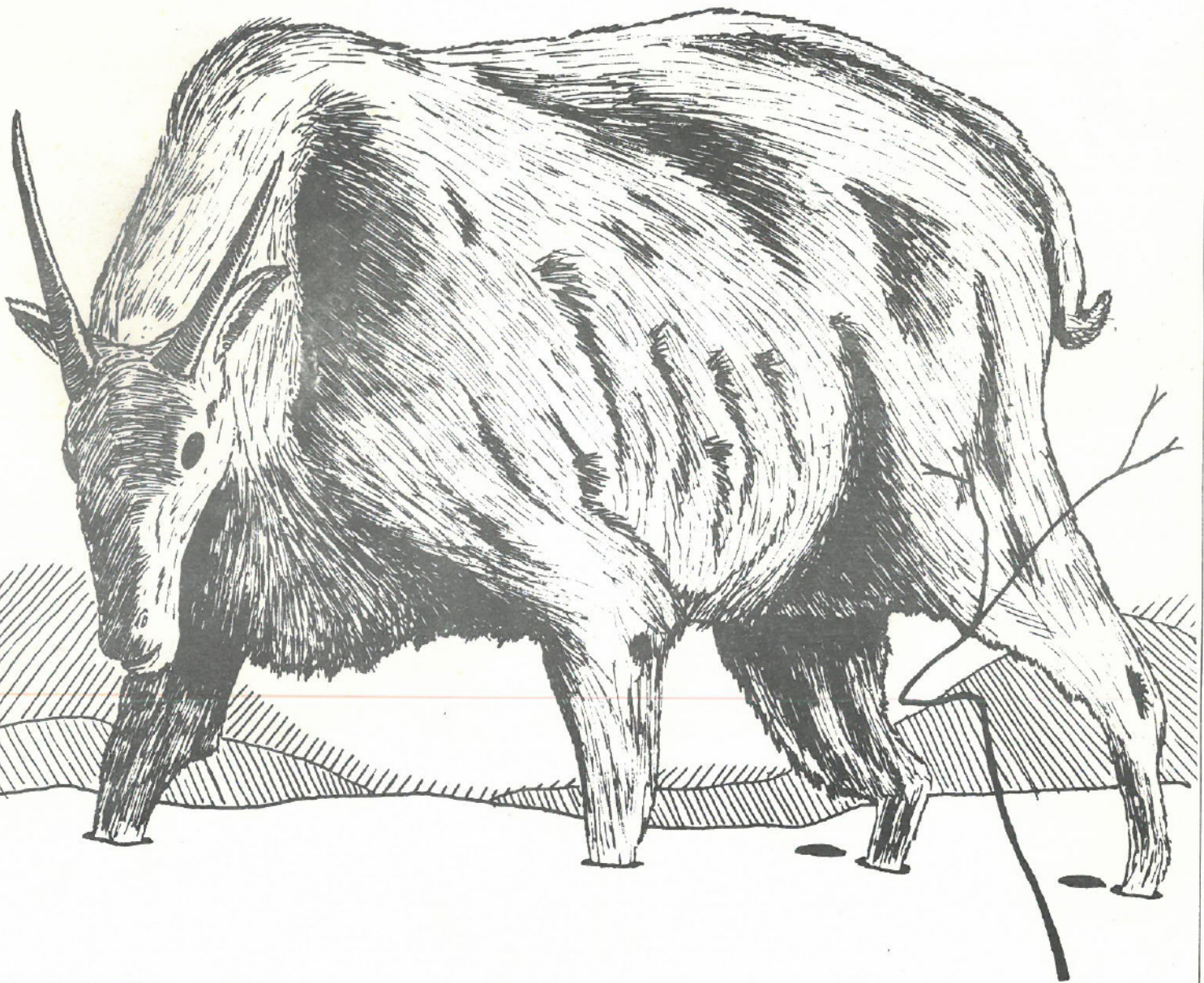


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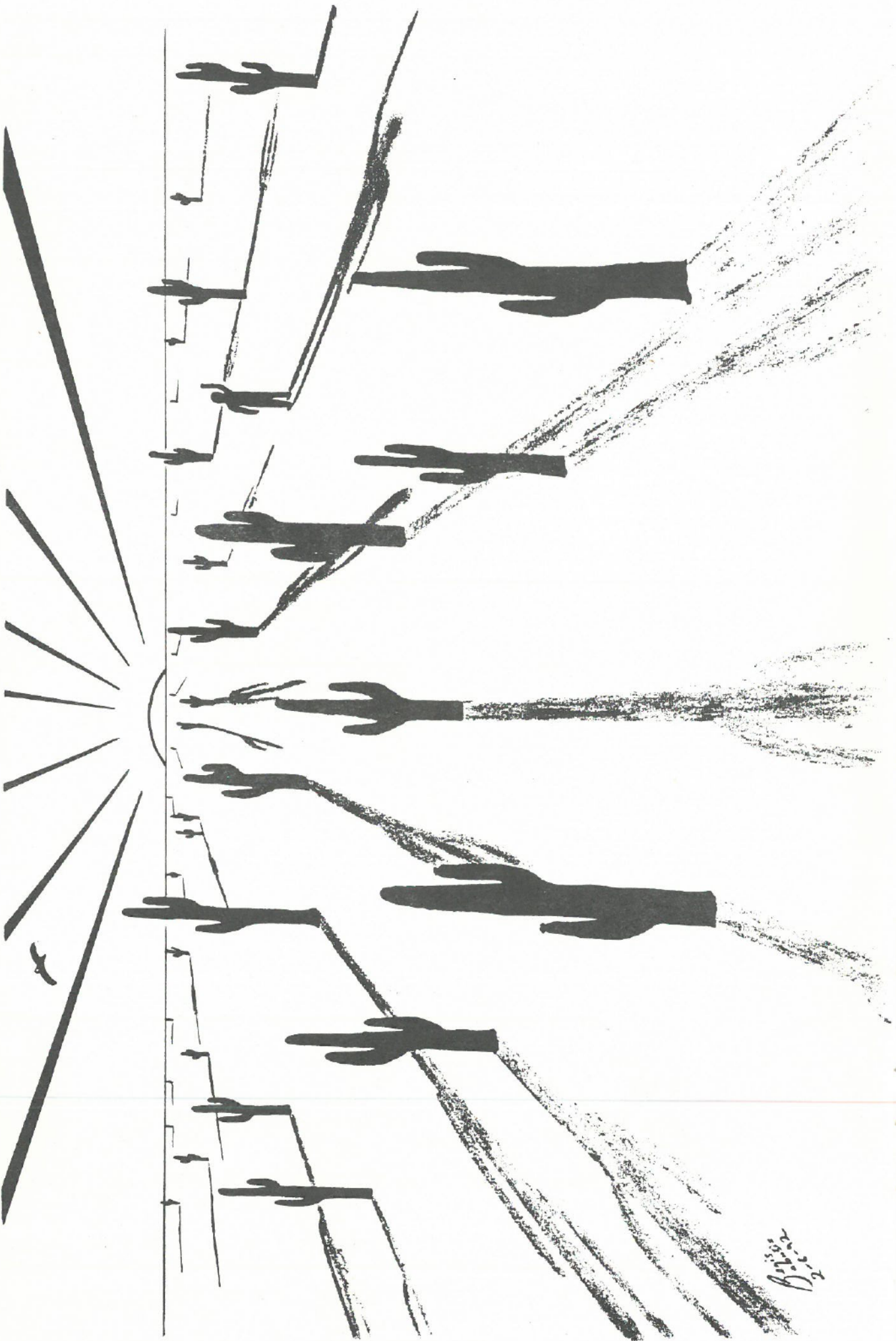
An Arts Publication of Harvey Mudd College

Issue 3, Vol. III

March 1992



THE GREAT



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SOLiD iMPROV

MARCH 1992

AN ARTS PUBLICATION OF HMC

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The Editor's Corner

Welcome back to SOL iMPROV! After two months of getting acquainted with 1992 and getting some extra funding (thanks ASHMC Council!), we're ready to put out three more issues (this one being the first).

It's the spring of an election year, so it's appropriate that we start the semester with a couple of short stories with a political flavor to them. The first is by Chuk Bean, a new contributor to iMPROV; he paints a future with Alice Cooper as an elected official-go figure. Guy Moore, another newcomer to the magazine, adds an impassioned discourse against a particular war.

A special thanks goes out to one special contributor in this issue: Jim Monson, Professor of Engineering and Director of the Freshman Division. Professor Monson has provided us with his impressions of *haiku*, the Japanese

and we've got a fair number of them in this issue. We have a portrait of Kim Staheli by Scott Lewallen '91, fractals and "Dawn" by Benis Babusis, and all sorts of spot art by our Phantoms of the Past (Jack Houng and Greg Levin) and Cliff Stein (who also drew the huge goat on our cover).

Four poems grace our pages, with contemplative themes (including a little bit of social and political commentary). We have "The Glass" by Glen Hastings and "Pointless Pondering" by Scott Sullivan, as well as a couple of poems with similar themes: "Picture Imperfect" by Dan McClelland and "Under Apocalyptic Skies" by Becky Jensen.

If you have any questions, comments, or criticisms concerning this particular issue, let me or any other staff member know (we're listed on the back cover). Enjoy the issue!

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poetic form, and some great brushwork. His endeavor is the beginning of what we hope will be more contributions from the faculty and staff. We are, after all, the arts publication of HMC—all members of the Mudd community are welcome to share and enjoy each other's work!

As you know, iMPROV wouldn't be iMPROV without artwork and poems,

When I Am Elected...

— Inspired by Alice Cooper's "Elected" —

by Chuk Bean

There came a day when the present was black and the future was blacker. For the mass of Americans, there was no hope, nothing to live for, nothing to do but inhale the smog and hope it was a little nutritious.

One aging man decided to stand up and give the country an adrenalin rush.

☆ ☆ ☆

Reverend Dwight Watson was watching TV.

"Yes!" Reverend Dwight was scared but happy, for now. "Ethyl! Hale just took Illinois! If he wins a couple more big states we can keep that mad pervert out of office."

☆ ☆ ☆

Chad and Robin were, as usual, looking for food. They walked away from the rationing station that had run out sooner than ever.

"Now what?" said Robin.

Chad thought for a second, then answered, "I guess we live on love." He laughed.

"Very funny. No, really."

They were interrupted

by the appearance of Zane, who had an anxious look about him.

"Hi."

"Hello."

"Aaey."

Zane said, "I just got back from the polls. The radio there said that Cooper's losing by a little."

"Relax, Zane," Robin said. "Us poor people will put him over the top."

Zane bent down to examine an apple core.

☆ ☆ ☆

United States Senator Johnny Bello slept.

Until his secretary woke him.

"Sir, you told me to wake you when a prediction was announced."

"Yes, what is it?"

"Cooper, sir."

"Shit. 'Welcome To My Nightmare,' alright. Go." His secretary left.

☆ ☆ ☆

Dave and Kurt, two engineering majors at a no-name college, were discussing politics.

"I can't believe Alice Cooper was elected president," said Dave, struggling to stay awake.

"Democracy is rule by

the mob." Kurt was well rested. Sleep was more important to him than studying.

"I mean, didn't Cooper promise to legalize aspirin? Everyone knows that aspirin is the first step on the path to serious drugs."

"It looks like you wouldn't mind having caffeine legalized."

"Huh? What did you say?"

"Go to sleep, Dave."

"Okay."

☆ ☆ ☆

"Honey, come out of it. It'll be OK," pleaded Ethyl.

"No, it won't. Alice Cooper is president and he'll lead the country to evil and ruin."

"Not if people like you let the poor know that they can still trust in the Lord."

Reverend Dwight sat and thought, then stood up and told his wife, "Yes. I will go to the people." He undid the locks on his door, and began the six mile drive to his church. He drove past ragged homeless holding signs saying "Let Alice Cooper Make Your Depression Less Depressing" and others singing Cooper's theme song, "Elected."

He entered his church, from which the pews had long since been removed and replaced with cots. The people who weren't too sick or tired were in the choir loft singing "Welcome To My Nightmare."

Dwight lost his nerve and left.

☆ ☆ ☆

Officers Billie and Steven were eating doughnuts at a Winchell's. "So how do you think the job is going to be after Cooper is president?" asked Steven.

"Easier, actually. Things will be a lot wilder, but he'll probably legalize most everything so we won't have to worry about much."

"Sure, we won't have to round up as many punks, but I don't want to be out there when they start banging their heads against our car."

"So you gonna quit?"

"Not a chance. I like to eat."

☆ ☆ ☆

Bello looked up from his law books.

Nothing here makes Cooper an illegitimate president, he thought. I'll just have to make something up and see if they buy it.

Um. . . How can I put

"gross misconduct" into legal terms? Let's see. . .

☆ ☆ ☆

"So what are we going to do about it, Nate?" asked Reverend Dwight.

"I guess I'll run again in four years."

"But what about now? Imagine what Cooper could do to the country in four years!"

"Why don't you start a grass roots movement to resist him?" asked Nate.

"The roots are rotten."

"How are you going to get anywhere with that kind of attitude?"

"I don't know. Maybe if I learn how to sing, they'll listen to me."

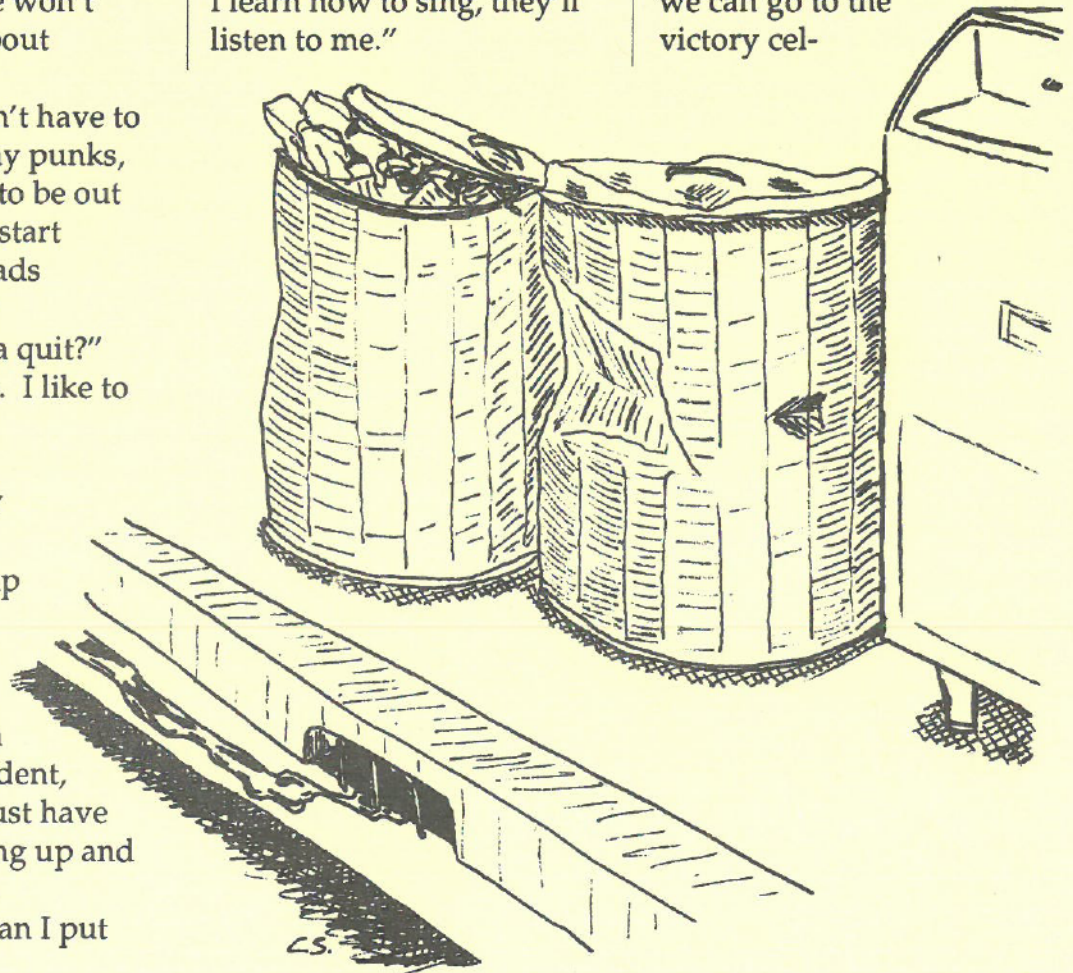
☆ ☆ ☆

Chad tripped over a can of black shoe polish. "Hey, Robin! Look what I found!" He picked up the can and opened it. "And it still has some left! Hold still." Chad proceeded to apply shoe polish around his girlfriend's eyes and mouth.

"How do I look?" Robin asked when Chad was through.

"You look great, Alice. Oops. I mean, you look great, Robin."

"Cute. Now it's your turn." She gave Chad the same makeup job. "Now we can go to the victory cel-



They walked, hoping there would be a little free food there.



Privately, Rozetta Pesch was becoming more and more pleased with the election results. She had voted for Nate Hale, but with news of Cooper's victory, sales had picked up. Why, just fifteen minutes ago some priest came in and purchased all of Cooper's twenty-four albums. He was muttering something about giving a sermon to denounce "that faggot."

Oh well, his cash was good.



An old man sat on his cot in the church. He was mumbling to himself.

"I should have stuck with Alice. I should have stayed in the band. I could have been in the cabinet. I could have had a warm bed. I could have had. . ."



Bello was mad. The other Senators had rejected his attempt to keep Cooper out of office because it was "not based on constitutional grounds." As if the Constitution were more important than society.

He stretched out on his

Pointless Pondering

by Scott Sullivan

What is defense?
I asked the country with bombs
the man with sun
the boy with imagination
"Dreams" he replied
looking up with swimming eyes
His is ignorance, I thought
and theirs - fear

Who would win the battle?
The country would kill the man
The man would kill the boy
Accidentally on some street corner
Maybe man was never meant
to gain knowledge
- start a fire
- turn a wheel
- ask why

As soon as life was
elevated beyond instinct
Ghosts lined up to moan

couch and went to sleep.



There was an empty bench on the street, so they sat on it. Chad and Robin were as hungry as normal but they weren't thinking about food, or jobs, or a place to sleep. Alice Cooper songs were running through their heads.

Robin pointed at the

horizon. "Chad, look! Mountains!"

"Where?"

"Oh. They're gone. The smog must have cleared up for a minute."

Chad coughed, opened his mouth, and sang. "Hello! Hooray! Let the show begin. . ."

Chuk Bean '93 is a Physics major and lives in Case Dorm.



The Glass

by Glen Hastings

Chipped, Cracked, and Stained,
Like a cloud in a strong wind,
Broken into a thousand pieces.

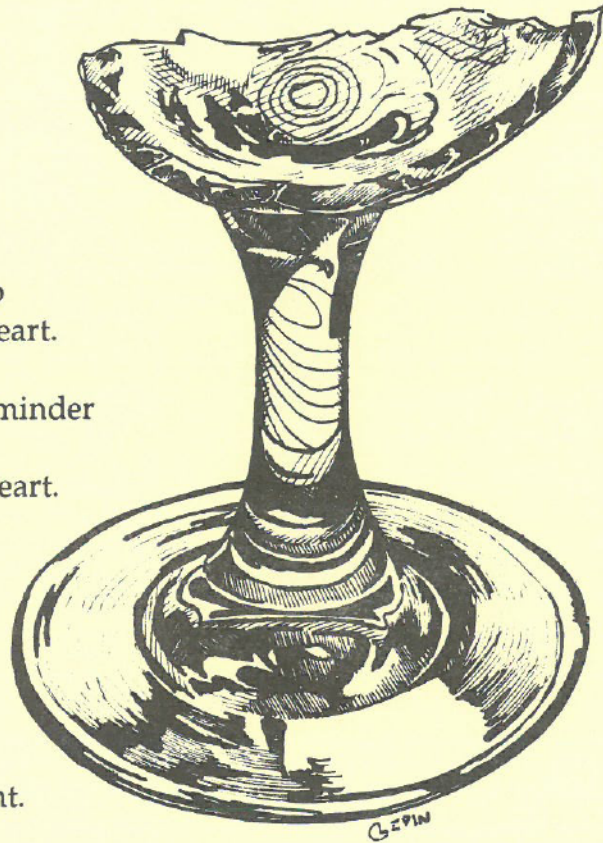
Hopes and dreams shattered.
The edges still sharp, cutting deep
Leaving only a bleeding broken heart.

The pieces remain, remain as a reminder
Of the beauty of love and peace,
And the rage which ravages the heart.

Violence is like a consuming fire
Burning and destroying all
And leaving only the ashes.

But it is upon these ashes
Where out of the chaos and fire
Springs new life, green and vibrant.

For life is like this glass, fragile yet strong.
It can be cracked, broken, and shattered,
But yet the base remains,
And upon this base
Will life and love return
If one just has hope and faith.



On Haiku

by Professor Jim Monson

Julie was saying to Jon, "Jim wrote a haiku once."

Flying butterfly,
Rambling rhinoceros.
Travel broadens us.

I hadn't thought about that haiku in years. In the late fifties, a flurry of interest in Zen Buddhism and things Japanese had inspired its writing. The classic 5-7-5 syllabic pattern had an appealing, deceptive simplicity. The haiku stayed on the refrigerator, held by its magnet, until displaced by the more timely artistic works of our children.

Many years later, haiku came into my life again. I was living in Sendai, the administrative center of the Tohoku region of northern Japan. I became interested in an earlier traveler to Tohoku, Matsuo Basho (1644-1694), who followed the narrow roads to the north. Basho was perhaps the greatest contributor to the development of haiku. I used his journal of his journey to Tohoku as my guidebook, enjoying his descriptions and haikus of the many places I visited.

Yamadera is a complex of beautiful temples covering the steep slopes of Mount Hoju. Here, Basho wrote his most famous haiku.

Shizukusa ya
Iwa ni shimiiru
Semi no koe

Quietness -
Sinking into the rocks,
A cicada's cry.

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NOTE: The translation of Basho's haiku is from Makoto Ueda, *Matsuo Basho*, Kodansha International Ltd., Tokyo, 1982.

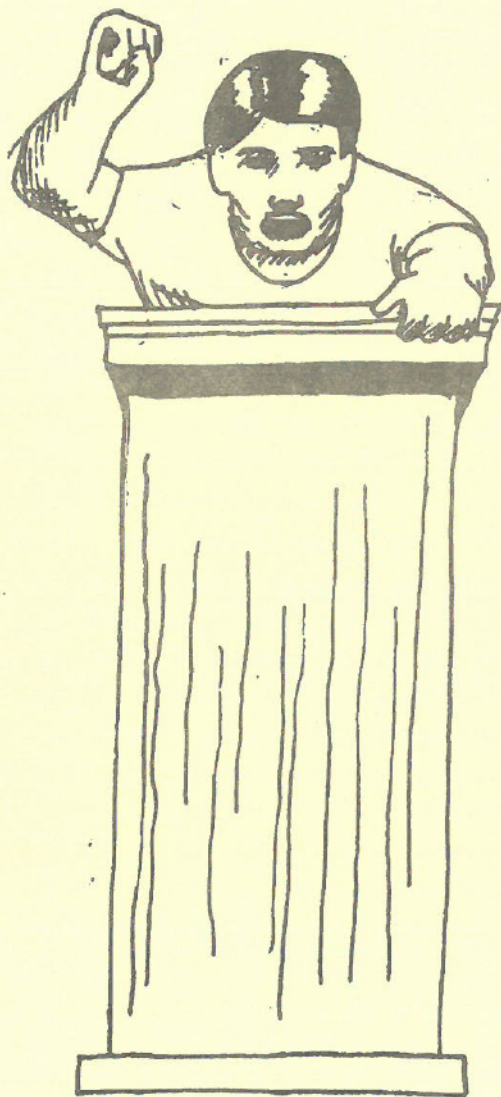
An Argument Against The War

by Guy Moore

I am but a simple farmer, unversed in the niceties of speech which Patrick Henry and his like can use to move your hearts; so I must endeavor to move your thoughts instead, and win your minds with the truthfulness of my speech and the justice of my cause.

You have heard Patrick Henry's appeal for this revolution against our brothers, the English; you have no doubt heard how those who oppose the war must be cowards who would rather live as slaves than die as free men. Well, I showed no such cowardice when the French and the fierce savages made war against us; I raised my gun and risked my life to defend our land and our loved ones from the savages, and I resent the implication that in not fighting when the fight is not just, I show cowardice.

Is this war just? Is it just for a son to strike a father? For so we are, the true sons of England, now grown to maturity and majesty, but still bound by our common tongue and our common



blood. We forget too quickly the land which raised our fathers, which gave us our laws, which taught us our language, which gave us our church so that we might worship the Lord, which won us our land so we may live in safety from the savages. A grown man should not

abandon the father who raised him, but should hold that father in the reverence and regard he has earned; so we cannot forget our English founders, but must stand by them in our strength as they stood by us in our weakness.

And yet the war party, with the support of a fraction of the people, would abandon our English brothers and leave us without their protection. To whom, then, shall we turn? We must either enlist ourselves in the service of another great power, or forge an alliance with the Puritan merchants to the north, or face the world of nations alone without ally.

To enlist in the service of another great power after severing our ties with the English is quite absurd. If we must live under the guidance of some European state, there is none more suited than England, the ruler of the seas, England, our partners in language and religion, that most industrious and devoted of nations. And if we have any grievances with the purported misgovernances of the English, who act to protect us and maintain for us the fair rule of law, I cannot but wonder how we

would chafe under the stern hand of the French king or the Spanish, or how we would suffer from the rude exploitation of the Dutch merchant men. No power in Europe is better suited for alliance than the English, whose friendship we would cast aside by revolution.

Then, forsaking every power in Europe, we may turn to a union with the colonies to our north, who first raised this struggle against the English. Today, while we are yet few and need strength to stand in the world of nations, they too are few and weak, and can be of no great service; yet as we grow in strength and majesty, they too grow quickly in number and appetite. Today they say they seek alliance, while seeking in truth a market; but tomorrow they will seek to rule where today they trade, for they are desirous of the products of our fine soil and hope we shall become dependent on their manufactures when those of England have been cut off from us. And as they are desirous of our produce they are fearful of our progress, unaccustomed to our ways, leery of our westward expansion, and hateful of our slaveholding.

They speak of democracy, which is rule by the many, meaning the North;

would such Northern rule allow our continued settlement to the west, or long allow slavery to continue? By joining them we give them the authority to cut us off from our rightful claims to the Kentucky territory, to wall us off from England with high tariffs, and to steal our rights to our slave property, all under the pretense of democracy and rule of law. Far better to serve under the protective wing of England, which even now asks to negotiate over our grievances, than to give ourselves over to the aggressive North.

And what if we venture into the world without ally? We need no help against the brutal savage, and can no doubt keep the Spaniard in Florida and the Frenchman once in Canada at bay; but I hesitate to think we can resist the piracy which would prey on our coasts, and we would have earned in one move the enmity of the two powers most important to us, the English and the North; for the English would never assist a power which had unjustly rebelled from them, and the North would fear the expansion of a neighbor who had shunned and snubbed them, and would be far more able to prevent our settlement to the west as a separate power than as part of a single state. Our sons will have no fresh land to

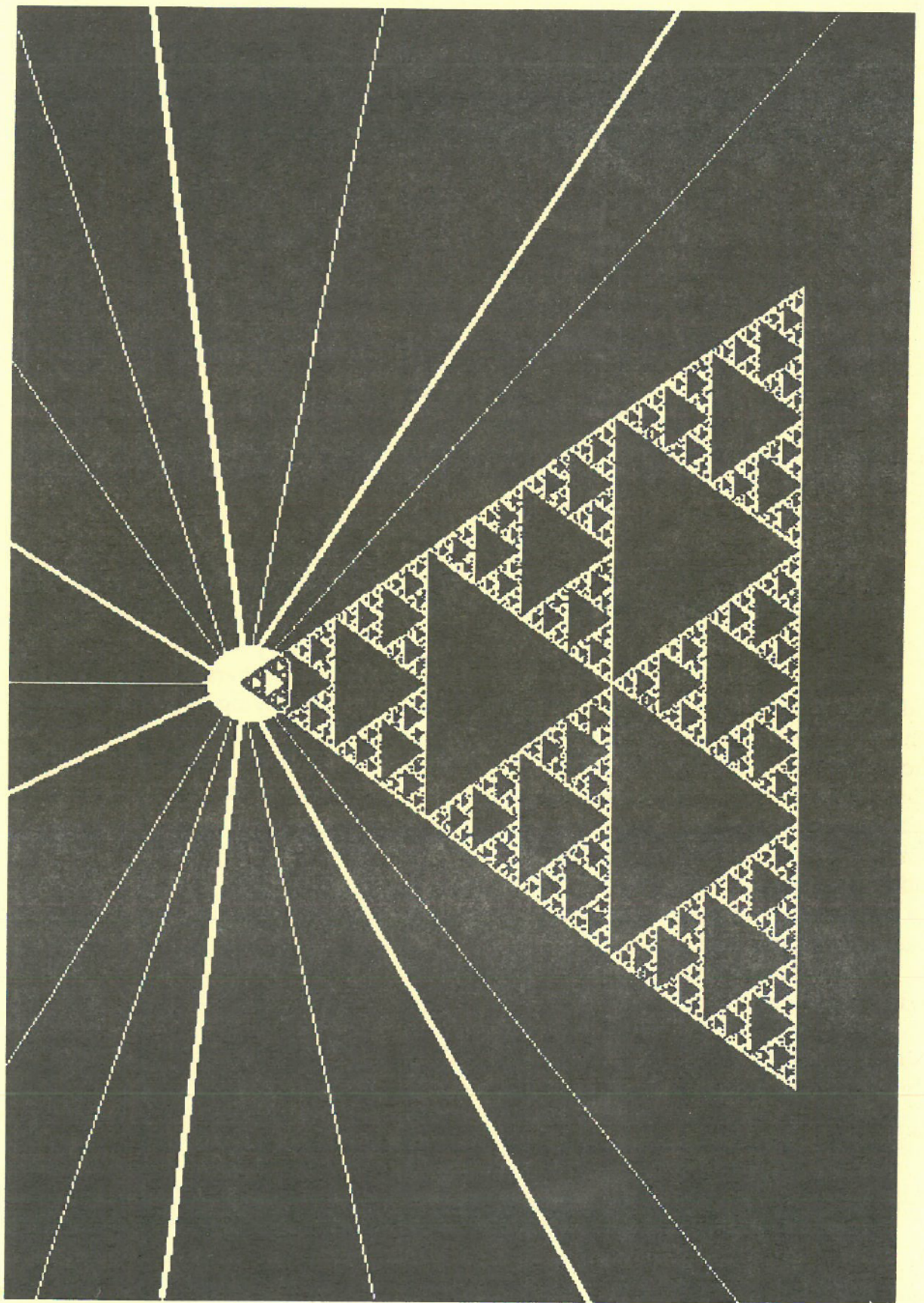
forge their farmsteads, and we will languish, fettered on all sides, paying heavy duties for all our goods, wares, and produce, when we could instead buy cheaply from England and expand freely westward under their guiding protection. Let the North go if they will, but we should follow at our own peril.

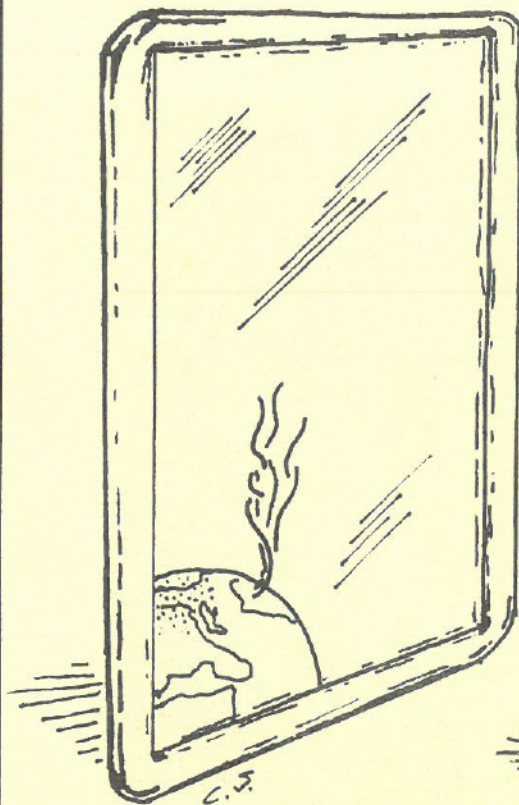
I am a Virginian, and I love my state as none other; for we are the greatest state, with the greatest laws, in all the world; but I am also an Englishman, a servant of the King as my father was and his father before. The state could no more stand without the nation as the man without the family, and so I hope to do the greatest service to my state by serving my nation, for only under the nation of England can we win freedom and prosperity for ourselves and posterity.

Guy Moore '92 is a Physics major and lives in South Dorm.

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Picture Imperfect

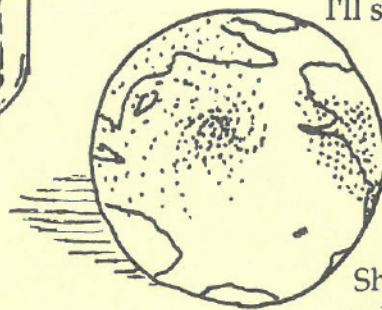
by Daniel McClelland

Picture a world plated with gold --
I'll show you greed one-hundred fold.

Picture a world sunny and bright--
and I'll show you a blind man's night.

Picture a world at peace, not war--
and I'll show you corruption's core.

Picture people who cannot cope--
I'll show you my world's lack of hope.



Some believe in Utopia
(I know it's not here)
living lives of escapism;
others drowned in beer.

Show me something I can believe:
polluted oceans, drug-filled streets,
self-indulgence (myself to please).
Why do people just sit in their seats
and let others destroy all the trees?
Destroying all without reprieve.

Picture a world barren of life--
I'll show you a world without strife.

Under Apocalyptic Skies

by Becky Jensen

Under apocalyptic skies, I stand
and watch the planets crash at my feet.
Under apocalyptic skies, I wander
through endless worlds without meaning.
Under apocalyptic skies, I dance
for the sheer ecstasy of total destruction.
Under apocalyptic skies, I sing
to the stars in their tightening whorl.
Under apocalyptic skies, I laugh
as the bitterness bubbles up overwhelmingly.
Under apocalyptic skies, I cry
for the beauty and the color and the fire.
Under apocalyptic skies, I live
for I am a pure entity and created of life.
Under apocalyptic skies, I die
and lay my body down beneath tumultuous heavens.

powers of prophecy and doom, soul and flame
cover me gently, farewell.

Enshrouded, I turn my face
forever to apocalyptic skies.

What we want!

Do you doodle in lecture?
Do you draw for fun?
Do you have the wit of Dr. Lector?
Or just write poetry in the sun?

SOL iMpROV is looking
For prose, poetry, and art
If you've got somethin' cookin',
Now's the time to start!

Yes! SOL iMpROV desperately needs submissions from both students and faculty. We're here to serve the Mudd community, but before we can do that, we need your artistic talent. Submissions have been sparse this semester, and we fear that much of the community has not been represented because much of the present material is from our own crew. So *please*, submit your works of art and join us in serving the community.

SOL iMpROV is also looking for Mudders to work on the magazine. We have the need for people to draw spot art for stories and poetry, as well as production folks who know (or are willing to learn) how to run Pagemaker. We also need people to proofread and critique the works we receive. If you are at all interested or curious, please come to one of our meetings at Case Dorm Kitchen Lounge on Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM.

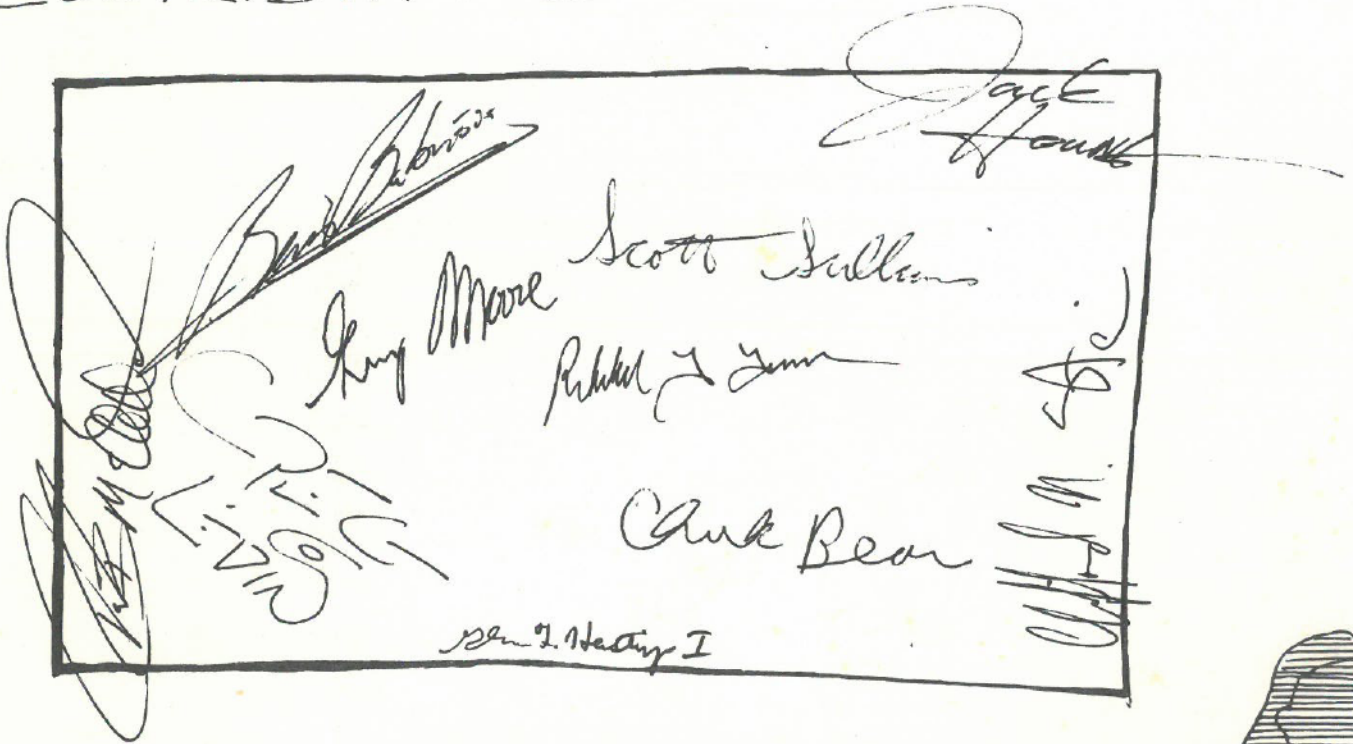


What It Is!

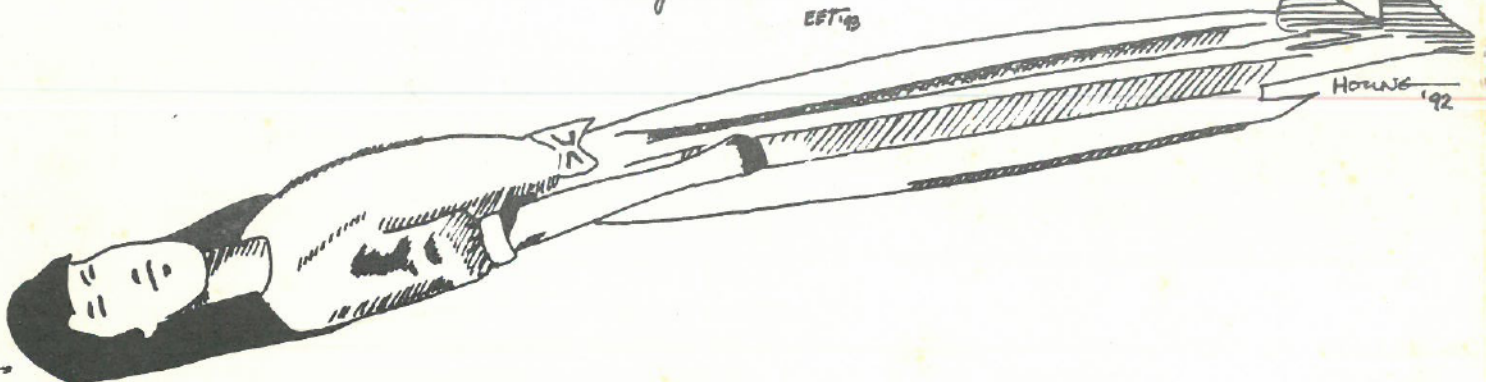
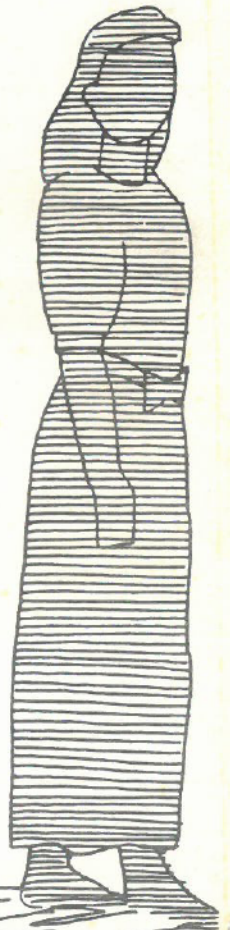
SOL iMpROV is a periodic publication that seeks to complement one of the main purposes of Harvey Mudd College as stated in the Preamble of the Student Handbook: "to emphasize an understanding of the human purposes and aspirations their knowledge can serve." To this end, SOL iMpROV promotes the process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

SOL iMpROV is also an ongoing process; 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 a jarthur account (improv@jarthur) for your convenience. We appreciate your input in all its forms.

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