

SOL iMPROV



An HMC Student Arts Publication
May, 1991

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ISSUE 3

AN ARTS PUBLICATION OF HMC

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The Greditor Speaks

Hello, and welcome to the third and last issue of the year, sort of. Y'see, there should've been four issues this year, but time problems, brought about largely by my (failed) efforts to finish an illustrated story that I'm working on, have prevented this. So the "fourth issue" for this school year will actually come out at the beginning of next semester, in no way interfering with the four other issues scheduled for next year. Got it? Good.

Now for a bit of business. SOL iMPROV is a creative forum for all students at HMC, not just us staffers & regular contributors. If you've been working on a short story, or drawing, or other creative type of thing that might be publishable, let us know! We've been a little short on submissions lately, and while I could continue to pester my friends to create for us, I'd rather receive submissions from the greater community at large... this includes you

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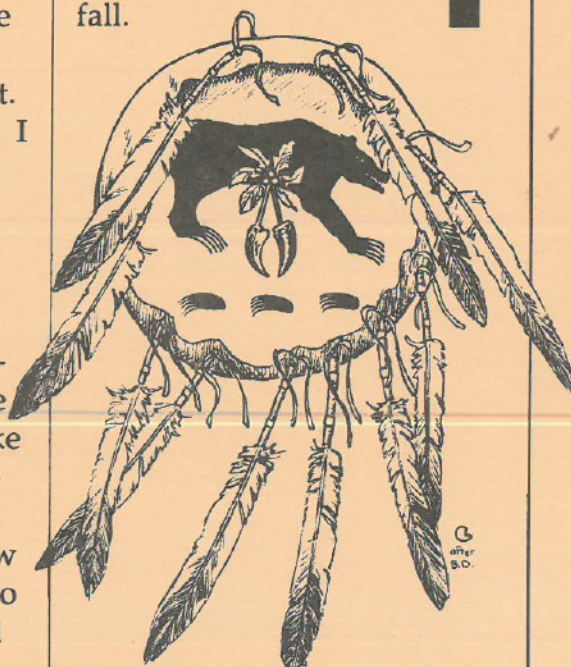
RAISING QUESTIONS

professors, if any of you are reading this. So finish up that project and let us have it. We cannot continue to exist without your support.

A little about this issue. I spend part of every summer traveling with my family, and spend a lot of time in the Southwest. Being an artist, I spend some of that time in galleries, and have become quite fond of Indian artwork (like the paintings of Pina, Redbird, Rance Hood, and Bill Rabbit, for those who know what I'm talking about). So when we got this beautiful

cover illustration from Jocelle, Jack and I decided to use a Southwestern motif through the entire issue. That's why some of the boarders look funny. Hope it works. We have some other neat stuff this issue, including some photos from Scott Lewallen's dance concert last year, and the return of Hoiwon Salutes.

Before closing, I'd like to express my gratitude to Mr. Raul Andrade (Corin's father), who donated the cost of this entire issue, and without whom this issue could not exist. His generosity is greatly appreciated. Enjoy... I'll see you in the fall. ■



Life Eternal

by Becky Jensen

Aleena wandered through the deserted halls of the hospital. She could just barely see in the flickering of the emergency lights to avoid the open doors. The hospital rooms were empty caves. She climbed the stairs, but the soft padding of her feet barely made a dent in the dusty silence. At that thought, an odd look came over her face. Never before had the hospital allowed even a speck of dust to rest on its sterilized surfaces. She reached finally what she had been looking for. In the miserly

lights, she could just make out the dull reflectiveness of the gold plate that hung on the door. It read, "Aleena M. Scott, M.D." She smiled, remembering when that piece of metal had been her greatest pride. She pushed the door and it swung in stiffly to reveal a cramped and cluttered office.

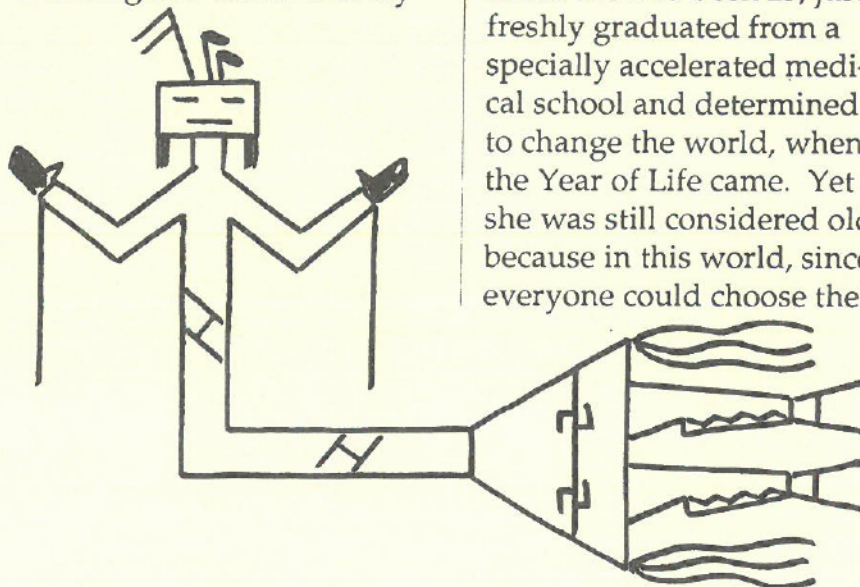
As she made her way around the piles of papers to her desk, she passed by a small mirror hung on a wall, a sign of her once modest vanity. Something about the image made her stop and return to stare at her own hollow eyes. The face that stared back at her was young, wrinkleless, and exactly 23. She knew the age instinctively, because she had been 23, just freshly graduated from a specially accelerated medical school and determined to change the world, when the Year of Life came. Yet she was still considered old, because in this world, since everyone could choose their

own age, most people ended up being about 21.

It had been eleven years ago when she had first turned 23. "The Year of Life," the newspapers had screamed, "Eternal blissful life for everyone!" For Aleena, it had been the end of everything, her career and her life-long dreams. "The Beginning of the Golden Age?" More like, she thought, "The Beginning of the Hellish Days." Nasty Thought. She shook herself and moved away from the mirror. She had come for a few small but precious things she had left. Mementoes of a former life. She shoved them into her cracked leather bag and took a last, lingering, wistful look around the room. Then, with finality, she strode out of the office, down the dark hallways, and out the front doors of the hospital. Time to make a new life.

A few hours later, the dusk found her walking thoughtfully along the white-washed streets of the city. She had been to her tiny apartment, unloaded her treasures, and then set out in search of something hopeful. The streets were quiet in the red of the sunset. She walked until she reached the quiet flowing of the city's ice blue river.

About that time, she



began to hear noises again. They weren't coming from all around, though, just from an area down the next street. She turned the corner, and noise and color burst upon her in a hot wave. There were crammed into a city park more people than she had ever seen, each waving a bright flag of a different shape and slogan. Two men stood on a platform in front of the electrified crowd. One of the men raised his voice to be heard over the din. She couldn't quite catch what he was saying, but it sounded of patriotism and reform and good days to come. The other man said approximately the same. Aleena studied the faces of the opposing men. They were both handsome, flawless, and 21. She doubted that either of them would win the election. In this world, one had to be at least 22.

Six years after the Year of Life had come the Age Wars. Within eighteen months, everyone 26 or older had been mercilessly slaughtered in the name of mercy. Eleven years ago, the Life Drug had swept through the world, creating an immortal unchanging class of people called the New Breed. The Life Drug, which stopped all decaying or destruction of the cells in the body, could only be taken by people who were

20 to 25 and whose growing process had not completely stopped but was mostly finished. The New Breed had suddenly overhauled the world into how they felt it should be. The Old Breed objected, of course, and the Age Wars began.

At first, the New Breed only desired to prove by force of arms that the new way was better. Eventually, though, they reached the philosophy that "They were going to die anyway and it would be much better to put them out of their misery now." So the New Breed systematically murdered anyone showing signs of age. No one had escaped.

Ironically, thought Aleena, after the Old Breed was eliminated, the New Breed found that they had no one to lead them. Dis-mayed, they discovered that age is a sign of intelligence and wisdom. Horrified, they realized that there were no more senators, doctors, or lawyers in the world. There were no more idols, heroes, or natural leaders. They had killed them all.

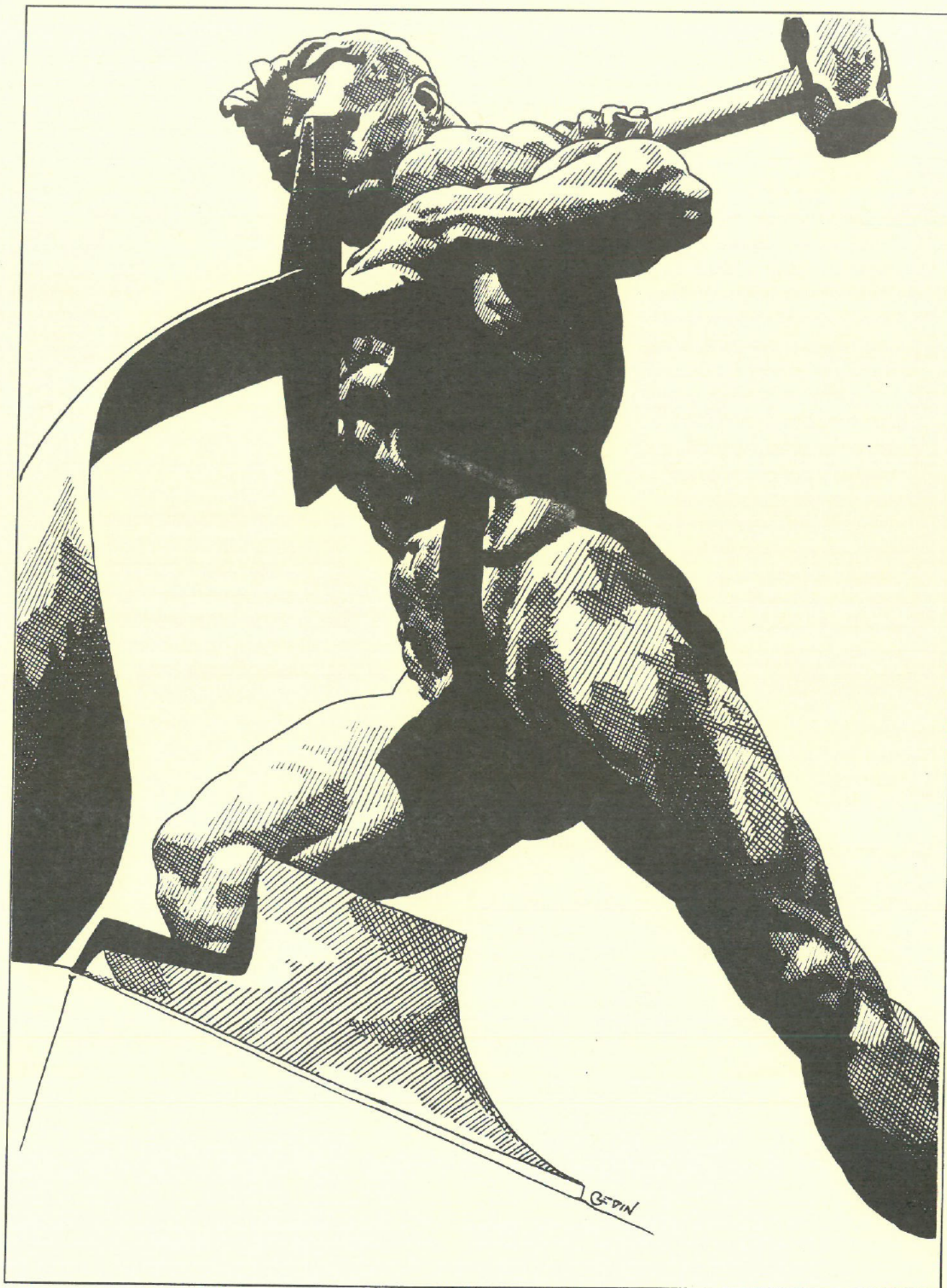
The world became a place of beaconless souls. Aleena knew that the two young men who stood on the platform, igniting the crowd, and beaming of success were doomed to fail. They would fall like the governments fell, like

the scientific laboratories fell, like the universities fell without the experience and knowledge of age.

Aleena shook her head rather bemusedly at her memories, then moved away from the churning mob and walked on down the street. The city returned again to relative silence. She was nearing the heart of the city. Maybe she could get a job. Then she caught herself. Not very likely. With most of the entire world hoping to be part of the work force, the unemployment was astounding. About ten percent of the population held a job. The other ninety percent survived off of food-synthesizers and other labor devises and spent the rest of their time trying to find something to do. The crime rate was as high as unemployment.

Maybe she could join the police. They always needed help. Then again, they usually died within the first month. If nothing else in this dismal world, Aleena wanted to live.

She had reached the center of town. The street was packed as it was 24 hours a day. Every day, many people would visit the hundreds of stores, bars, and whorehouses, then end their stay, permanently, at a suicide



joint. There were all sorts of creative ways to die. Aleena wandered towards one, morbidly curious, but turned away just before she reached the one-way door.

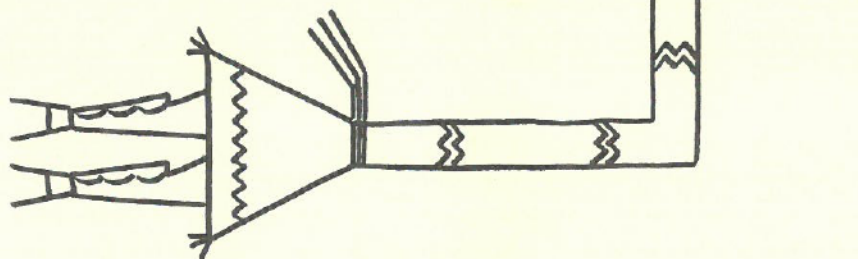
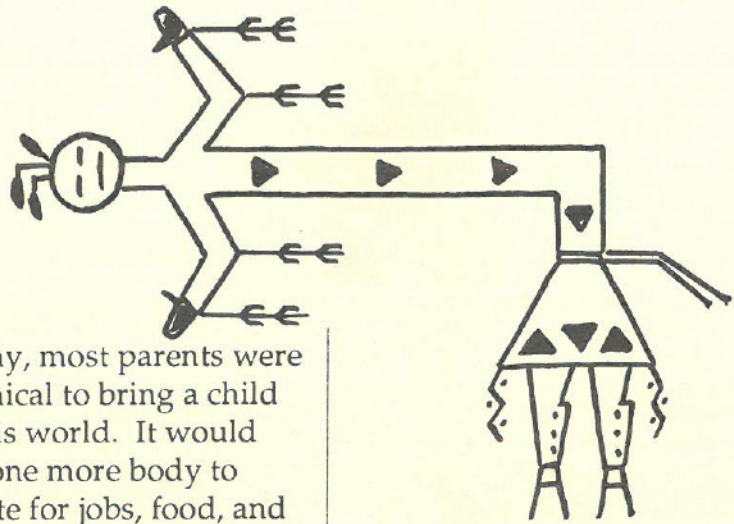
She had known that all of this existed—there was a billboard right outside her window advertising one of the better known suicide places—but she had never actually ventured out into the city. Almost everyone in the city was here. All scientific advancement had stopped so that the scientists could enjoy the good life too. The gaudiness, the futile gaudiness of it all made her stomach heave. Nauseated, she ran away from the lights into the calming darkness of a side alley.

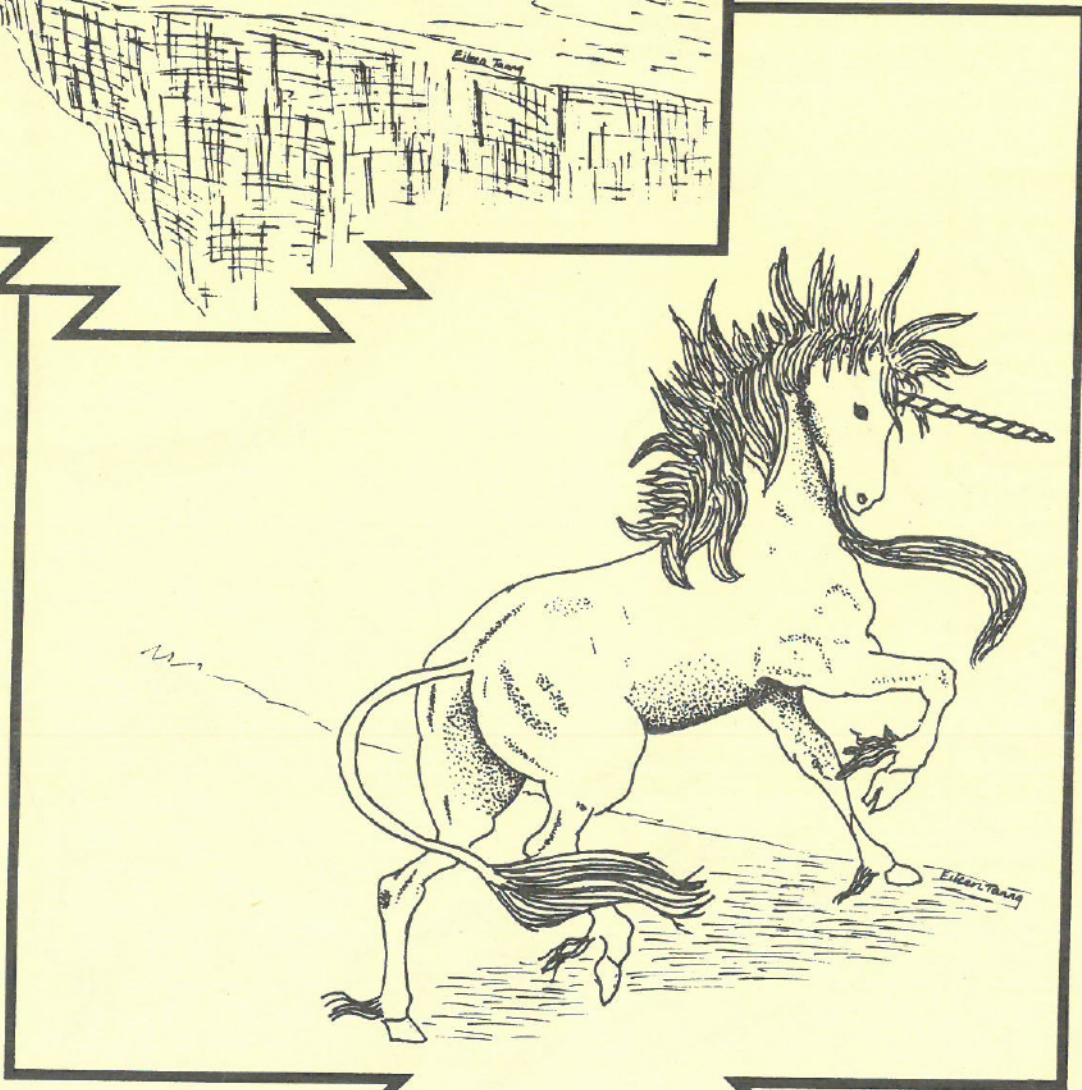
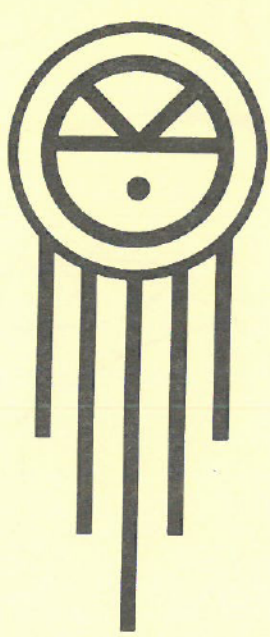
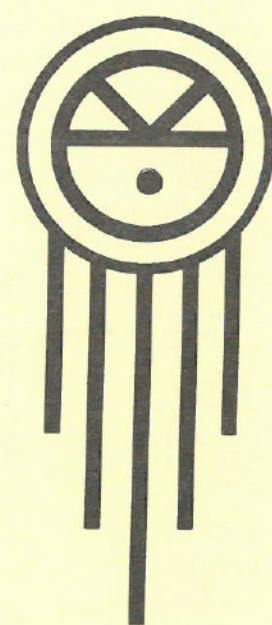
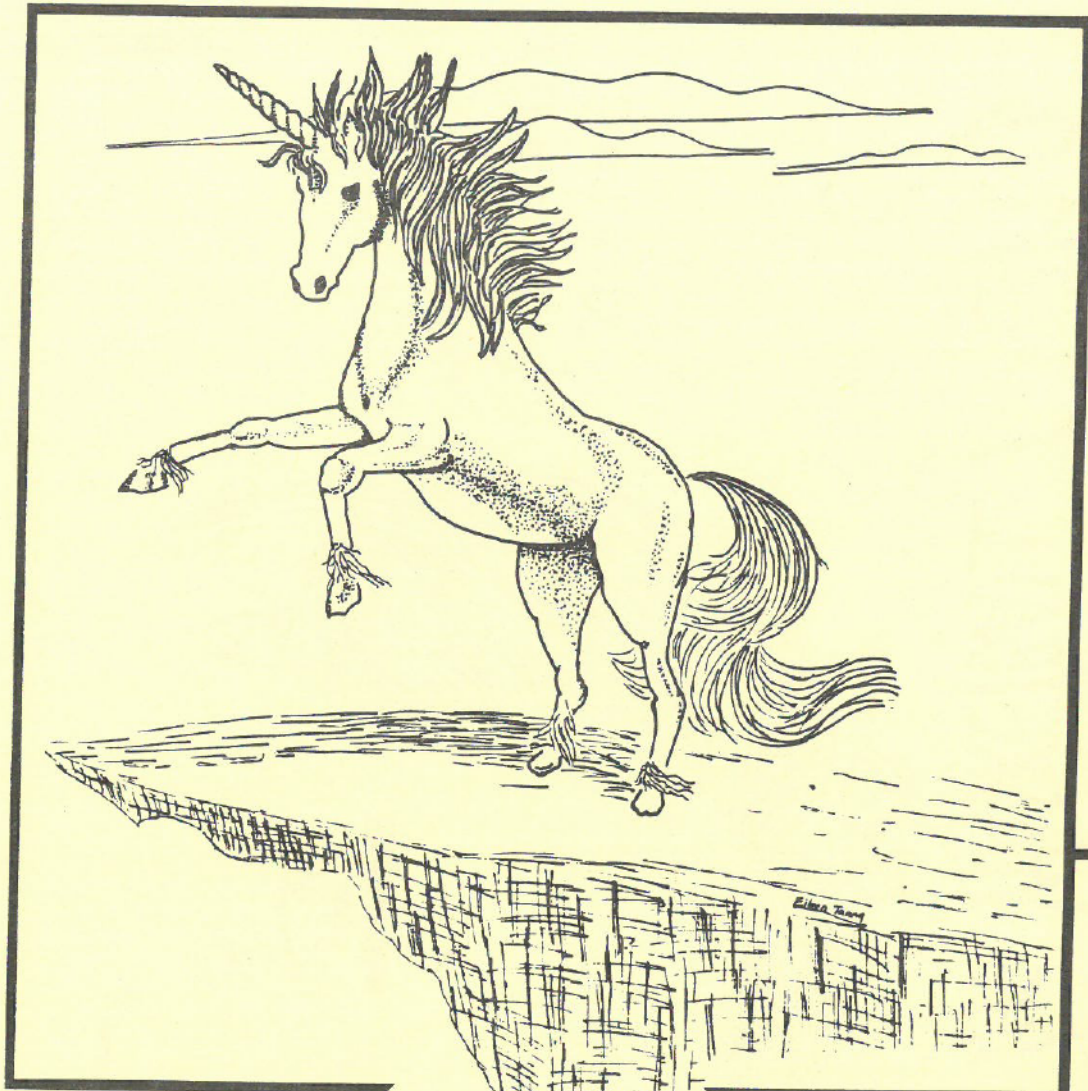
A while later, Aleena found herself in a pristine tree-lined suburb. Every house was perfectly groomed, maybe even over-groomed. There was a little girl in front of one of the houses. She sat forlornly on the grass and played with a pink doll. Aleena doubted that there were any other children in the neighborhood. Having a child was expensive, time-consuming, and made the mother look nine months older. A mother would have to take a reversive drug until she got pregnant and carried her child to term. Then she could retake the Life Drug.

Anyway, most parents were too cynical to bring a child into this world. It would mean one more body to compete for jobs, food, and space. Space wasn't entirely at a premium yet, but it was getting there. The girl's mother came out of the house and yelled at her for not doing something cute that she could take pictures of. Aleena hurried away.

The resolve she had started the day with was gone. She could find nothing good in the world. Nothing worth saving or fighting for. Everything had stagnated. Everyone was trapped. She thought fondly of the days when she was young and naive and full of dreams. The days when she was to be a great doctor. Now she was probably the only one in the world with a doctor's degree. Now she was alone.

A light abruptly came into Aleena's eyes. A light that had been missing for a long time. She turned around and retraced her steps through the town, back by the sobbing girl, back by the frantic shoppers, back by the uneasy crowd, back to the doors of the hospital and finally her office. She was back to the beginning point, where she had once been happy. She took off her coat, sat down behind her microscope, and began to build a deadly virus.

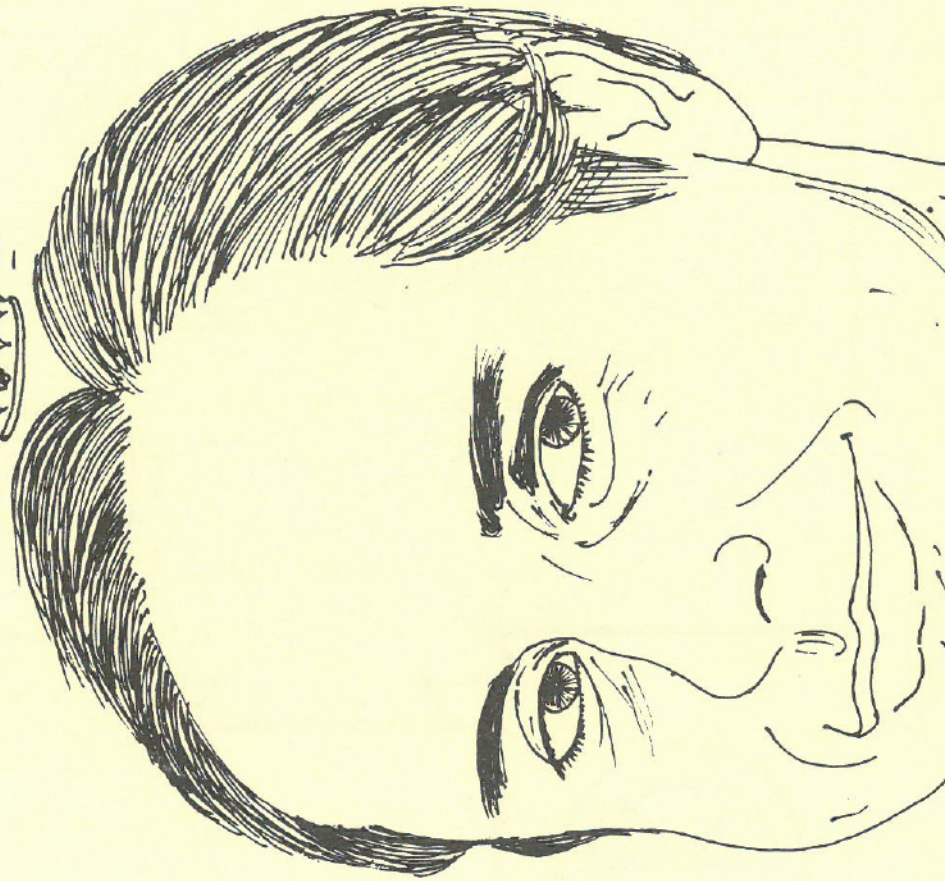
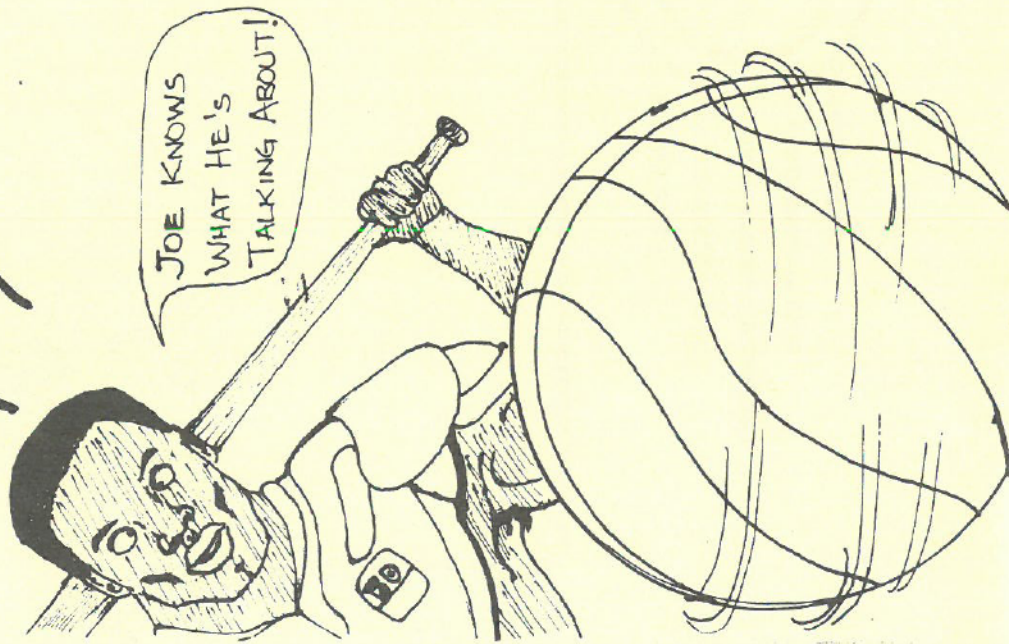




HOIXONI

Salutes!

Professor Joe "The Wasketball" King





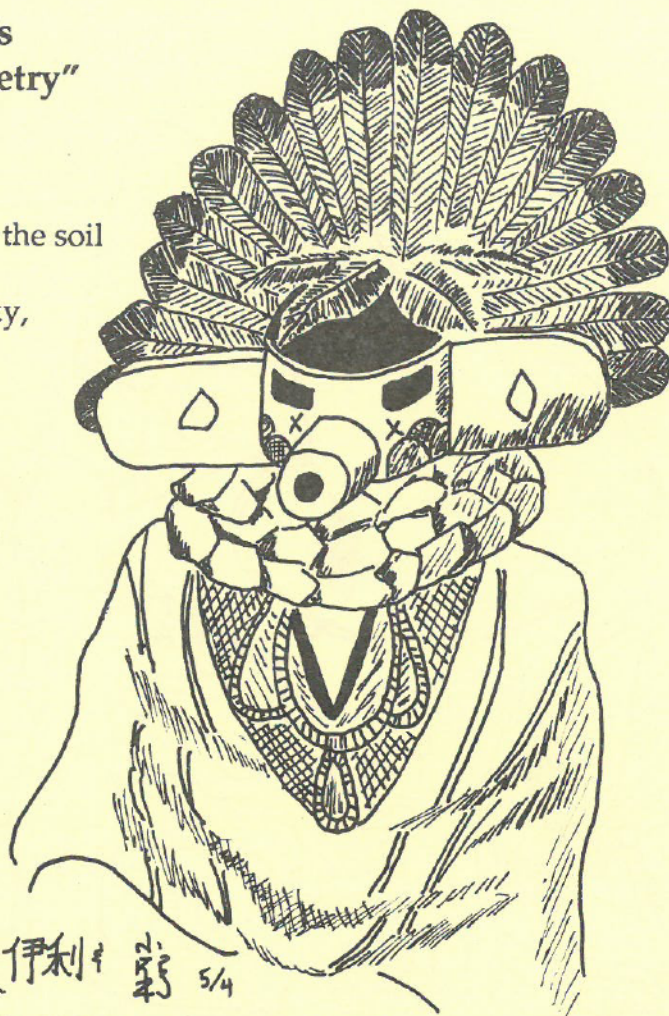
Written while reading Heidegger's "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry"

by Sean C. Stidd

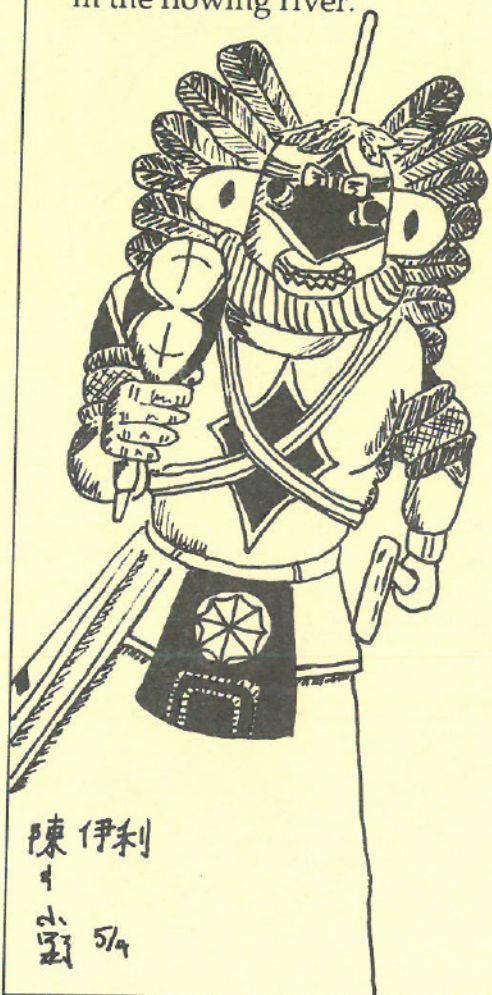
So easy for a tree, to take root,
Long, life-sustaining tendrils at one with the soil
while the mighty trunk stands firm
and the limbs soar into the vault of the sky,
the tree is a bridge from earth to heaven,
from heaven to earth.

Why, then, do we humans,
ourselves that earth, ourselves that sky,
find so little ground to nourish our roots?
Why do we ever lack a home?
We substitute for silent dwelling,
overlooking the simple oneness
of that without
and that within.

Those of us who are the world
can only take root
in the flowing river.



陳伊利 5/4



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5/4

What It Is!

SOL iMpROV is a periodic publication that seeks to compliment 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 explore, express, and discuss their creativity, emotions, and philosophies. *SOL iMpROV* is also an ongoing process, and for this reason, we depend on your input to continue our 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. We have an jarthur account (improv@jarthur) for your convenience. We appreciate your input in all its forms.

Scott Lewallen's Dance in a Round

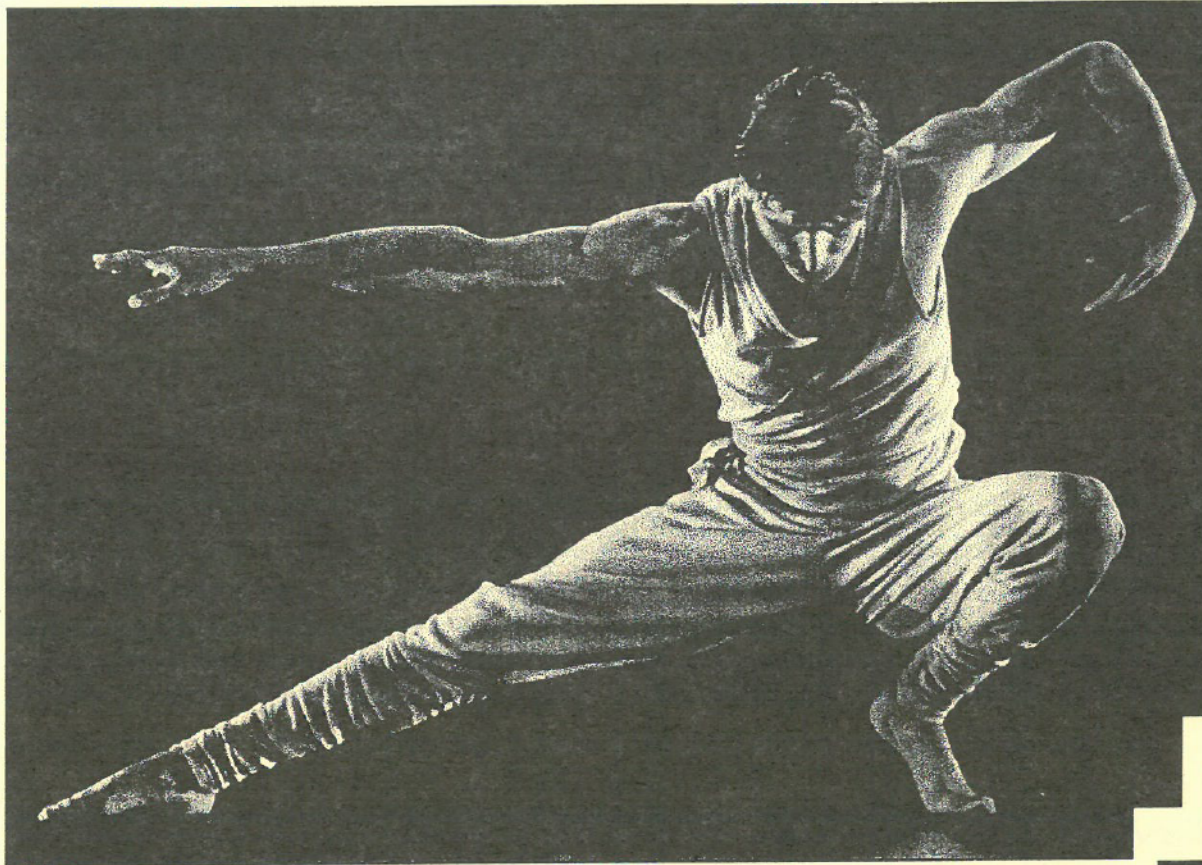
Photos by Kye Epps

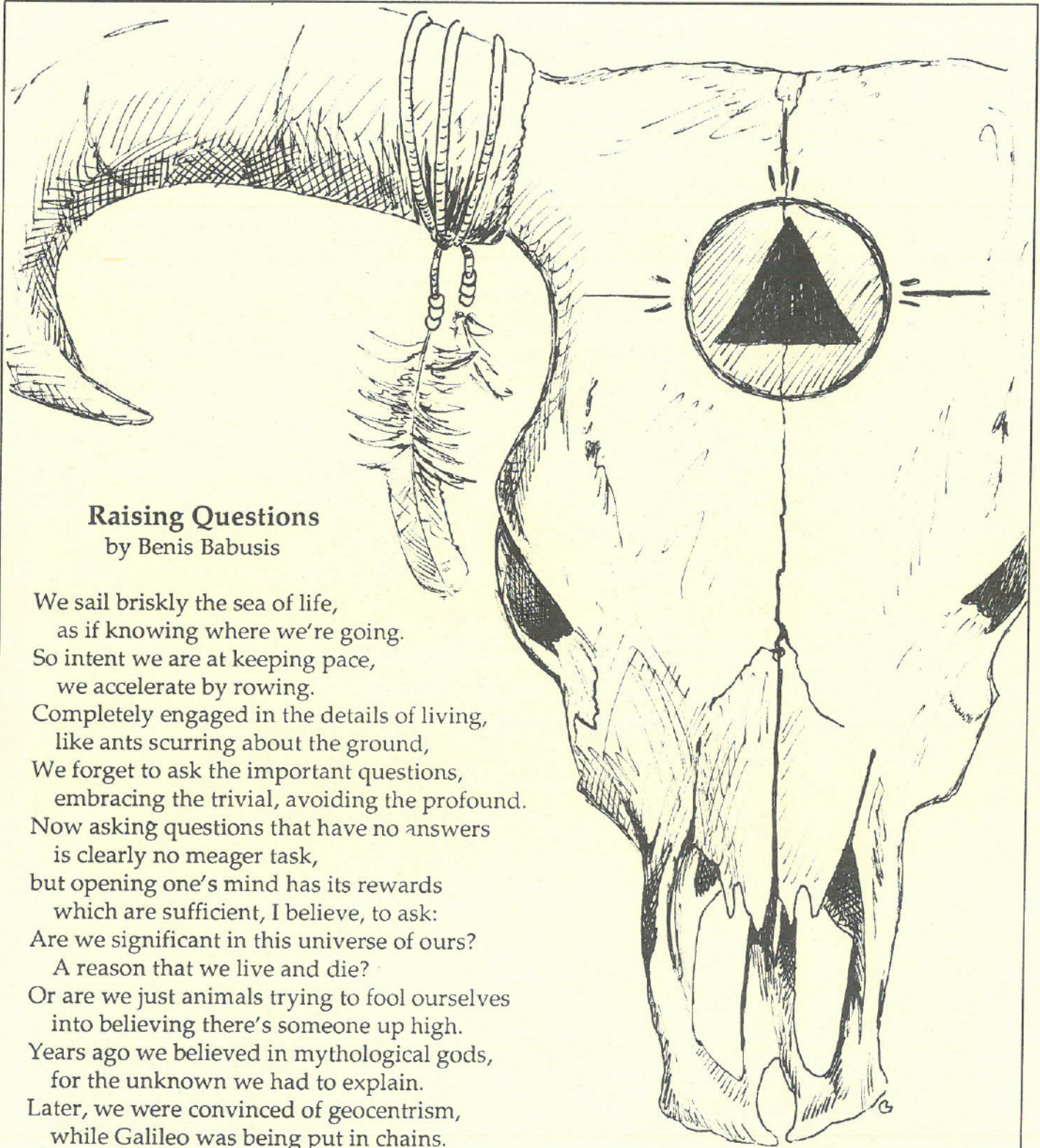


The present is the life I live.
One meant to be enjoyed, fulfilled.
Each moment, times end, lived to give
existence to dreams the past has willed.

KSL 87







Raising Questions

by Benis Babusis

We sail briskly the sea of life,
as if knowing where we're going.
So intent we are at keeping pace,
we accelerate by rowing.
Completely engaged in the details of living,
like ants scurrying about the ground,
We forget to ask the important questions,
embracing the trivial, avoiding the profound.
Now asking questions that have no answers
is clearly no meager task,
but opening one's mind has its rewards
which are sufficient, I believe, to ask:
Are we significant in this universe of ours?
A reason that we live and die?
Or are we just animals trying to fool ourselves
into believing there's someone up high.
Years ago we believed in mythological gods,
for the unknown we had to explain.
Later, we were convinced of geocentrism,
while Galileo was being put in chains.
Creation, prophets, spirits and miracles.
Oh, the variety of beliefs we nurse,
And how much suffering over different opinions,
war after war—Ahh, religion's a curse.
Faith is irrational; truth nonexistent,
So why even care what others think?
When we mature enough to admit our ignorance,
then we will rise, rather than sink.

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Mar. 8, 1991

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