



unicorn

unicorn

UNICORN is published quarterly by the students of Loyola College. Subscriptions are \$4 for one year.

All submissions must be accompanied by an SASE, and all are eligible for cash prizes. Shorter fiction is preferred, and no more than five poems per submission. We ask that you also include a brief biographical note.

Send all correspondence to:

The Editors
UNICORN
Loyola College
Baltimore, Md. 21212

Copyright 1977 by the authors.
All rights revert to the author.

Member of COSMEP and CCLM.

A Quarterly of Literature and Art

Spring, 1977

Vol. 6, No. 3

Loyola College of Baltimore

CONTENTS

POEM CITY	
<i>poetry by Elliot Fried</i>	3
FROM THE JOURNAL	
<i>poetry by Nancy Barry</i>	4
<i>artwork by Patti Gura</i>	5
TRACKS	
<i>poetry by Elliot Fried</i>	6
PHANTASM	
<i>poetry by Janice Hogan</i>	7
ATLANTA FEDERAL PRISON, 1920	
<i>poetry by Don Sandnes</i>	8
A SOLDIER FOR THE EMPEROR LEAVES FOR BURMA, 1943	
<i>poetry by Don Sandnes</i>	9
GRAY HORSES PULL	
<i>poetry by Jesse Glass, Jr.</i>	10
THE ELITE GEEK	
<i>fiction by Bob Farmer</i>	11
<i>artowkr by Sam De Mattos, Jr.</i>	14
WALKING ON A BEACH ON A SUMMER'S AFTERNOON	
<i>poetry by Lynne Dowell</i>	16
THE BROOK	
<i>poetry by James Maher</i>	17
NAMING DEER CREEK	
<i>poetry by Ruth Moose</i>	18
A LIGHT BULB	
<i>poetry by Paul Lake</i>	19
RED HOTS	
<i>poetry by Jill Grossman</i>	20
THE PLATE GLASS WINDOW	
<i>poetry by Mike Reis</i>	21
ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND	
<i>poetry by D. R. Belz</i>	22
THE SUN LIFTS	
<i>poetry by Vicki Aversa</i>	23
<i>artwork by Tom Mitchell</i>	24
DREAM #3	
<i>poetry by Ginny Friedlander</i>	25
I WATCH YOU SLEEP	
<i>poetry by G. Jeff Whittaker</i>	26
PREMONITION	
<i>poetry by Linda Pastan</i>	27
 <i>cover artwork by R. Weisgian</i>	

Poem City

HOWDY FOLKS THIS IS YOUR OLD BUDDY ELLIOT FRIED OF FRIED'S POEM CITY LOCATED JUST A FEW FEET FROM THE 91 FREEWAY IN THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF LONG BEACH FOLKS WE HAVE A TREMENDOUS SELECTION OF NEW AND USED POEMS TO CHOOSE FROM THOUSANDS OF THEM TRADE IN YOUR OLD WORN OUT DOGGEREL AND GET INTO SOME SMART NEW STANZAS ALL OF OUR USED POEMS ARE FULLY EXPLICATED AND GUARANTEED FREE OF CLICHES FOR 30 READINGS OR 30 DAYS WHICHEVER COMES FIRST IF YOU'RE NOT HAPPY BRING YOUR POEM BACK AND WE'LL REWRITE IT FREE OF CHARGE FOLKS YOU NAME IT WE GOT IT HERE FREE VERSE BLANK VERSE THE EVER POPULAR ENGLISH SONNET AND THE NEW RACY ITALIAN SESTINA WE GOT EM ALL FOR THE ECONOMY MINDED WE HAVE A GIGANTIC SELECTION OF JAPANESE HAIKUS AMAZING HOW FAR THESE BABIES WILL TRAVEL ON JUST 17 SYLLABLES OR GET INTO SOME SPORTY NEW FREE VERSE MANY OF OUR POEMS HAVE BEEN READ ONLY FIVE OF SIX TIMES AND NOT ONE HAS EVER BEEN WRITTEN UPON BY A GRADUATE ENGLISH MAJOR OUR SERVICE DEPARTMENT HAS THE BEST SET OF METRIC TOOLS IN THE CITY THEY'LL SMOOTH OUT ANY IRREGULARITIES AND TIE DOWN ALL LOOSE ALLUSIONS ALL POEMS ARE CAREFULLY POLISHED BEFORE LEAVING THE LOT BRING THE KIDS AND LET THEM PLAY WITH OUR FRIENDLY OXYMORONS WHILE YOU SHOP AROUND THIS WEEKEND ONLY WE'LL GIVE YOU A FREE SET OF MATCHING SAUCERS AND COUPLETS JUST FOR DROPPING BY FOLKS THESE POEMS ARE GOING FAST SO COME ON DOWN TO POEM CITY TODAY.

---Elliot Fried

From the Journal

The night air breathes the moon
into position, while the birches
ink their way thicker in the sky.
The landscape yawns like a half-
finished picture, a drawing someone
left undone for lack of light,
waiting for the first brush strokes
of morning to sweep the sketch away
for want of a different picture.
Earth fading fast in this
daguerreotype greyness, the oaks
embarrassed by their autumn
baldness their branches minor
scars still showing from the
summer.

Everywhere I look this dull
blank stare--from earth, from
sky, from life itself--blinking
once as I put out the lights
and climb my father's stairs
to hear him purring like some
fatted cat. He always told me:
"We come into this world crying
and we leave knowing why."
I swallow one more day down
into sleep, with all its
pictures left unfinished,
all its stories left untold,
thinking that it's just as well
we're left undone to greet the
morning.

---Nancy Barry



Tracks

We walked on separate rails, father and I,
rails connected by rotting wooden ties,
never talking on those long gray mornings,
past stiff-brick factories, smokestacks, windows.
Cinders crunched and the long slow freights clanked by.
Squat grimy diesels dragged boxcars boxcars.
We left his De Soto parked in a field.
I was 8 or 10 or 12. We walked in rain.
Gray fedora, black brim, brown overcoat kept him dry.
His flat black shoes skidded off thin tracks.
We walked past switches spurs dead ends. Yardmen
hunched in tall stone towers stared down at us
threading through a maze of steel. We walked
on separate rails for years and never talked.

---Elliot Fried

Phantasm

Seized
my fear-horse
by the rein
grabbed horn and mane
and tightened knees
bent low
know not what form
he will take next
wild-eyed and
painted
Black.

---Janice Hogan

Atlanta Federal Prison, 1920

An angelic Gene Debs
At sixty-five, stands
In his prison cottons
Cradling a dozen
American Beauty
Roses in his arms:
Another election,
Someone forgotten.

---Don Sandnes

A Soldier for the Emperor Leaves for Burma, 1945

His fresh shorn hair and clipped nails
Wait in a crypt, hedge against his return,
Second guess his death. His father, staid,
Walks with him as far as the tram;
His mother, still, stays behind.

He cups an orange in his hand,
Considers the Mandarin, the seed.
His eyes, on a red sun set,
Moon among the ashen Asian skies
Above Kagoshima harbor.

Curbed close with sea-birds, dusk
Denies a sense of Spring.

---Don Sandnes

gray horses pull
the governor's wife
sweating in her green dress
thru the city

a blue veil tumbles
to her knees
from a hat
full of stuffed birds

she is so fat & dim
she cannot see
what makes
the horses tremble
in their silk
harnesses.

---Jesse Glass, Jr.

The Elite Geek

---Bob Farmer

I went to the carnival the first day it was in town. The town council's Special Projects Committee had boasted that this year the carnival would be the best ever. The claim was not an unusual one for them, but I sensed that this time they honestly thought they had something.

My initial impression was that it was no different than the others. The gambling wheels were much the same, as were the amusement rides, as too, were the "skill" games. But as I walked farther I noticed a banner stretched high between two posts, proudly proclaiming "Special Attractions."

Under the banner were several of the town's "leading citizens." The mayor was there smiling, nodding and shaking hands as if he had just won an election. Members of the committee were congratulating each other in mutual admiration.

Behind the banner was a cluster of tents. Each had a poster mounted outside of the entrance that explained what was inside.

The first tent I came to housed the Fat Lady, and for fifty cents anyone could get a look at her. She weighed 850 pounds, according to the poster. I paid and went inside. There was a curtain shielding a stage, and folding chairs for the audience. No sooner had I taken a seat, than a man came in and sat right next to me. This seemed peculiar only because the tent was nearly empty. Then he turned to me and said, "So they got you, too."

"I beg your pardon--what was that?" I was sure I had never seen him before.

"I said 'So they got you, too,'" the man replied. This hardly clarified things for me.

"Sir," I said, "I don't believe I know what you mean."

"These freaks, these monsters. They aren't human, you know. They've no pride, no scruples, nothing. They lure people into these tents--to see what? So this freak is fat--so what. See what I mean? There's nothing worthwhile, no art, no pride, nothing."

"I see, sir, but I thought maybe something different would be interesting."

"Different? They're different all right. They're not even humans. They're lower than any street corner hooker, if you want my opinion. They sell themselves completely--body, soul, everything."

He might have gone on, but the curtain was drawn. There was a "master of ceremonies," and a fat lady sitting on a stool. The stool's legs could hardly be seen for the rolls of fat that nearly hung to the floor. The "MC" gave some specifics--5'4" 850 pounds, weighed 24 pounds at birth, and so forth. Then the "show" was over, although a few people managed to touch the woman before the curtain closed.

The man badgered me again as I walked to the next tent. "You mean you haven't seen enough? Did you like it that much?"

"It wasn't that good," I answered, "but maybe the rest are better."

"No, no, they're all the same! They're terrible, worthless. Save your time and money."

Nonetheless, I went into the next tent, which exhibited "Tiny, the Smallest Man Alive." The man followed me, and I wondered why, but didn't ask because I was not too anxious to continue the conversation. He was interested in continuing, however, as he proceeded to describe this act in terms similar to those he had used before.

The truth is, I must admit, the man was right. He was right about the Fat Lady, about Tiny, about Sheeba, the Gorilla Woman, and about Ivan, the Sword Swallower. They were all freaks or frauds, and instead of being entertained I felt embarrassed about attending such a thing. My decision not to see the act inside the fifth and last tent met with much approval from him. "I knew, son, I knew you'd come around. You look

much too bright to buy this garbage."

"Thank you sir," I said. "I'm not sure I've earned your opinion of me, but thank you. You're the wiser of us, no doubt, but I think you've taught me something today. Good-bye, and thank you."

Not until I was outside of the fairgrounds was I curious about the fifth tent. I paused and struggled with my conscience for a few moments, until the curiosity got the better of me. As I hurried back through the carnival I was conscious of everyone around me. I didn't want the man to see me, but I wanted to see that last tent. Fortunately, he was gone when I paid and went into the tent, and I was just in time.

"What you're about to see," said a man on the stage, "is beyond belief. Some of you may have seen wild men in carnivals before, but never like this. Here is the wildest, the most animalistic, the most gruesome geek on earth!"

The curtain opened to reveal, in a steel cage, my wise teacher.





Walking on a Beach on a Summer's Afternoon

The sky a haze, the bay a mirror;
heat wraps my son and me like a wet towel.
We walk the beach like unwieldy
sandpipers, picking shells,
fossils and pebbles, rounded
to mind-smoothing curves. We see beetles
lemming their way down slope, turn them back
stand still to provide
harbor for ocean-bound moths.

When we come to a sea of dead perch
tails bitten off, or semi-circles cut
from shining under-bellies,
my boy's betrayed eyes embody
all the steaming threat of the day.
My words sink unheard, flat, dry,
"the bluefish are running, they kill
the slow and the small."

I would give my skin
to clothe this child
but I have nothing to shield him
from knowing that ours
is a world of wide beaches
strewn with silver fish,
their lives half eaten.

---Lynne Dowell

The Brook

Alone in these moonless woods
I build a small fire
of damp knotted pine
and face the north star:
a spark that found its place;
I take direction from it.

As if from far away
I hear the sound of a brook.
Perhaps there's no brook at all
just a field mouse
whiskering the wreckage
of some leaves and broken jars.

I kindle my slackened fire
but it falls again to embers
whitened at the edges,
pale rose at the heart scarcely
breathing. I tune out the wind
nosing through the weeds

and now I finally hear
each nuance of the brook
break on weathered shores.
Ants gather the debris:
roots reeds silt
and scraps of fur and flesh.

A crayfish surfaces.
He faces the north star
a moment
one claw crooked
as if pointing,
and takes one tentative step.

---James Maher

Naming Deer Creek

Racing water leaped rocks
chased white tails of foam
in the after storm stampede.
The reckless herd carved
the valley with speed;
bobbed and broke
over boulders. Mavericks
kicked the air with the sound
of wind, raced breath
in the earth colored waters
migrating from high pastures
to spring places.

---Ruth Moose

A Light Bulb

Two chairs, one table
and a narrow bed (or mattress,
to be more exact) could not
begin to fill the rooms
you rented, out on the city's
edge. Two poets and
our women, we sat on
your hardwood floor, huddling
around the one bare
bulb you owned--like moths
drawn out of darkness. Something
like music sputtered from
your battered phonograph
while we mumbled words
like priests cowed in shadows.
Even the bare shelves
in your refrigerator cooled
in an unremitting night,
and I thought how
to write, or cook, or read
or move in light you must
cup the still warm bulb
in your hands and stumble
to the next room's socket--
and how in mid-sentence
you await the spark
that bursts like lightning
across the page and face--
a stark and brittle clarity
that's doused in an instant,
plunging you into a deep,
a final dark.

---Paul Lake

Red Hots

Firemen always marry women with red hair.

At night they burn
in their wives' caresses,
snorkeling through the softness.
Lights flash and spin around them.
And yes, the women hear sirens.

When a fireman sees flames
he thinks of his wife.
Aiming the snaky hose,
he sprays beyond the call
of duty. His knees lock
inside his wading boots.

A building burns in the dark.
Twenty slickers watch in silence.
Big hoses stretch and gush
to the rooftop where
twenty redheads sit,

lazy as slips,
smoking cigarettes.

---Jill Grossman

The Plate Glass Window

I ordered the plate glass window
so that I could watch the girls.
I have done it
in every other shop I've had.

In New York, catty, dance-studio types.
In Pittsburg, spindly as watertowers.
In Phillie, fillies.

I watch.
Wilhelmina never savvies.
A little dab has never done me.
I just order windows.

---Michael Reis

On the Death of a Friend

You told me, friend,
and still I find this thing
a snake without a tail.
It is a millstone I can not lift
for the grinding,
a milestone sunk into the earth
of a path I do not recognize.
As athletes, astronauts vault higher, higher,
you have discovered the divine
in fog, dust, and brine.

Tell me once more:
From the Trivial draw the joy of existence.
Teach me to see with your eyes, friend,
God as the glue between cell walls,
Christ at the heart of each tumbling atom,
and how, when the Spirit breathes, the planet
quakes as quietly as a spinnaker
swelling towards the moon.

---D. R. Belz

the sun lifts
his painted sombrero
from below
the whitewashed horizon
to follow
the pretty curves
of the passing moon.

to the rhythm
of dull castanets

wagons clack against
the mud of the riverside
wheeling toward the marketplace

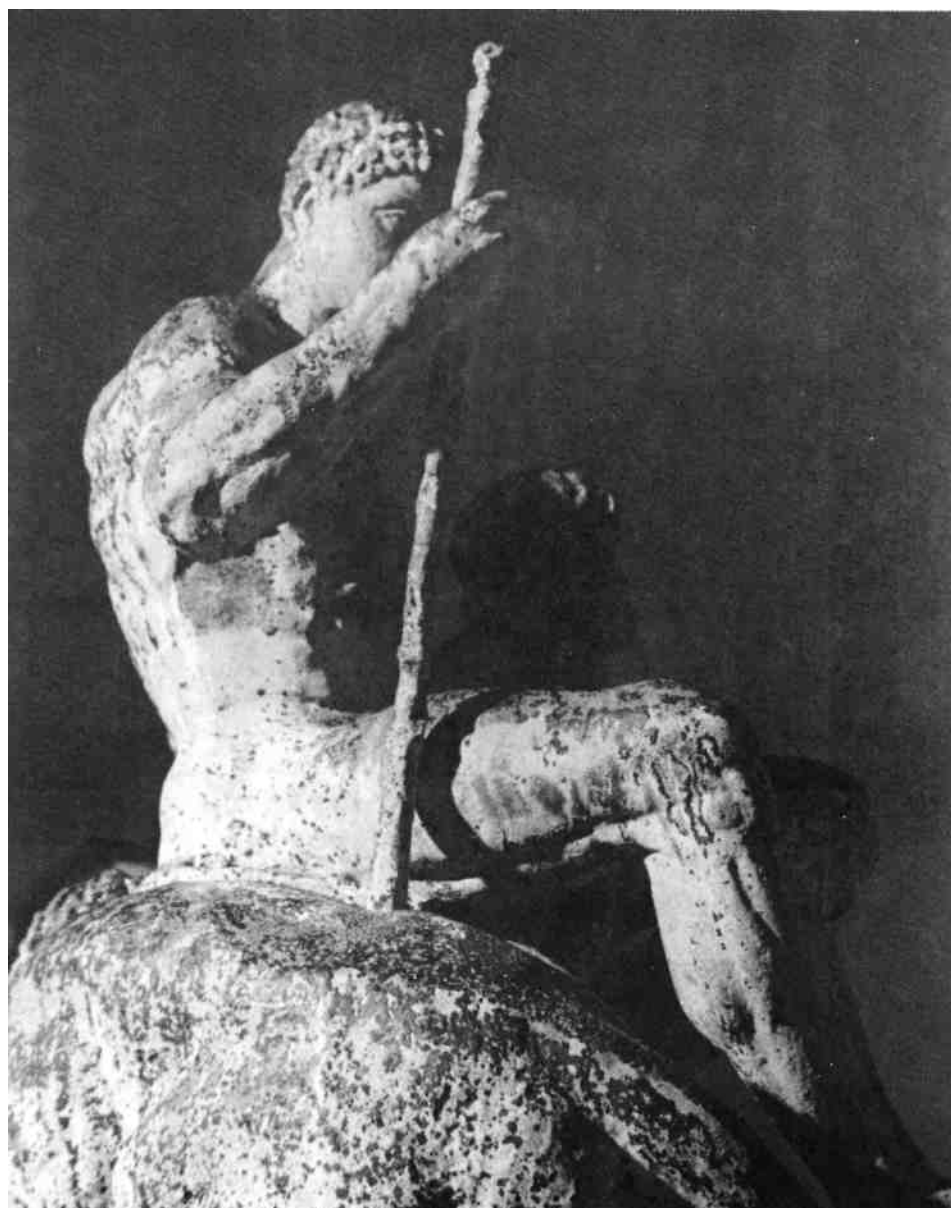
i circle the river
with the moon across my shoulders
carrying my pottery
for sale in the plaza.

you come from the plateau
brandishing your wares
the golden fruit of the sun.

we barter by the roadside;
the sun melts the wet clay of the moon.

even the rain gods plod on their burros through the sky.

---vicki aversa



Dream No. 3

Agamemnon,
I saw you in your homebound glory,
saw you naked at the prow
of your harboured ship;
your chest was plaited silver
without armour,
your thighs were sunburned
below the tunic line,
your beard, your hair, glowed,
polished by the warm sea air
buffing gently on your skin.

Before a host of waves
that tipped their caps
I ran unabashed at my own nakedness;
ran,
no wood could touch my feet,
reached out my arms for you.
And you murmured,
Cassandra, my Cassandra,
lifted me and walked
into my sleep.

---Ginny Friedlander

I watch you sleep
like a little girl
watches a cat.
Snort, you odd thing.
Twitch. Snooze and
lose a human
appearance. Wheeze
like a sick cat.
I would pet you
if I thought you would
purr. But your
eyes would open,
open and--
scratch my hand!

---G. Jeff Whittaker

Premonition

Because of the way
the fire
shapes itself
to the curve
of the log

and of how the dog,
bred to hunt
lions,
moves like a cat
himself

because tonight
a spring snow
settles
over the green
corn

I think of the way you lean
against me in sleep,
shaping yourself
to the warm curve
of my back.

---Linda Pastan

CONTRIBUTORS

VICKI AVERSA cares. *Really.*
NANCY BARRY goes to Western Maryland College and is sometimes seen at Loyola College Writing Workshops. She edits Contrast magazine.
DAVE BELZ wants to be a fireman.
SAM DEMATTOS, JR was born in Brazil, and was soon after infected by a literary virus.
LYNNE DOWELL is a Baltimore poet who has kids and goes to Towson State. She has a car that will not start unless you trick the seat belts into believing you've "buckled up."
BOB FARMER writes, grows a beard, and eats dill pickles at Loyola College.
ELLIOT FRIED doesn't really operate a used poem lot.
GINNY FRIEDLANDER wants to be a foreign correspondent.
JESSE GLASS is a writer from Western Maryland College. He writes about clowns alot and has been published in various small magazines.
JILL GROSSMAN won second place in the Loyola Winter Workshop in Poetry for her poem "The Diary of Night."
PATTI GURA is Vicki Aversa's cousin.
JANICE HOGAN began writing poetry last April.
PAUL LAKE has been accepted into the graduate Writing Program at Syracuse University. Paul is a Unicorn regular, but he doesn't let that stop him.
JIM MAHER is a writer from College Park.
TOM MITCHELL is a graduate of Loyola.
RUTH MOOSE lives on a mountain in North Carolina. When she wants her mail, she has to walk a mile. She sends us friendly postcards.
LINDA PASTAN is a well known Maryland poet. She wrote Aspects of Eve, and spoke at the Loyola College Winter Workshop in Poetry. We were thrilled and would like to say "thank you." Thank you!
MIKE REIS, poet, actor, history major, is an associate editor of this magazine.
DON SANDNES sent us a couple historical poems. He lives in Kagoshima Harbor.
R. WEISGIAN keeps his first name a secret.
JEFF WHITTAKER has a good time in Western Maryland.

Editor-in-chief: Jack Holmes

Associate Editors: Vicki Aversa
D.R. Belz
Mike Reis
Mike Schultz

Staff: Rafael Alvarez
Ginny Baird
Mary Barbera
Rachel Barbera
Stephany Brown
Martha Carroll
Debbie Clarke
Bob Farmer
Tom Gamache
Carol Gesser
Gloria Kendall
Donna Kennedy
Leo Martinelli
John Rossman
Trisha Schweers
David Steinberg
Arleen Talley

Advisor: Dr. Phillip McCaffrey

The editors would like to thank Mrs. Gen Rafferty of the English Department, and Janine Shertzer and Bob Williams of the GREYHOUND staff for their help.

