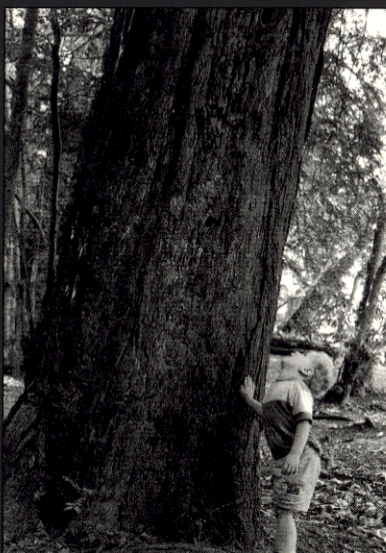




TOTEM 2002



"HUMBOLDT COAST REDWOODS" by JUDY POST 35 millimeter

Memoriam-A Duet
for Steve Craver September 26,2001

swing low sweet	could the sky be any clearer
swing low sweet	try not to sleep, the car ride (world) will be more real
will God's morning come	
oh sweet chariot	John says to eat cheddar gold
	fish if we get hungry
oh sweet	bitter death taste
	the stars' reflection on the desert's face
sweet chariot	
	he said he'd only be a minute
coming back to carry	upstairs
	elfish frame hovering in the air
swing low, sweet chariot	Steve, frozen glistening (happy)
	in my mind
coming back to carry me home	

God, he'll never see another clear night sky.

Liddy's Junkie

I flash her that smile, the one that's not much to look at, but radiates confidence. And I can feel her get infected by it, then the world starts to blur as the high kicks in. The high that can only come from having some else interested, someone new in your sights....

Getting things going is a hard thing to do, I've never figured out how to set it off and go pro. Yet I've managed to make myself a comfortable amateur's living, grabbing chance when she walks by. Opportunity doesn't sneak up on me anymore; it crashes into me like a wall. A wall that breaks up into a warm wave, its heat, numbing my brain, making everything slow down. Everything except my mouth, that somehow manages to speed up, faster than my brain can turn it off. When her own smile breaks through, the flame heats up and at that moment I let go of all the guilt. Who cares if I don't believe what I'm saying. Who cares if Liddy is waiting for me, waiting for me to take her out, waiting to celebrate our anniversary, again.

What matters is that I've got a fix going here and I need to finish her off. I never promised this girl anything, I never told her that I was a good guy. Its not my fault she needs to believe it so bad, so bad that she turned off her own mind. It doesn't turn on again until later that night, when I am on top of her and say Liddy's name. I can feel her recoil, and freeze up, but its too late and I am starting to come down. I can see her eyes start to catch on fire and I brace myself for the storm that's about to break. The body aches begin, cursing through me, emanating from that torn open wound inside of me. And yet... somehow she manages to catch herself before saying anything. Probably cause she realizes she never really asked the right questions, she knew the answers and just didn't want to hear them said out loud. How could she not, all the signs were there and she blew them off, its not my fault, and besides we both know we'll never see each other again so what's the point, right? I know I didn't do anything wrong, I never promised her anything, even if she thinks I did, I never said the words. As we both get dressed I can see all the cobwebs start to leave her. I can see reality slam into her little world and its not pretty, but that's okay cause neither am I.

So now that the fix has run dry and I need Liddy to help me come down. I show up at her place at three am, all it takes is one knock on the door. She's been waiting up for me, and so it starts again, our clockwork routine. She asks me where I've been and I lie. I tell her I fell asleep; we both know it's a horrible lie, my worst yet. But it doesn't matter, I stopped putting thoughts into my lies a long time ago, back when Liddy got tired and stopped testing them. Now its just part of our old, twisted, beautiful dynamic. She can smell the other girl all over my body and liquor on my clothes. Still, she lets me, cause like I said it doesn't matter. Liddy and I have grown beyond the truth at this point in our relationship. Even at this time of night I am still her best high. We've spent five years of our lives living like this. Our friends stopped trying to "fix" us a while ago. Now they just silently judge us from above on high. They can't understand Liddy and me... they can't afford to. If we can be happy like this their worlds are the ones that get warped and don't make sense. Well, five years of stability as far as I am concerned. They can all fade away as far as I am concerned. My mother told me something once, she said, "the next time you're main lining don't forget to have some quaaludes handy cause they really take the edge of the fall"... she has no idea how much I listen to her.

Liddy and I got married last summer.

"SUNSET AT LAKE TAHOE" by RYAN SAMSON 35 millimeter



"SNOWY EGRET" by JUDY POST 35 millimeter

Visiting (at her grave)

I have brought for you
a smile, and a pine cone
– two small emblems
of each year I have missed you
oh I love you I love you
my lovely, I love you
one of these years
with nothing left to bring
I will sink into your soil
cuddle in close
and leave for another
the cluttered fatigue
of love and remembrance.

DANA SADAVA

"Dear,"

All night I hear the hush and tickle of this rain,
Its surf and surge. Your whisper.

I

And with the break and birth of day,
The grass and leaves perspire and steam -
The specks of light on shrubs blink
And hesitate - the sky in the far, untouched.

The blunder and vacuum of clouds
Fades. The wind in the bushes sways -
And in the crescendo of silence emerges a beam,
A tender notion to faith.

I wish I had known you, for now
Twenty freckles of light spot the sheers,
And in this most violent of reveilles, (1)
The dawn in my room throws soft sunlight.

II

The satins and silks, the sheers and sheets
Yearn for a glimpse to mimic your slope and curl -
The covers a cradle warm
With your dream-sighs.

And, with the hush promise of your lips
Still a whimper away
(Two-thousand memories pass before the screen) -
I throw open the heavy theater curtains
To a stage cold and sober with morning.

The sun is pale. Its sleepy eye
Just blinking beyond the hill. My knees
Are old and creak, the weak noisy machine.
It is cold to run.

III

But now I feel my feet are lighter.
The chill now makes my lungs grow tighter.
And spring, sprint, sprawl: I am a finch!
And no Lesser bird (2) could so believe

This soft heaven to be found in the *connaissance* (3)
That within this being of dust and soot
There is a wondrous urge to breathe, to once again

Feel the soft-setting of your gaze and your smile.

For on this tiny path winding so far from my home,
The soft breeze in your touch weaves
Through the last of the harvest bend and turn
In the whirlwinds of your dress.

IV

The streetlights throw my shadow -
Oh how the malaria is so savage
A disease to sweat out bright, dark,
Bright shivering!

The indecision of this race as horizon turns to sky,
These pleasant paths now a slow turn to mountain.
And my fever a drudgery trudging
Up, up this hill.

A train sounds one mile away, its hum a dirge to
A sun-bearer infinitely tired and sad,
Up to this humility peak, the animal within so
generously
malicious -
I sigh.

V

Two years after our love, I saw you
Staring at a nest of two-hundred colorful ribbons -
A dream from my toy box
After my return.

The world fades and sways in my veins -
That this message thrown to the wind
Will never bush across your feet.
And

I, muse, cannot think of this beautiful joke,
My laughter a mere cough, soft.
Once more, your idea has whispered me away -
Your sober gaze distant and my ankles weak.

1 - Reveilles (reh-VAY-uhs, French) - Dreams

2 - Lesser Bird of Paradise - a type of tropical bird, the males are highly
for their bright and colorful plumes.

3 - *Connaissance* (ko-NAY-sonce, French) - Knowledge

CHRISTOPHER MEAGHER

"EMILIO'S STANCE" by BEVERLY KARIHSON acrylic on canvas



"A LONG NIGHT AHEAD" by EMILIO CASTAÑO GRAFF 35 millimeter

Rain in Pasadena

The rain is drumming heavily and monotonously on the hood of my red raincoat. My feet are drumming as monotonously and not any less heavily on the pavement. I am running through Pasadena's street on this winter weekday morning to get my head clear of the strange night from which I had been awoken just minutes ago by the same rain drumming against my window, heavily and monotonously. Not from the very same rain drops of course, but from the same fancy of the weather.

I've had a pretty rough night fighting dragons and stuff, so I was really exhausted when the rain woke me up. All the eyes-rubbing and head-shaking did not help, I still felt the dragons pounce on me. I decided to take a run to get my head clear, despite the rain. Or because? So, here I am now, splashing through the puddles of Pasadena's sidewalks that have turned into streams and creeks following the same boring rectangular road pattern that dominates the map of every American city. The palm leaves are hanging in the rain like abandoned party decoration. You know, palm trees in a rain storm look ridiculous in a way. It just doesn't fit - palms and rain. Palm trees stand for sunny beaches in travel catalogs. Rain stands for suing the travel agency.

There is a dream catcher hanging on the wall, just in the middle over the head end of my bed. Of course, it has to hang over the head - how else could it catch the dreams? As, of course, the dreams are always going into our heads. Coming out of our heads? Whichever, mine is still throbbing like hell. This dream catcher is patiently watching me when I sleep and takes care of my dreams. It must have had a busy time last night, it probably got overloaded. Maybe I should get it exchanged.

I keep on running, automatically, like a clockwork. Passing cars wave at me with their wipers. I wave back, but neither the cars nor the people hiding behind their windscreens seem to notice. They are too busy following their daily routine, slightly disturbed by the rain that is drumming heavily and monotonously on the hoods of both my red raincoat and their cars. I stop waving. I am not a lunatic after all, I think. My legs have become cold and numb. They keep running on their own, I don't have to worry about them. Let them have their fun, I'll have mine. Did I mention that my raincoat is bright red? I like my red raincoat. Red is such a wonderful color on a gray day. And finally, you would only wear a raincoat on a gray day anyway, wouldn't you? So, giving a raincoat a bright red color is the ingenious foresight of raincoat creators who put themselves into the place of raincoat wearers being rained on.

The world pretty rapidly becomes foggy, which fills me with some concern. I find myself relieved when taking off my glasses turns the world from foggy to blurry. It is quite astonishing how a little deed like taking off one's glasses can change such a big world. Well, for me the world is what I see, of course. So, the world is blurry now. But that's much better than foggy. Of what use is a sharp world to me when I can't see it for the fog? My head feels dizzy from all the parts of my sub-consciousness that I had to go through during the night, the dragons only being one of these evanescent appearances, albeit one of the more lasting sort - if this is a term that can be applied to dreams at all. Dreams are so unfaithful; they come and go as they please and don't care about you and your desire to hold and analyze them. Perhaps I should wring out my dream catcher over a large pile of white paper, letter size. Or over my computer keyboard? Or over a video tape? I'll have to think about this; but not now, I'm still too sleep drunken. The rain becomes stronger. I splash into an ankle-deep puddle that I have seen too late and soak my sneakers and socks. Well, maybe there is something to a sharp world after all....

I come to a traffic light that is raincoat red. Obediently I press the button the sign on top of which tells me to. The cars are still waving at me, only this time threateningly, because I have stopped them in their mad run with the tip of my finger. I feel power surging through my body. Instead of crossing the road, I wait until the traffic light becomes raincoat red again, and the cars start with howling engines. Somewhat hesitantly my finger moves towards the button, and finally dares to push it again. Only seconds later the cars are stopping and waving at me furiously. Leaning against the lamppost, I am just grinning back and stay at my side of the street. The next time, my finger is already more confident of its power and pushes the button strongly all the way through. Seventeen cycles later, I begin to worry about my finger becoming too power-hungry and about the rush hour people behind the windscreens becoming too annoyed at the weirdo in his red raincoat leaning against the lamppost holding up rush hour traffic in its heavy and monotonous run. I cross the street by only jumping on the yellow stripes of the zebra pattern. You never know what could happen to you if you hit one of the black gaps. Would you want to risk it? Having reached the other side, I can just convince my finger not to stay on and practice button-pushing also from this side of the street.

A little cold from the standing and making faces to car drivers I am sprinting home. For the last couple of hundred meters I take off the hood - I want to feel the rain. Back in my warm apartment, I tear off the steaming clothes and my soaked sneakers and socks. I hang my red raincoat next to the window - the contrast with the gray sky is marvelous.

Entering the bathroom stark naked, a guy with dripping hair smiles at me from the mirror. I draw the shower curtain and let rain drops drum heavily and monotonously on my head. I love when it rains in Pasadena.

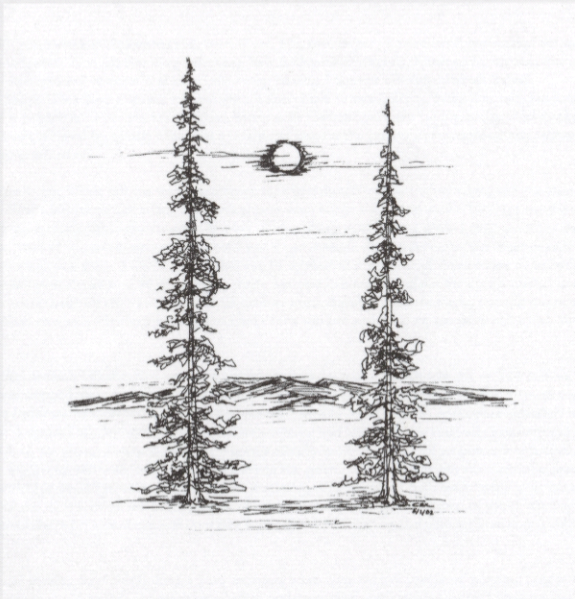
Pasadena, 15.01.02

DIRK WALTHER

Two Ponds

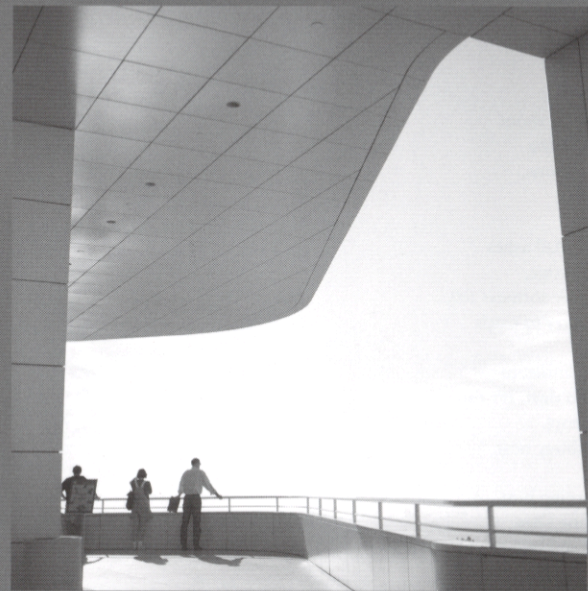
Twin ponds sparkle with fallen stardust,
Reflections of a gentle soul beneath calm waters.
Cautious shadows echo upon their depths,
Ponderous revelations told by voiceless whispers,
Buoyed only by the moon's unconcerned smile.
Divine conversation between heaven and earth
Blows ripples across the cerulean nightscape.
A dove kisses trembling willow branches.
Earth turns away from god's gentle caress.

YE LI



by CHUCK YEE pen on paper

"REFLECTIONS" by EMILIO CASTAÑO GRAFF 6x6 centimeter



Black Cows, Beer, and Cigarettes

Loosened up by Lucky Lager
or by Pabst Blue Ribbon beer,
he'd not deny me my Black Cow
on fourth-grade Friday nights

at the chrome-rimmed kitchen table,
where he sits in undershirt
and workpants, while he's
smoking, drinking, nodding;

counting on that quart of beer
to help him to forget
the day, the weeks,
the months, the years.

Soon he'd grin and move about
the kitchen slowly gathering
ice cream, root beer, spoons,
and glasses for us both.

I would watch his Pall Mall ashes
growing long at table's edge,
and when the warm grey softness fell,
with cupped hands I'd try to catch

its shape be fore it hit linoleum
and turned from ash to dust. It's then
I'd rub it in my corduroys,
like dad without an ashtray near.

Next, I'd slide the burning butt
to get it back out on the edge
where ash could start to build again,
or he'd just light another one.

Simple favors for each other,
catching ash/creating Cows,
went on between my dad and me
for more than thirty years, I know.

Saying little, touching less,
until an hour before he died.

GEORGE SHULTZ

Innocuousness

"Hi.
How are you?
I'm fine," I lied
Presenting the public face
The public wants to see
Knowing there's a truth
That's deep,
Sad,
And serious;
A side too burdensome
For public conveyance,
Too problematic
For casual contact
So I smile, and I lie
Knowing perfectly well
That you're lying too.

KAREN HURST

"SLOVENIAN STREAM" by FREDERICK ROMBERG 1024x768 pixels



by VIJAYANTHI BALARAMAN 35 millimeter



by WILL HELTSLEY 35 millimeter

the unemployment sonnet

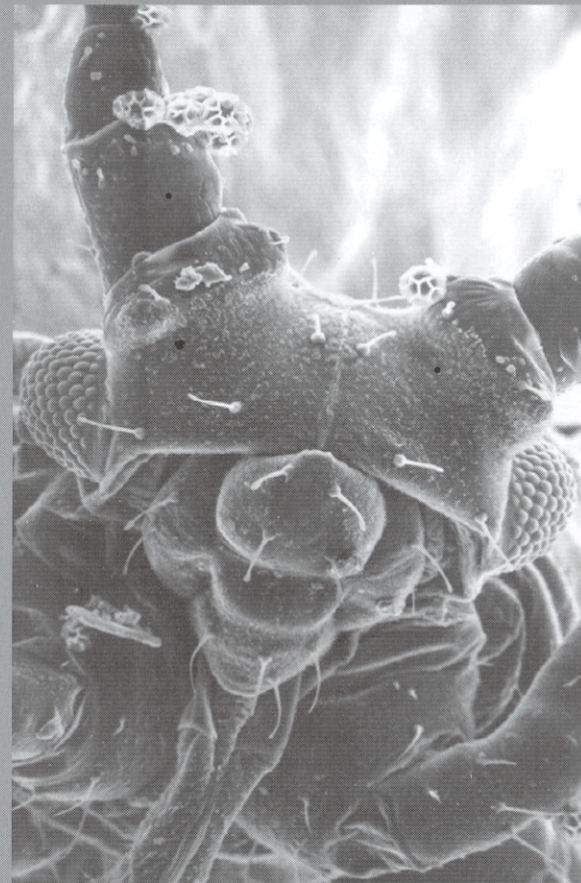
O! What misfortune o'er the head may fall
Of he who must the labourer's life hate
Of he who deaf'd his ear to labour's call
Of he who in such calamitous state

Can buy nor shoe for foot nor hat for pate?
What wants the man who for all wanting goes
But that which he finds furnished by fair fate
But that which from the fertile earth up-grows

Or that which from her arteries out-flows?
O, painful life of living on the cheap
Whose poverty and peace he freely chose
Your treasures transcendent he now can reap!

To live a little while as lazy slob
Seems far more meet than yet another job.

"ROCKPAPERSCISSORS" by MICHELLE GIRON light on photo paper



"THE MARTIANS HAVE LANDED..." by JEAN-PAUL REVEL scanning electron microscope

"CHURCH ALLEY" by KAMILEE CHRISTENSON 4x5 inch



Mexico

I'd say come away to ocean or
to land-the small arm
reaching south and west-
her thin legs crossed beneath her
bended near her side, a body thick
hard, sweatless, dark skinned
Judith (Julia) waiting in a desert dusk
silent air entering her nostrils
flow out the long shaft, her rifle
points, lips pulled across
"Conquistador," it mocks.



by MICHELLE GIRON 35 millimeter

"CANE GARDEN BAY" by FREDERICK ROMBERG 1024x768 pixels



"Glasgow"

Through spotted, sullied window glass
Through fleeting boxcar after car
Immersed in stony faded sun
Weatherworn telephone poles
 All peeling, limp, forgotten
 Ever more content to rotting

Trodden fences, feeble boundaries
Hills' horizon close around
Windless hang the grasses now
Stillness, only, rounds the bales
 No greater cause than seeing
 Little needed there but being

This passing screams an aberration--
The steel beneath has settled home
The streaking shadow even so
And yet the inner world defies
 Defined in isolation
 Neglecting outer desolation

50 miles an hour Montana
Stubbed fields and foothills spread
So many blips between boxcars
Now another lonely station
 Shut in once again we pass
 Still silent under spotted glass

Eating Grapes

Oh, to enjoy life,
as ~~fasting~~ and bittersweet as it is.
It's like popping an insignificant moment into the mouth,
and letting it roll around,
colliding with the canines and the molars;
Feeling the ~~delicate~~ peel on the tongue,
smooth and abrasive at the same time;
Appreciating its bland perfect wholeness,
and then to **finally** squeeze
just a bit,
and feeling the sudden release;
Breaking through that fragile barrier
and reaching the **pungent** succulent flesh,
which bleeds the musty, tangy ~~nectar of the gods~~;
Slowly sucking and chewing,
savoring the *acidic* sweetness,
ever savoring,
until finally the pulp is all but **DISSOLVED**;
And the moment passes down the throat,
to be followed by another tiny moment;
a moment that is similar,
but never the same,
not exactly the same.
Every moment is *relished*,
the tart pleasure echoing through **TIME**,
to be called on when needed
from the *casks* of memories,
the tubs of moments;
Although few are remembered distinctly,
these individual, **negligible** moments make up an eternity;
And this is to enjoy life.

"LIGHT AND DARK" by NICHOLAS A. KNOUF 1280x960 pixels



by JORDAN MILLER watercolor



by VIJAYANTHI BALARAMAN 35 millimeter

Acolytes of the Moon

We were children that sat through the night
As the wind wove its hands through our hair,
And we feasted our eyes on the light
Of the flowers that bloomed in the air.
There were fireflies casting their light
On the flowers that bloomed in the air
As they drifted around in the sky
Through the warmth of the month of July

Do you long for those innocent days
When we laughed at the passing of years?
We are trapped at the ends of a maze
By the shimmering depth of our tears.
I would cross to your end of this maze
And undo the progression of years,
But the distance between you and me
Has been drowned by the sapphire sea.

So let's meet on the stairway to hell
Where we feast side by side on the moon.
Then our summers are quenched by the well
Of the creamy white light of the moon,
And our winters are warmed by the well
Of the buttery light of the moon,
Which is salty and bitter, but sweet
Like the ocean that lies at our feet.

"SHROUD OVER LOWER MANHATTAN" by NICHOLAS A. KNOUF 1280x960 pixels



In America, every day is a new beginning, every sunset is merely the latest milestone on a voyage that never ends.
For this is the land that has never become, but is always in the act of becoming.

Ronald Reagan

The Totem would like to thank all whose help has brought this issue into being:

ASCIT
The Words Matter Committee
GSC
Humanities & Social Science
Public Relations
The MOSH
Alumni Association
Campus Auxiliary Business Services
The Digital Media Center
Student Affairs
Development and Alumni Relations
Student/Faculty Programs
Institute Archives

All who submitted their creations to the Totem

Editor-in-Chief Alvaro Masias

Layout Editor Emilio Castaño Graff

Web editor Nicholas A. Knouf

Business Manager Martha-Helene Stapleton

Assistant editors Lucie Lee
Katherine Mack
Yuliya Ruvinskaya
Steven Shepard
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