

A Student Arts  
Publication of  
HMC

# SOL iMpROV



December, 1991

GEVIN



# SOL iMPROV

Volume III, Issue

AN ARTS PUBLICATION OF HMC

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## The Editor's Corner

(Here I am staring at a blank screen at 4:15 AM, but here goes nothin'. )

Once again, ladies and gentlemen, we bring you the wonderful world of SOL iMPROV. This is the second issue of this semester, and I had planned to get this issue ready for the press by 8 PM last night. Unfortunately, human nature has a wonderful way of screwing up the best laid plans.

Anyway, we've got a great collection of short stories, poetry, and art for your enjoyment. Last year's editor, Greg Levin, has been playing with his new "toy" (watercolors) and as a result has created some of the finest work that I've seen in SOL iMPROV—the front cover and background art for Paul Thiessen's poem, "Today (The Moon is Lonely)." Stu Hooper gave us his perspective view of a stairway sometime in the early history of this magazine; his photographs have been published in previous issues of S.i. Our short stories include "A Boy and

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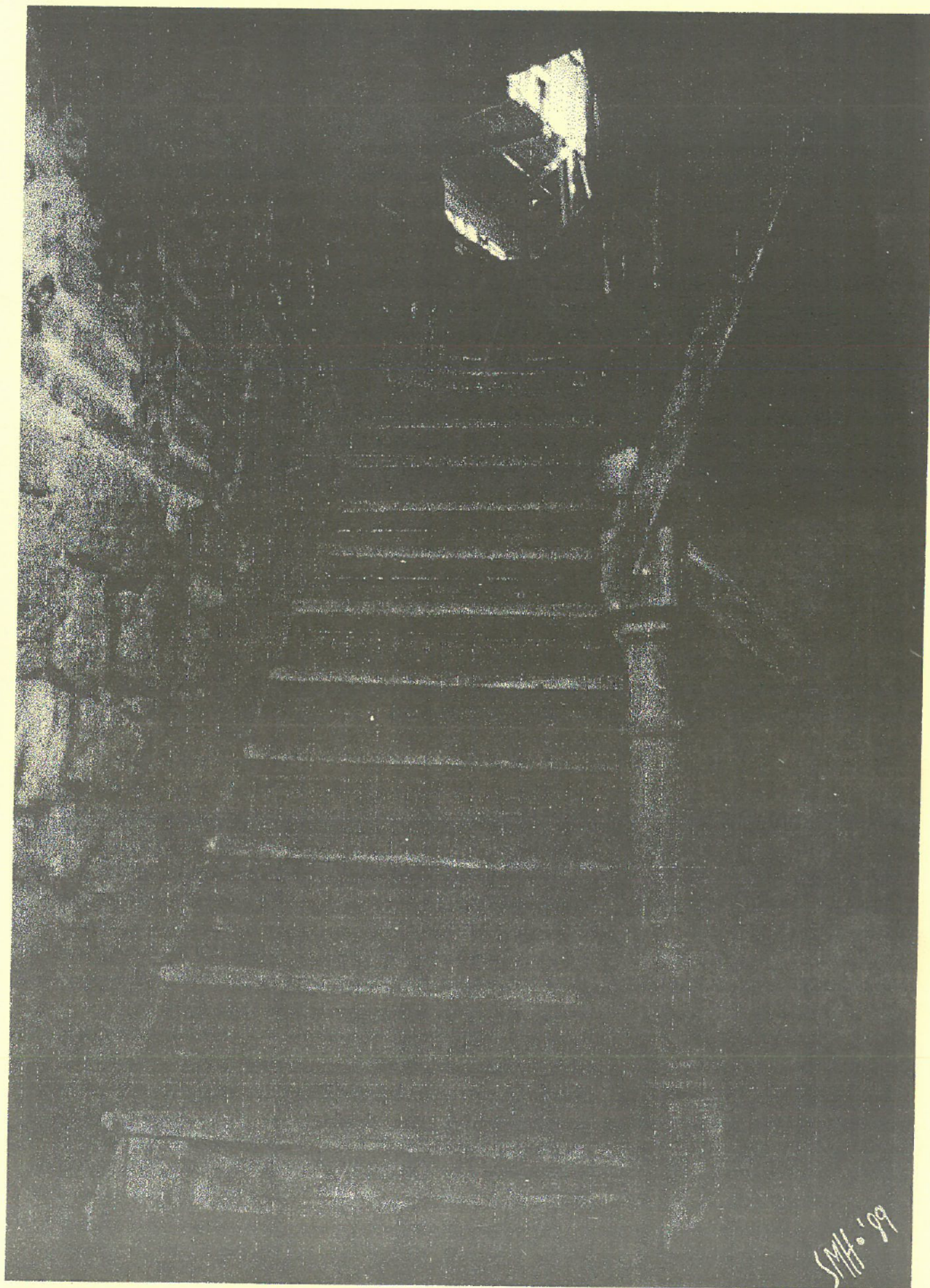
His Rocks" by Loren "Rope Joke" Majersik and "Happy Birthday" by Jocele Wang. We also have an interesting recipe for fun in Mechelle Lewis' "Brian's Sunday Seahawks Football Spaghetti Sauce" (don't try this at home, kids), and a short reflection by Dan McClelland on impatience at Christmastime. In addition to "Today," we also feature the poems "Joshua Tree" by Dave Nash, "Alley Prayer" by Michael Yuan, "Eve" by Eric Pesheck (he also illustrated his poem for us at the last minute—a thousand thanks, Eric!) and a cartoon meditation by

Russell Hamilton, "Why?" Omar Amir and Jocele Wang graced our pages with their artistic creations, and various people contributed spot art that rounds out the various literary pieces.

Since the last paragraph was so long, I guess I'll close with a short paragraph of thank-yous and warm, fuzzy thoughts. First off, I'd like to thank all the contributors who have filled these pages over the past few years; I hope you continue your literary and artistic creativity. I'd also like to thank the staff for putting up with a non-artist for an editor-in-chief. Most importantly, I'd like to thank you, the reader, for your interest in a literary magazine like SOL iMPROV. It's kinda neat to notice that, while the other four colleges have just started their literary periodical, HMC already possesses its own well-established arts magazine—which couldn't be possible without Mudders like you. Good luck on your finals, and see you next year.

*Jonathan*







# A Boy and His Rocks

by Loren Majersik

Once upon a time, there was a small boy. He had much difficulty dealing with the people of the world, so he mostly talked to rocks. Most people find rocks to be boring conversationalists, but somehow this boy was able to bring out the best in them. One day he was discussing the recent events in the village with a sandstone. The stone was concerned with the recent election of Mayor Finneous T. Flabberlip. Mayor Flabberlip was very anti-rock. An unfortunate thing for rocks is the fact that they have very little influence on local politics and the politicians often have very much of an effect on the local rocks. The boy shared the rocks' concerns, because the rocks were friends of his, and if they were all removed from the village, as Mayor Flabberlip planned, the boy would be very lonely. The idea of a massive rock protest came up, but it was abandoned because people would probably not be concerned with a large pile of rocks outside city hall. The sandstone and the boy finally agreed that the only possible course of action was to lock the mayor in a room full of rocks until he finally

understood that they had needs that deserved to be attended to as much as the needs of any man. The plan went into effect late one night when city hall was deserted. The boy snuck in time and time again, each time carrying an armful of the most eloquent and influential rocks he could find. The next morning the mayor walked into his office and stopped after he took a step in because he saw rocks piled up on top of every piece of furniture and covering every inch of the floor. As soon as the mayor stepped in, the boy closed the door and locked it by wedging several conveniently shaped rocks under the door.

"What is the meaning of this?" shouted Mayor Flabberlip.

"We have come to demand justice for all rockkind," said the boy. "These fine and honorable rocks are here to tell you their grievances and convince you that they should have as much protection under the law as any citizen of this village."

"Surely you cannot believe that I will listen to a child and a pile of stones."

"On the contrary sir," piped in an old, wise piece

of granite, "we believe that you will not only listen, but believe that our plight is worth paying attention to. In fact, we not only demand that you abandon your plans to clear the village of rocks, but also that rocks get equal representation on the village council and that rocks be allowed to vote on all village issues, including the election of mayors."

The mayor was startled. He had never heard a rock speak before and had certainly never considered their needs. His thoughts turned quickly to their demands. If rocks could vote for mayor, there would be no way that he would be re-elected. Therefore, his immediate response was, "The things you propose are preposterous. There is no way that rocks will ever be allowed to vote, or even that people will take notice of rocks, except when someone trips over a rock, which is why they must all be removed."

The rocks were not very happy with this response, but they were prepared for it. "Your wife and daughter return from your mother-in-law's house today. Do you know that stretch of the road that goes beneath a cliff? And the



boulder that lies atop that cliff? We have spoken with this boulder and at this moment he intends to roll down the cliff and crush the carriage that your family is riding in as they pass by. The only way to stop this occurrence is to agree to our demands."

As the piece of granite finished, the boy removed a parchment from his pocket. On the paper was written a contract in perfect legalese

that would bind the mayor to comply with the rocks' suggested revisions in the local government. The mayor was a good family man and had no choice but to sign.

Within a month there were two rocks sitting on the village council, and a campaign was already planned to get the piece of granite elected as the next mayor. The rocks were so grateful to the boy for all of

his help and friendship that they held a festival for him in the traditional rock fashion. Most people would find this boring, but the boy had the most enjoyable day of his life. As the years passed, the boy matured and was himself elected mayor, and lived out the rest of his days aiding people and rocks alike in this honorable position. ■

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## Christmas Wishes

by Daniel McClelland

A motley of mountains surround me—I have no escape. The hills and valleys around me look as if they have been casually discarded by sloppy, color-blind titans. A gigantic tree stands alone in the center of this geographical knot, touching the stars at its highest point. Unusual creatures inhabit this tree; many resemble representatives of the fairy world, and others are likenesses of a distant past, all but forgotten the dredges of my memory. The structures they have created far exceed the limits of my imagination, and I am enraptured by the wondrous thoughts of joy and contentment that fill my mind. The winter season has left a blanket of snow on the ground, but an earthy fire burns nearby, and I am sheltered by its warmth. I grope for deeper thoughts but fear that their superficiality will pop my world of blessed happiness.

"I'm not going to tell you again, young man—get away from the presents *now*. You're not going to open them until tomorrow and that is final!"

To put it simply, it's not fair.

"But—"

"No 'buts' other than yours which is gonna be sore if you don't do as I told you!"

I leave my cozy enclave in search of a less dangerous habitat. The threat of the great mother titan is too truly terrible to test. ■







# Today (The Moon is Lonely)

by Paul Thiessen

A thin slit of a moon—  
Like a silver scythe—  
Shined in your eyes

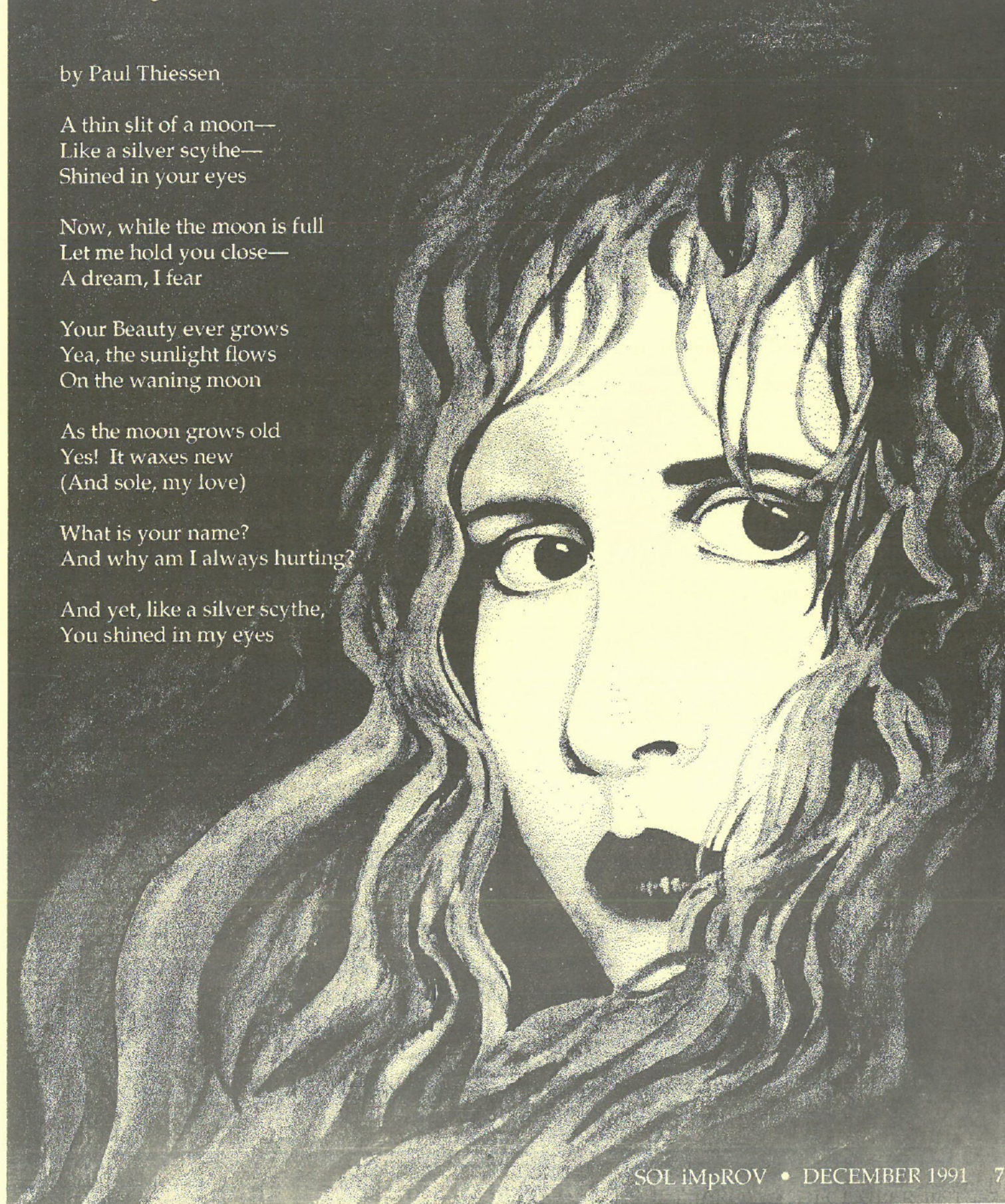
Now, while the moon is full  
Let me hold you close—  
A dream, I fear

Your Beauty ever grows  
Yea, the sunlight flows  
On the waning moon

As the moon grows old  
Yes! It waxes new  
(And sole, my love)

What is your name?  
And why am I always hurting?

And yet, like a silver scythe,  
You shined in my eyes





# Brian's Sunday Seahawks

by Mechelle Lewis

## Saturday:

Invite the buddies over. If they accept the invitation, start checking the fridge and cupboards for the following.

**1 medium onion**

**1 clove garlic (or 4 or 5)**

**2 tbsp. butter**

**1/4 cup olive oil**

**1/2 to 1 pound Italian sausage**

**1 tsp. anise seed**

**salt**

**pepper**

**1 ~28 oz. can of whole tomatoes—cut up, or can of crushed tomatoes**

**1/2 cup cream**

Other items you might want on hand for the guests:

chips and salsa

maybe some beer . . . maybe

Those items not found go on the shopping list.

## Pregame:

The Pregame is reserved for tuning in the TV, removing all breakables from the playing field and replacing them with the chips and salsa, and making sure there is enough seating for the expected guests.

While the announcer is filling the airwaves with senseless trivia and debatable opinions, retire to the kitchen and chop the onion and garlic. Saute them in the butter and olive oil. While drying hands of onion remnants and soap[?] return to the TV. When the announcer gives another unjustifiable conclusion return to kitchen. (If your hands aren't dry yet wait for second offense; it shouldn't be long.)

Squeeze sausage out of membrane wrappers into a large bowl—it is helpful to imagine







# Football Spaghetti Sauce

the announcer's throat. Stir the onions and garlic. Add the anise seed, salt, and pepper to the sausage. Return to TV to watch the kickoff while mixing the sausage mixture.

At the first commercial break return to kitchen and add the sausage to the onions. The sausage needs to be broken up so either put it in in small globs or break it up once it's in. Run to the TV to watch the rerun of the first touchdown. Upon your return the sausage should have cooked long enough to have just changed color. Lucky you!

Add the can of tomatoes, stir in, and turn the works to simmer. After refilling the chips, salsa, and beer requests from the guests you're free to watch your first commercial break. At each of the following commercial breaks you might want to stir the sauce once at the beginning of each commercial break and once at the end.

At the second commercial break of the second quarter start the pot of water heating for the spaghetti, along with stirring the sauce and refreshing the beer supply. At the two minute warning commercial break add the spaghetti to the water with a touch of oil.

By halftime, after the score review everything should be ready to go. Drain the spaghetti, skim the excess oil from the top of the sauce, and add the cream. Line up the troops and send them through the line. If there are any comments on the lack of bread, salad, or veggies either tell them you're a bachelor and to live with it, or tell them it was a potluck and they were in charge of the extras. They should be back lined up in front of the TV complimenting your cooking by the time of the kickoff of the second half, eating seconds by the third commercial break, and then all that's left is cleanup (by yourself, of course).

That night while watching the reruns of all the plays you missed because you were in the kitchen, you can finish off the leftovers with a final inner smile. Have fun and may the Seahawks win.

Otherwise known as Salsiccia al Pomodoro in Italian or Marco's sauce with sausage in Keyport.

Love,  
Mech



## Joshua Tree

by Dave Nash

Brown, broken rocks  
check the advance  
of stunted forests,  
havens for life

Tiny lizards dart and flicker,  
peering up cautiously  
at their large  
monstrous visitors—  
distant relatives  
who stand on the desert  
welcome mat, staring  
transfixed  
by these miniature basilisks

Great deserts advance  
from up high and from below  
clashing, and suddenly bursting  
with hardy life

A solemn crowd  
views the advances:  
creeping sands and plants,  
swirling storm winds,  
and the unchecked  
Square-angled  
Heart-pounding  
Type-A  
Growth of humanity

## Alley Prayer

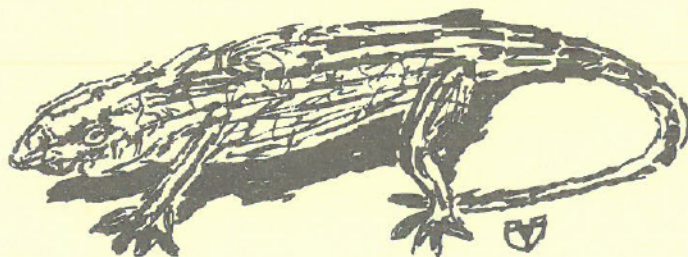
by Michael Yuan

To some, the sun is a burden, and the cool  
winds bear nothing but dark decay and  
death.

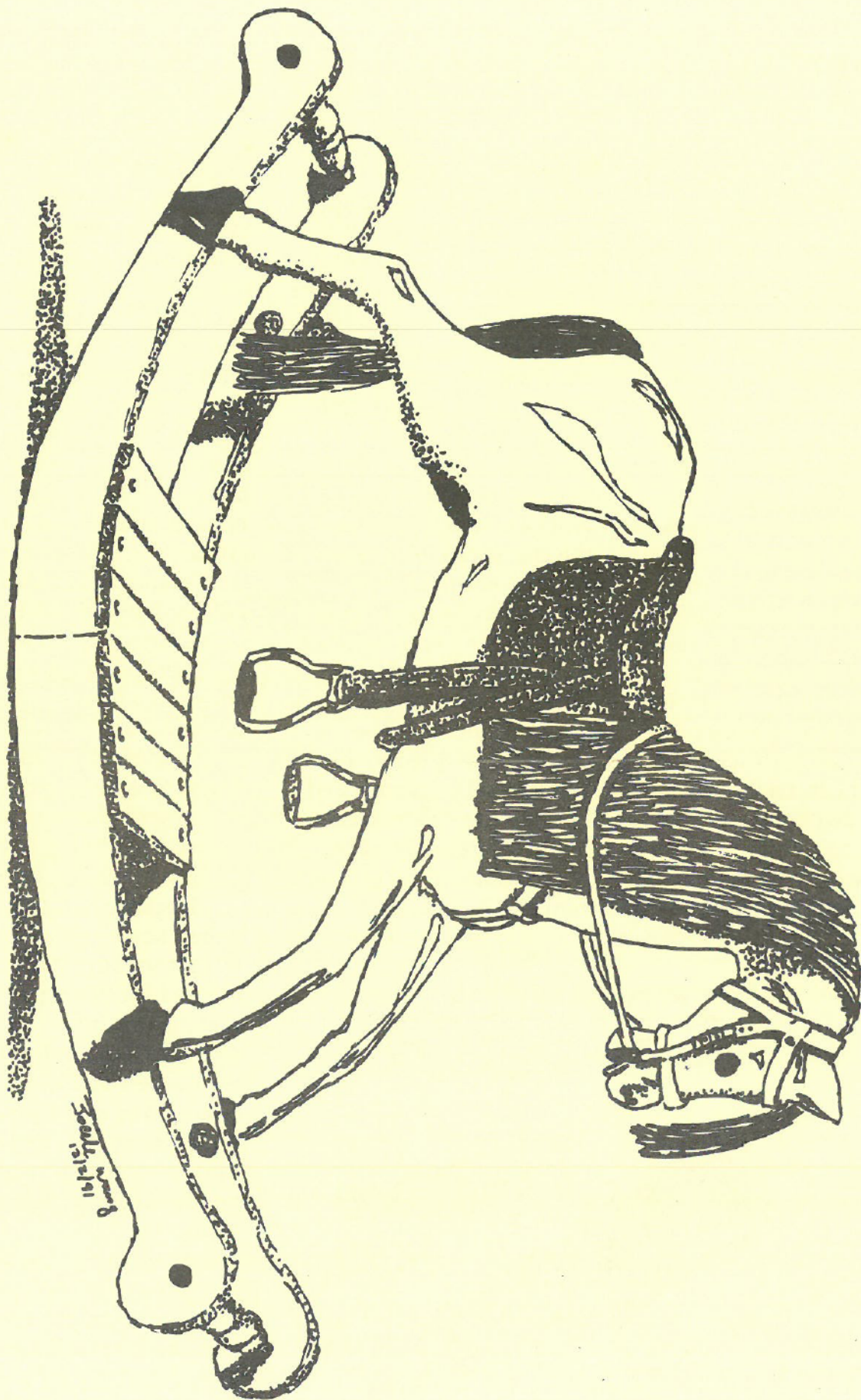
For some, a light evening rain washes  
away sanity drop by drop, and is replaced by  
the cold comfort of stars piercing the clouds  
with blinding light and restlessness.

About some, every pair of eyes holds a  
message, be it young wonder or old disgrace,  
and a void exists centered about the galva-  
nized hands of silent, keen lament into which  
the jaded hands crossed with silver are thrust  
not.

Against some, Time is a meaningless  
backdrop to their leathery husks, weathered  
by countless dawns and sunsets. From some  
fly the soul, claimed and consumed by the  
streets, shorn and slain, but saved. . . by a  
whisper.









# Happy Birthday

by Jocele Wang

Margarite hummed softly to herself as she stepped lightly through the house, dusting, polishing, and tidying up. She was careful not to muss her hair which she had had done that afternoon; it was swept back from her finely molded face, accentuating her high cheekbones and tumbling blondly to her slender shoulders. As she passed the picture on the wall of a simply featured man with an honest smile, she softly touched the clear features with perfectly manicured fingertips. "Just wait 'til you see your present—it's just what you've been asking for," Margarite crooned to the face in the photo.

"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you,"

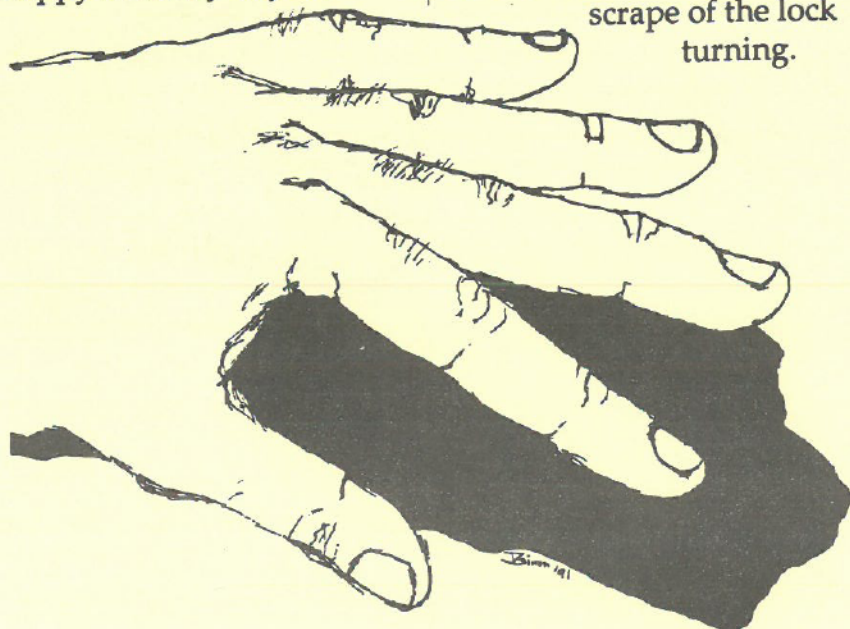
Margarite continued humming. The doorbell rang. "Just a minute dear, coming!" She picked up her checkbook and glided to the front door, pausing to look at herself in the hall mirror. She flung open the door with a grand gesture and said, "You're right on time—how much will it be?" as she poised her ivory-stemmed pen over the checkbook. The delivery boy, seeming to be stunned by beauty, quoted the price and then watched the pen rasp across the check. "Here you go, dear. Now run along." The delivery boy tried to meet her eyes when he thanked her, but they were darting about distractedly. The door closed firmly behind him and he heard the

scrape of the lock turning.

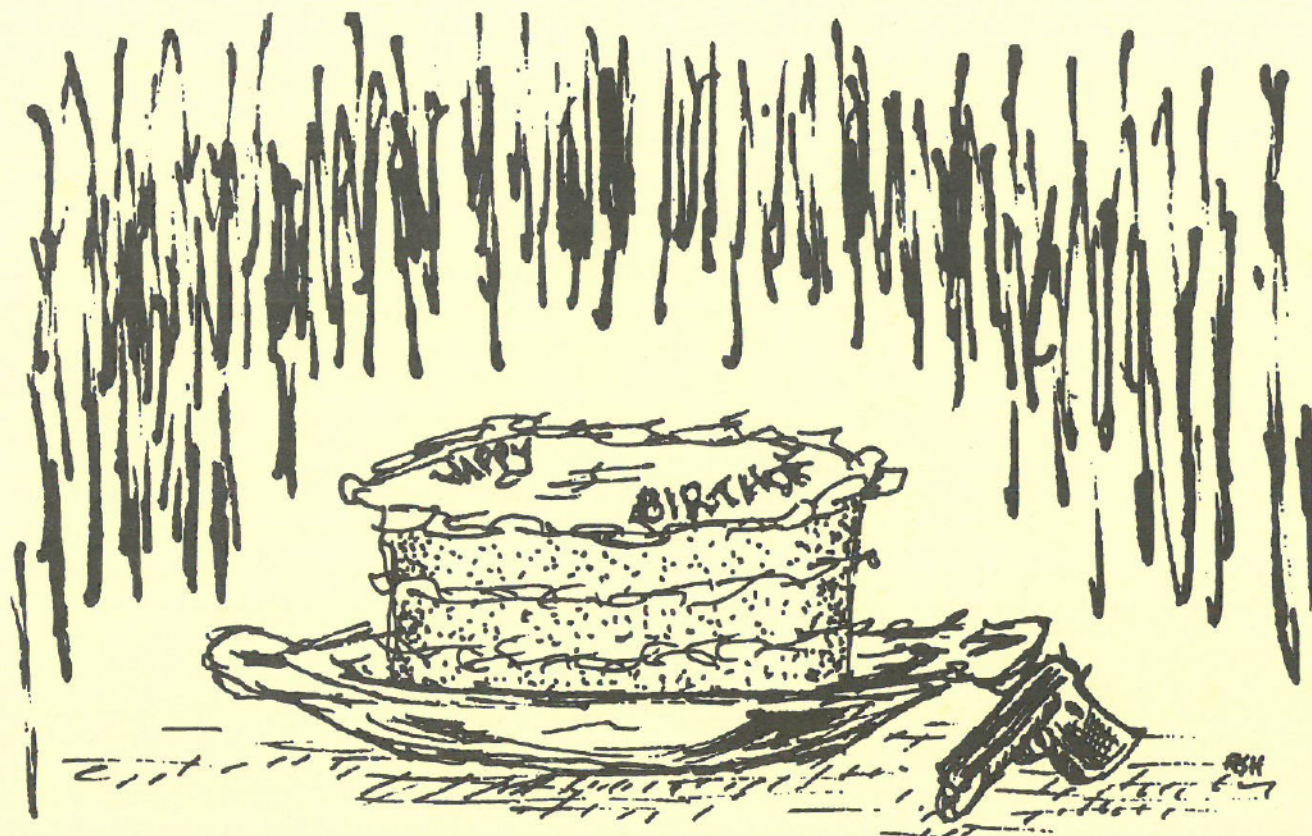
Inside, Margarite hustled the white box into the kitchen and lifted the lid, revealing an elaborately decorated birthday cake. On the smooth white top was *HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAREST ROGER* written in purple script. "Oooh, perfect! I'll have to make absolutely sure he sees this just before I give him his present, or it'll ruin the effect."

A glance at her shiny gold wristwatch sent Margarite scuttling off to the bedroom to change. She emerged a few minutes later, encased in a slinky gold and black sequined dress. She turned around a few times before the hall mirror, smoothing out wrinkles with her hands.

Margarite had barely seated herself down to wait when she heard a car chocking and sputtering its way towards the house. The sound expired in front of the house and a door opened and shut rustily. Tired footsteps tramped up the walkway and paused before the front door. Margarite arranged herself voluptuously on the sofa and waited. Keys fumbled at the door; then it opened and Roger stepped in, clad in worn-out overalls and







work boots.

"Hi, dear. How was your day?" Margarite inquired from the sofa.

"Oh, the usual. We really must get that car worked on, but it's not in the budget." Roger's eyes rested on Margarite for the first time, and he flinched.

"My God, Rita, did you go and buy another dress? You know we just can't afford that sort of thing. And where did you get that watch? That's not real gold, is it?"

He was answered with a lilting laugh. "Of course it's real—you know my impeccable taste. I got them just for you and your birthday." Rita was disappointed at his reaction. She reminded herself bitterly that this was

what she got for marrying Roger instead of Ken.

"Come in the kitchen so I can give you your present, dear."

Margarite pulled Roger into the kitchen and sat him down before the covered box on the table.

"Now, open it slowly so you can get the full effect, dear."

Margarite backed slowly towards the drawer where the present was hidden as Roger, defeated, regarded the box.

"I hope you didn't spend too much on this, Rita."

"Go on, open it."

She slowly drew the present out from the drawer and went to stand behind Roger again. She raised the present and took

careful aim.

"Open it, dearest."

Roger placed his hands on the lid and slowly lifted it. Just when the lid was clear of the box, he suddenly turned before looking at the beautiful birthday cake.

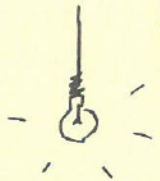
"You know, Rita, I don't think you should have gotten me—"

Margarite panicked and pulled the trigger, blowing Roger's face away and sending him sprawling across the nice clean kitchen floor in a puddle of blood. There was a slight pause while Margarite surveyed the effect.

"Damn, he didn't see his cake."



# Why?



THE STARS SHINE ABOVE,  
WE LOOK TO THEM WITH LOVE  
WHILE WE WORK, SWEAT, & TOIL  
AND KILL AIR, SEA, AND SOIL.

LOVE LIFE LIBERTY —  
RANDOMLY ASSIGNED  
AND TAKEN AWAY

BETWEEN YOU AND ME.

THIS DOES NOT BOTHER HUMANITY —  
ANOTHER DAY, MORE INSANITY.

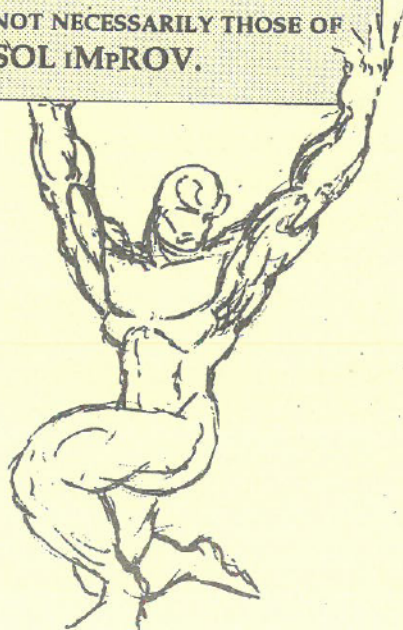
*Why?*

DON'T ASK ME, I'M BUSY.

— Russell Hamilton —



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## Because . . .

SOL iMPROV is a periodic publication that seeks to complement one of the main purposes of Harvey Mudd College as stated in the Preamble of the Student Handbook: "to emphasize an understanding of the human purposes and aspirations their knowledge can serve." To this end, SOL iMPROV promotes the process of self-expression by providing a forum for artists, both literary and visual, in which they can express and explore their creativity, emotions, and philosophies.

SOL iMPROV is an ongoing process, and for this reason we depend on your input to continue this publication. If you have any creativity that you would like to see published, or if you have any suggestions, comments, or criticisms about SOL iMPROV, please don't hesitate to contact us (the staff is listed on the back cover). We have a jarthur account ([improv@jarthur](mailto:improv@jarthur)) for your convenience. We appreciate your input in any form.



# Eve

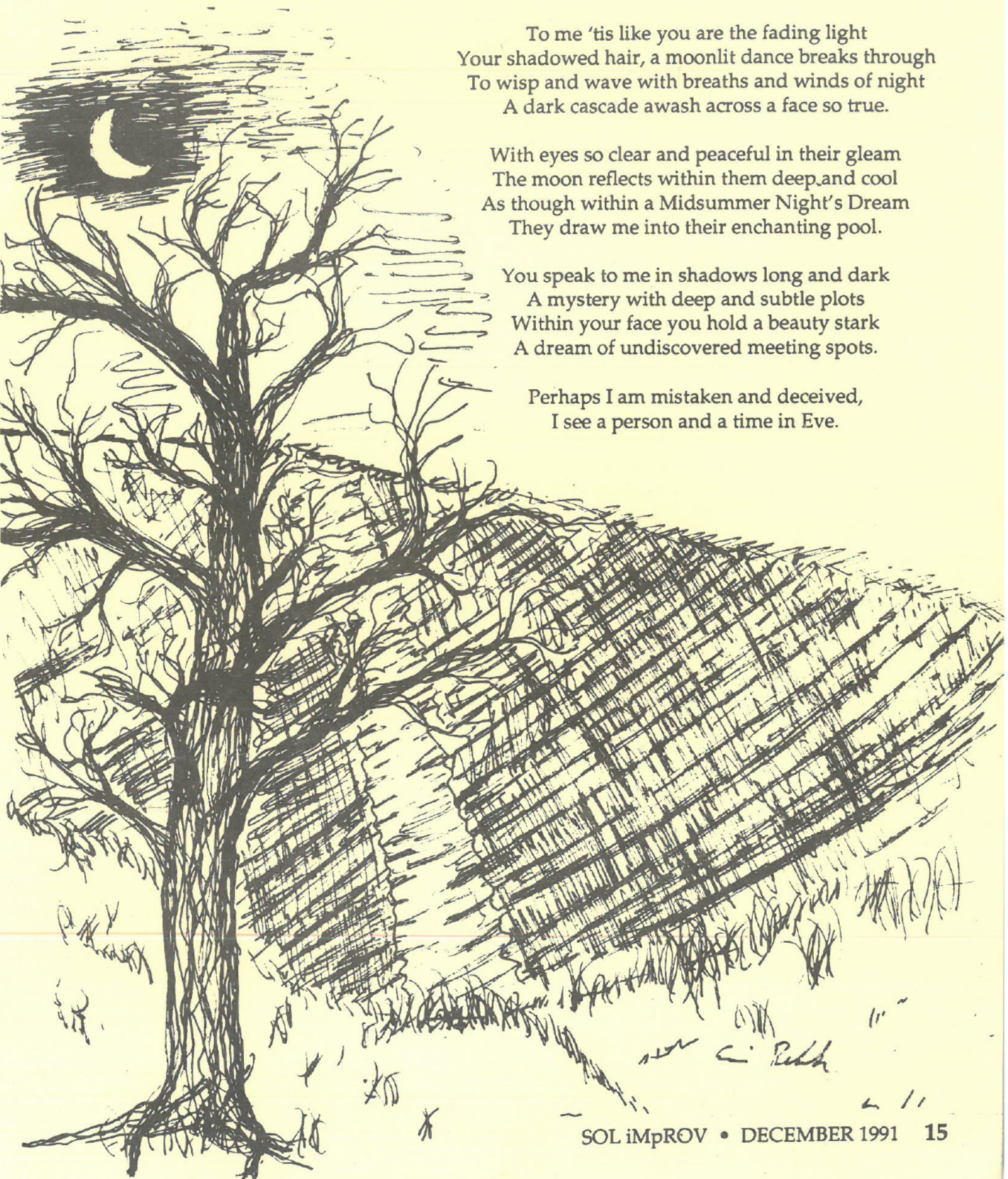
by Eric Pesheck

To me 'tis like you are the fading light  
Your shadowed hair, a moonlit dance breaks through  
To wisp and wave with breaths and winds of night  
A dark cascade awash across a face so true.

With eyes so clear and peaceful in their gleam  
The moon reflects within them deep and cool  
As though within a Midsummer Night's Dream  
They draw me into their enchanting pool.

You speak to me in shadows long and dark  
A mystery with deep and subtle plots  
Within your face you hold a beauty stark  
A dream of undiscovered meeting spots.

Perhaps I am mistaken and deceived,  
I see a person and a time in Eve.





# Contributors

Jocell Wang

GREG LEVIN

Jim + McCl

Loren Majerik

Michael Yu

David Nash

Mecky

E. Ruhl

Cliff M. Stein

## Staff:

Editor-in-Chief: Jonathan Giron  
 Secretary: Cliff Stein  
 Treasurer: Benis Babusis  
 Public Relations: Melissa Aczon  
 Layout Editor: Daniel McClelland  
 Editing Staff: Becky Jensen  
 Jim Patterson  
 Eileen Tannig  
 Proof Readers: Dylan Walker  
 Michael Yuan  
 Distribution: Corey Liu  
 Jack Hounig  
 Greg Levin

Phantoms of iMPROV's past:

C. Stein 9/91



Amber

Paul A. Thiesen