way.

I remember then hearing, softly but surely,  
the voice of my friend, and how, tenderly  
she took my hand, lifted me up

She walked with me  
giving me courage and strength  
taking the tears from my eyes.

I thank you, my friend,  
and that young man's friend, too  
I never knew . . .

. . . how much it meant  
when casually we said  
We'd be friends forever.

**LEAVES FALLING**  
**. barbara bommersbach**

When leaves fall from the trees  
And the wind blows softly through your hair  
And night seems to sing peaceful songs  
Songs of sadness  
Songs of joy  
When the wind whistles up his tune  
And the leaves all start dancing  
I sit and look up, watching  
Waiting  
Wondering.  
I ask myself, "What will happen next?"  
Then sit back in my old rocking chair  
Watching  
Waiting  
Wondering.

Only they know, and they won't tell.

**CHANGES . linda linczeski**

The plain brown cocoon  
hangs like a dry leaf,  
waiting for transformation.



*Karen Kawalski*



## ONLY THE BEST . luann dura

Down peeped over my windowsill and attempted to wrap its warmth around me as I dressed. Lost in thought, I fumbled with the buttons of my shirt. Slipping the striped tie around my neck, I moved towards the mirror to make a closer inspection. My eyes moved from my suit to gaze upon the blank face that looked back at me. I searched for a sign of emotion, but there was none. Only emptiness.

The Mass passed quickly. A stranger highlighted my father's life, notes he read from the index card that lay in his hand. "Mister Lawson was a good man," he started. I doubted that he knew my father's first name. ". . . employed for thirty years at . . ." He shouldn't have talked about what my father was, I thought. He should have told them who he was. He should have told them how Dad used to cheer up Mom when she was pregnant with Josh by pressing his ear against her belly and pretending the baby was giving him stock tips. He should have told them about the time Dad helped me build a treehouse so that I could have a special place of my own. He should have told them about the night that the house caught fire and Dad cried because he was so relieved we were all safe. He should have told them this.

The church grew stuffy. The speaker's voice drowned in the sniffing, and my mind drifted. When had I seen Dad last? We used to spend so much time together -- fishing at Bond Falls, deerhunting at the cabin, or just sitting around on a Sunday afternoon watching football. What had happened to us? What had happened to all those afternoons? Had I really become so wound up in myself and my friends that I'd ignored Dad? What was the last thing I'd said to him? I couldn't remember. How long had it been since we'd talked?

The heavy, wooden box was wheeled outside and placed in a car among roses, carnations and daffodils. I followed, my hand touching Mother's trembling back. Faces stared at us as we moved down the aisle. Empty faces.

Relatives I'd never met took my hand or hugged me. "You take care of your mother now, Son. She's going to need you,"

they said. I flashed a painful smile and nodded as their words floated by.

My nose began to burn. I blinked my eyes, trying vainly to remove the mist that was forming there. "Oh, God, not here," I told myself, "not in front of all these people."

My body began to tingle as the strangers came to me one after another. A buzzing sound roared in my ears, so loud that I was sure someone would hear it and notice that I was near fainting. The people kept coming.

I closed my eyes and felt them roll back into their sockets. As the hum engulfed me, my body became entirely numb. In the darkness, I could see my father kneeling beside a mound of freshly turned dirt, his arm propped up by a shovel. I was standing beside him, a weeping child. Then came his deep, soothing voice:

Checkers isn't really dead, Joey. Remember that day we went to the beach and collected seashells? Some of them had a little animal inside, but some were empty. The little animal had gone away. Well, that is what happened to Checkers. The part that we put in the ground was only Checkers' shell. The live part has gone to Heaven.

But why did he have to go, Daddy?

He had served his purpose, Son. That puppy made you very happy. And God was so pleased with him that He wanted Checkers to live in Heaven with Him. You know, Joey, God only takes the best . . . only the best . . . only --

A hand touched my elbow, bringing me back to consciousness. The weary, swollen eyes of my mother peered into mine, drawing from me every bit of strength I had left. I stood struggling under her gaze, unprotected. Then, without my knowledge, a tear escaped, breaking the wall. And I fell into my mother's arms weeping.

In the empty darkness of my mind, my father's voice echoed -- "Only the best, Joey."



Christina Salzman