

# TOTEM 2005



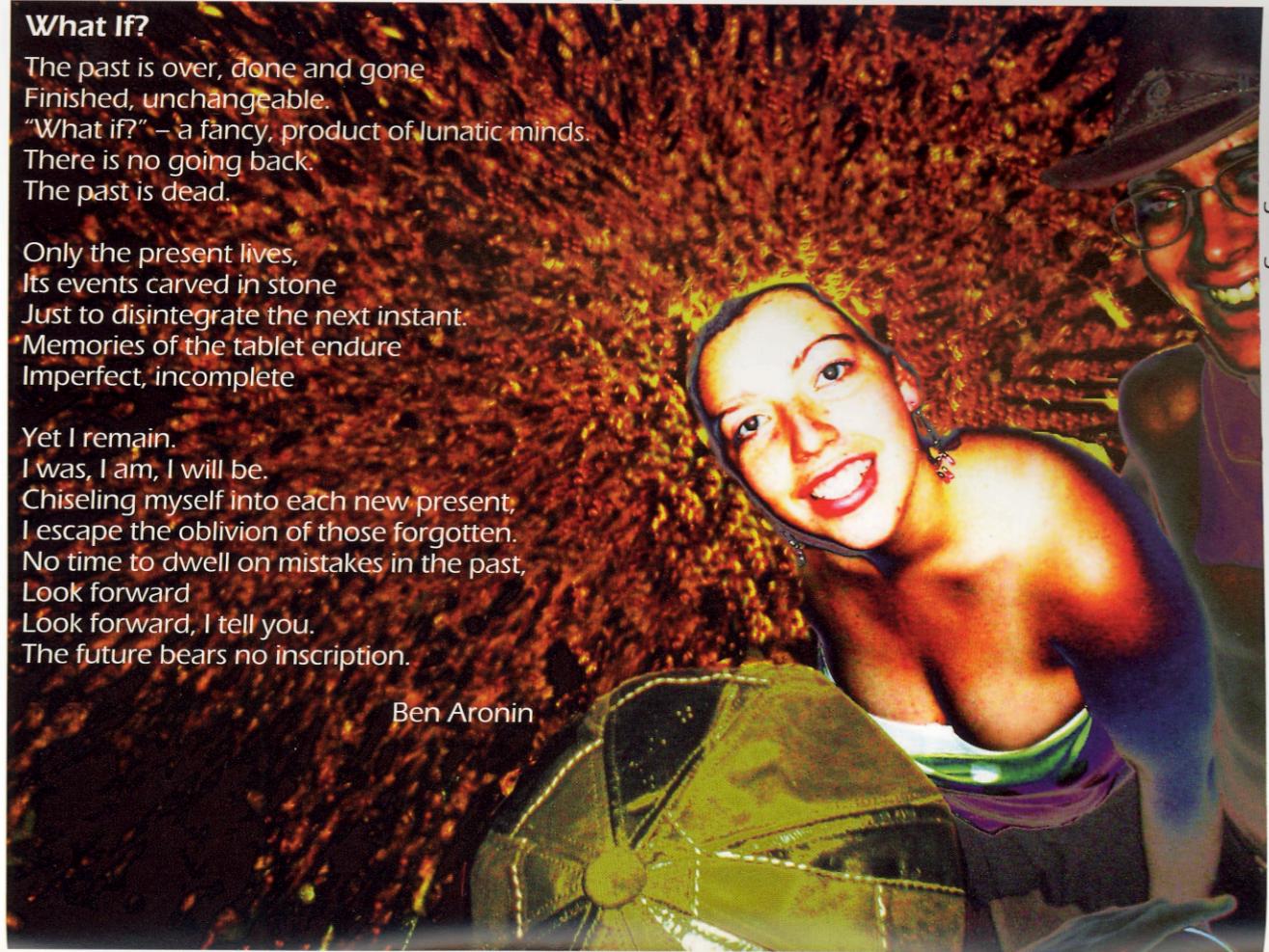
### What If?

The past is over, done and gone  
Finished, unchangeable.  
"What if?" – a fancy, product of lunatic minds.  
There is no going back.  
The past is dead.

Only the present lives,  
Its events carved in stone  
Just to disintegrate the next instant.  
Memories of the tablet endure  
Imperfect, incomplete

Yet I remain.  
I was, I am, I will be.  
Chiseling myself into each new present,  
I escape the oblivion of those forgotten.  
No time to dwell on mistakes in the past,  
Look forward  
Look forward, I tell you.  
The future bears no inscription.

Ben Aronin



## July 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Independence Day					
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

yellow leaves,  
I think it was,  
falling in the sunlight,  
or maybe it was only yellow:  
yellow floating down from the sky  
to settle in my mind.

yellow,  
yellow,  
yellow,  
yellow.

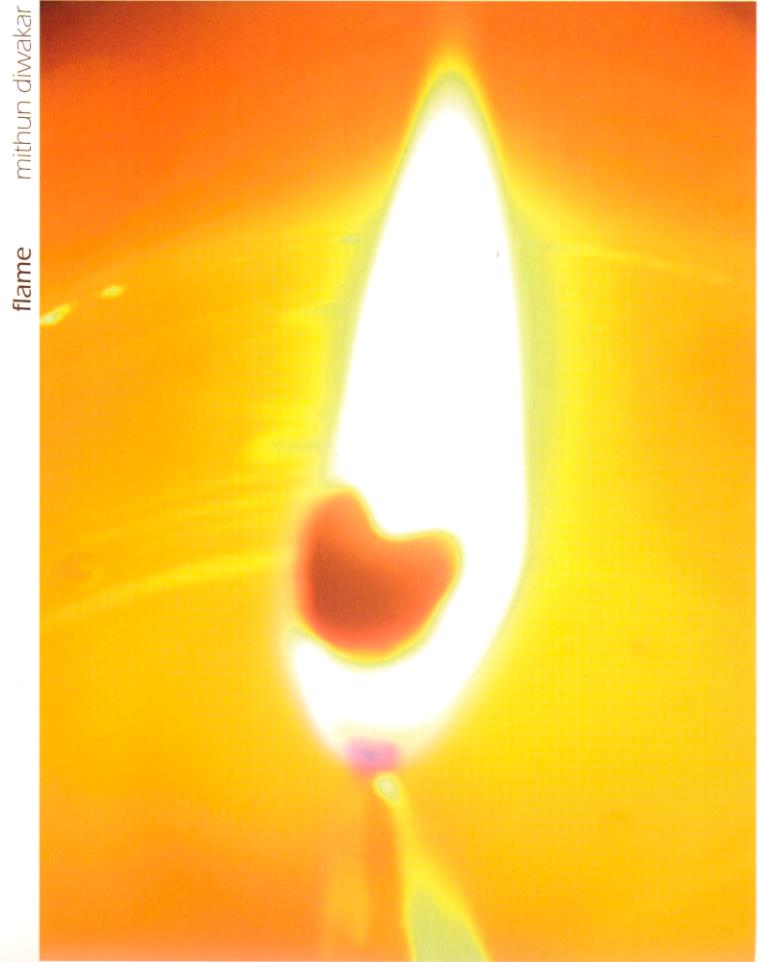
I feel the word in my mouth;  
I taste the color,  
thick and sweet.

yellow.  
yellow leaves falling—  
yes that was it—  
yellow leaves,  
and yellow flowers  
and yellow sky,  
well, blue,  
but the air feels yellow  
yellow yellow yellow  
footsteps fall  
to the rhythm of  
yellow

yellow  
yellow  
yellow  
bare yellow soles  
falling in the sunlight  
to kiss the yellow earth;  
my bare yellow soul—  
or maybe i was only Yellow,  
floating down  
from the yellow sky.

yellow

Rebecca Streit



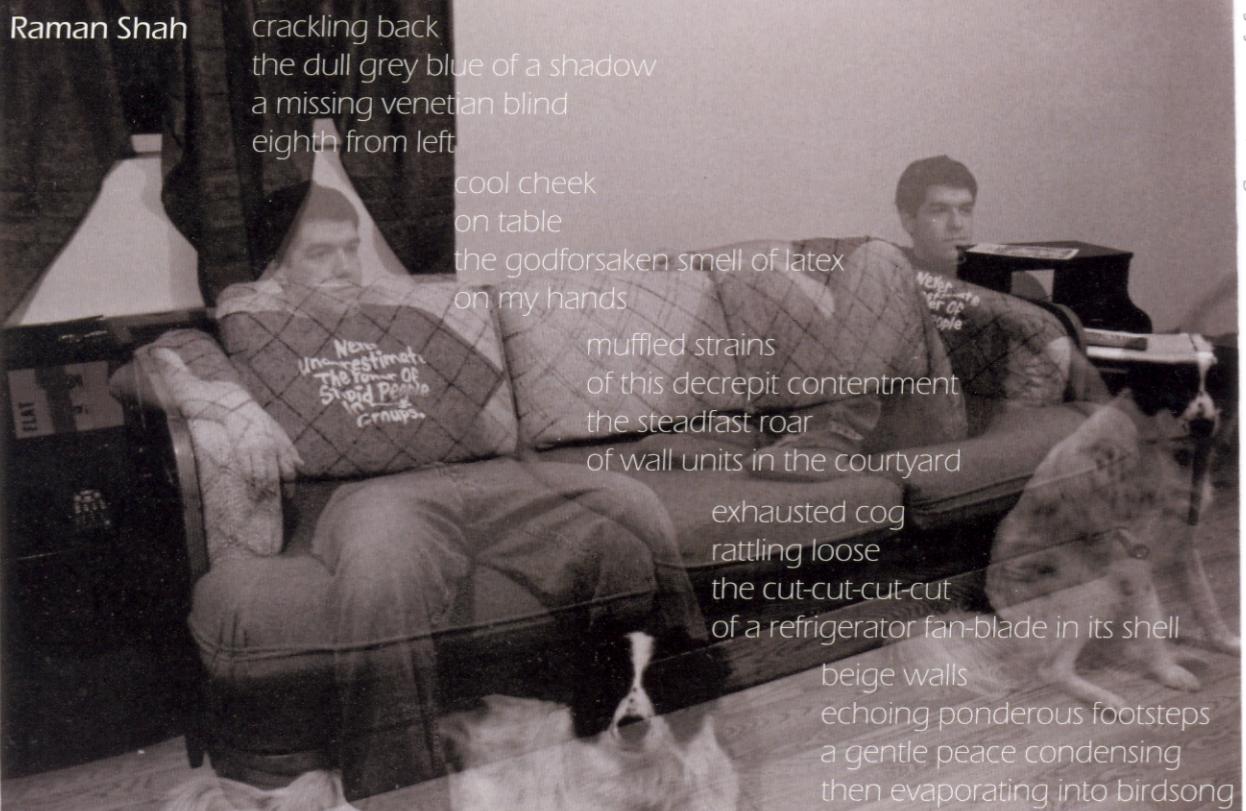
# August

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

End of SURF

**150 South Chester Avenue, Apartment 109**

Raman Shah



# September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Labor Day					
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
	1st Term Begins					



kristy hilands  
searching for solitude

### Nighttime Treehouse

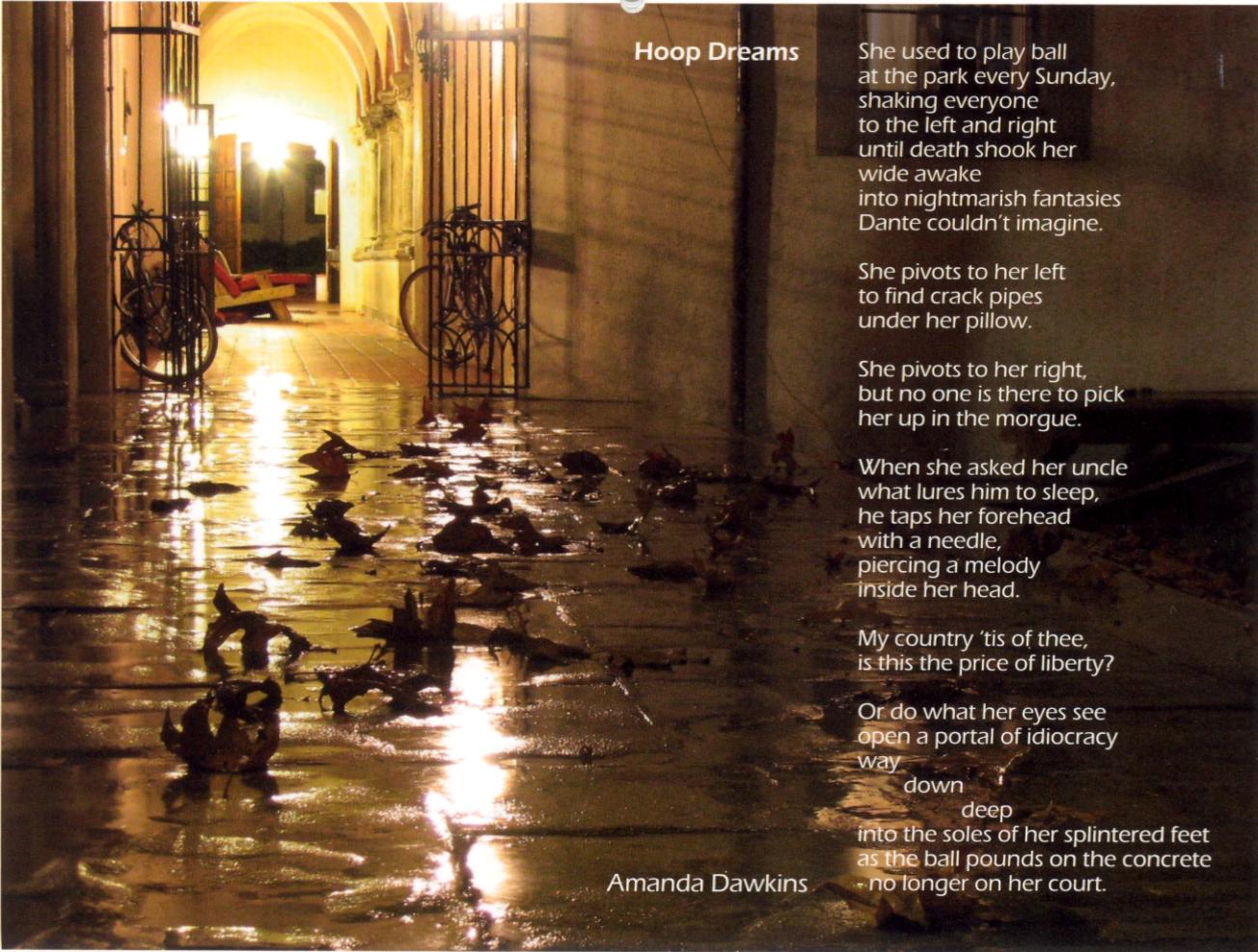
Trains cross planes of perspective  
Of existence; horns blast as a  
Sign of resistant reluctance;  
Chord, minor key, one three seven  
Nine, engines grind out the  
Tune of Maiden Voyage;  
And people are too busy  
Buzzing to notice, but not me.  
I'm right there for all the  
Sounds and sights that make  
This world a crazy place to  
Live in, on and around.  
Surroundings beat like hearts  
Pound we fall asleep in  
Unison and all that we hold  
In common is each other.  
Separate dreams and separate  
Schemes. When we awake she  
Takes the bus into the city.

Dave Yelacic

## October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Rosh Hashanah		Ramadan Begins			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			Yom Kippur		Add Day	SURF Seminar Day
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	Halloween 31					

rainy night  
joseph koehler



### Hoop Dreams

She used to play ball  
at the park every Sunday,  
shaking everyone  
to the left and right  
until death shook her  
wide awake  
into nightmarish fantasies  
Dante couldn't imagine.

She pivots to her left  
to find crack pipes  
under her pillow.

She pivots to her right,  
but no one is there to pick  
her up in the morgue.

When she asked her uncle  
what lures him to sleep,  
he taps her forehead  
with a needle,  
piercing a melody  
inside her head.

My country 'tis of thee,  
is this the price of liberty?

Or do what her eyes see  
open a portal of idiocracy  
way  
down  
deep  
into the soles of her splintered feet  
as the ball pounds on the concrete  
- no longer on her court.

Amanda Dawkins

# November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
					Veteran's Day	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
			Drop Day			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				Thanksgiving		
27	28	29	30			

It's too big for me.  
If it were a man, I would need to  
stand on a chair  
To look him in the eye.  
He wouldn't catch me if I tried  
To wrap my arms around him. But  
Lying down, it swallows me whole  
And then some.

I toss and turn to make it stick,  
But it is coy, like a woman,  
Her darkest corners  
Always retreating from my purple feet.

Someone is pulling black silk over my face  
And I can feel the pressure  
Where they are piling dirt on my knees.  
Mother would always find me like that,  
Buried under the covers.

If she were here, she'd heave them off  
Angrily exposing my shame (what shame?)  
The punishment -  
Letting the cold air feast on my warmth.  
She was afraid for me,

Afraid of what the neighbors would say  
If she lost a child in such a careless way.

If death feels like this,  
I want it to climb in with me.



*love is a creature of the deep*

kristy hilands

But it'd be even better if life was like this,  
Dark and soft and warm.

If I were a man,  
I would want my woman  
to lie over me  
Like this sleeping bag,  
While away the hours  
under the scented folds  
of her supple fat,  
Twice exfoliated and moisturized.  
I would make a brief half-hearted struggle  
To be Don Juan  
Leave her for the tentacles of light  
Grasping at me through the hemp curtains  
Before I am pulled back  
Like a grubby child at the candy store  
And forced to admit that I was  
Only toying  
With the idea of leaving her.

Wrapping her downy wings around me  
Like a mother,  
She would let me kiss her  
Like a mistress,  
She wins by yielding before the fight begins.

Cocooned in this velvet abyss,  
Never have I been so happy not to breathe.

Xiao Peng

## December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					Last Day of Classes	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
					1st Term Ends	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Christmas & Hanukkah	26 Kwanzaa	27	28	29	30	31



philip lindquist

central park saffron gates

## As long as we aren't staring into space

Eva Murdock

He tried to teach them how to make rock candy. The sugar was supposed to harden on the wooden stirrers. The children were supposed to carry around their **beautiful crystals in all the colors of the rainbow**. I told him maybe it was too humid lately. The children had colored wooden sticks. The sugar water grew moldy and Mr. Webster threw the Dixie cups away on Wednesday.

He tried to teach them about solar energy. **With tin foil, we can harness the power of the sun. They should get a sense**, he wrote in his lesson book, **of commanding the heavens to do man's bidding**. First he crossed out **man** and wrote **humankind**. Then he crossed out **heavens** and wrote **???**

The children worked in groups of threes. Mary and the slow twins. Tyler and Curtis and Buddy. **Break things up a little. Here son, move near, in here with Jamie Wilkin's table.** Mr. Webster thought that if the children knew the word **archaic**, they would like it very much, but as a science teacher the opportunity had not come up to share it with them. He did not know how he felt about this sort of **absence of privilege**. So he called the children **son**. Buddy's real name was Benjamin. There were two Bens, whom I had been calling **the Bens**. One day Mr. Webster told me that it made him think of **The Bends**. Mr. Webster's ex-wife was **such a Radiohead fanatic**, he told me that day, while we were on our ways home. So he started calling Ben D. **Buddy**. Buddy's dad was a widower. Mr. Webster told him it was the child's **false plastic identity**. I wondered about emotional scars of all kinds.

The three children pasted together black construction paper and corrugated cardboard and tin foil to make their solar ovens. Mr. Webster took Mary, the first to finish, and her oven outside the classroom to the back stairs, which were sunny in the afternoon. He gave her a bag of marshmallows, a Hershey's bar, and some graham crackers. **Preserve freshness** said the side of the box Mary tore off and threw aside. Mr. Webster picked up the litter while Mary placed the ingredients in her oven. **One two three**. Mary had made a door with cardboard hinges. The light was direct, so the chocolate might even melt.

Mr. Webster used a Slinky to explain light. Buddy held one end while Mr. Webster gave the command **Oscillate!** Buddy convulsed. The slinky oscillated. **This is rather sophisticated**, Mr. Webster told the children. He did not know how to explain color. **Color is light, too**, he told them. **You don't see the rock candy, you see the light reflected from the rock candy**. The children turned and looked at the window whose sill was stained pink and blue from their cups of liquid candy. **Or this green jacket**, Mr. Webster offered, tugging back on their thick, disappointed attention. **This jacket left over from the Halloween party. Is it yours?**

Mr. Webster looked at the mail on his desk for Recipient. **Green Jacket for Son of Recipient. Children's large**. Mr. Webster would do anything for the children. I look at his mail sometimes; Mr. Webster was always eligible for this or he was preapproved for that. He was reprimanded for bringing his personal mail to school. Mr. Webster explained that it was merely for hamster bedding. **The hamster is in the building somewhere, Christine**, he told me. He told everyone. **I have a coalition of students whose concern for the hamster's well-being is paramount**. Mr. Webster asked me if I would provide milk and cookies, **pending the hamster's safe return**. The way he said pending—the children lost hope before my eyes, **Christine**.

Mr. Webster bought the class white Christmas lights on a long string. He decorated the hamster cage and the windows and the paper cabinet.

On Friday Mary brought Mr. Webster a pansy. Mary walked to his desk at recess and gave it to him privately, when she also told him that she understood all about color. **She knew the pansy needed sunlight to be so pink and purple**. Mr. Webster put the pansy pot on a dish in the windowsill. By Monday it had lost two leaves and three petals. Jamie Wilkin folded two of the petals into the corners of his paper football. Mary watched Jamie Wilkin fold the paper like it was an ancient Oriental art. Like he was peeling apart a mummy. Like she expected it to catch fire under his fingers. I watched Mary watch Jamie Wilkin fold the paper for twelve minutes. When he finished, I looked down and found my hand on my left breast.

**As long as we aren't staring into space**, Mr. Webster chuckled. **I like to do my job. I like my work**. Mr. Webster had a red beard and a stretched floury face. The children could not see the cracks because they were not looking for them. Mr. Webster thought that if the children knew the word **divorce** they would understand the **bastardization of language**. Mr. Webster had crossed out **bastardization** and had written **Ask Christine—also coffee**. I didn't know what to do when I found this in the hamster bed on Tuesday. He had written it on a coffee filter. I should not have wondered all that much.

## The Subway of Stolen Memories

Mithun Diwakar

whooshing by in a rush of urgency.  
figures: gray, black, silhouette - phantoms  
color where? there - on the mud-encrusted steel grating  
a red winter hat, smudged black by greasy shoes,  
promising me rosy tales of cold, windy snow but-  
laying forlorn and forgotten, it whispers of the  
subway of stolen memories.

polaroid picture - click! - instant memory - shake!  
colors creeping in to flesh out...colors seeping out to flesh in?  
trees slowly losing green, turning red autumn, then dead  
where? there - on the grime-streaked window  
then dead winter. sky slowly losing blue, turning moonless night.  
the subway car takes away the sun, the day,  
stealing memories for its fuel.

speeding, snaking through the tunnel, lit burnt-harsh-yellow  
intermittent, glowing - silvery shadows  
an outline of me, no detail, just the figure  
where? there - on the dent-endowed wall  
on the scar-faced plastic seat  
reminds me of me and me of them  
riding on the subway of stolen memories.

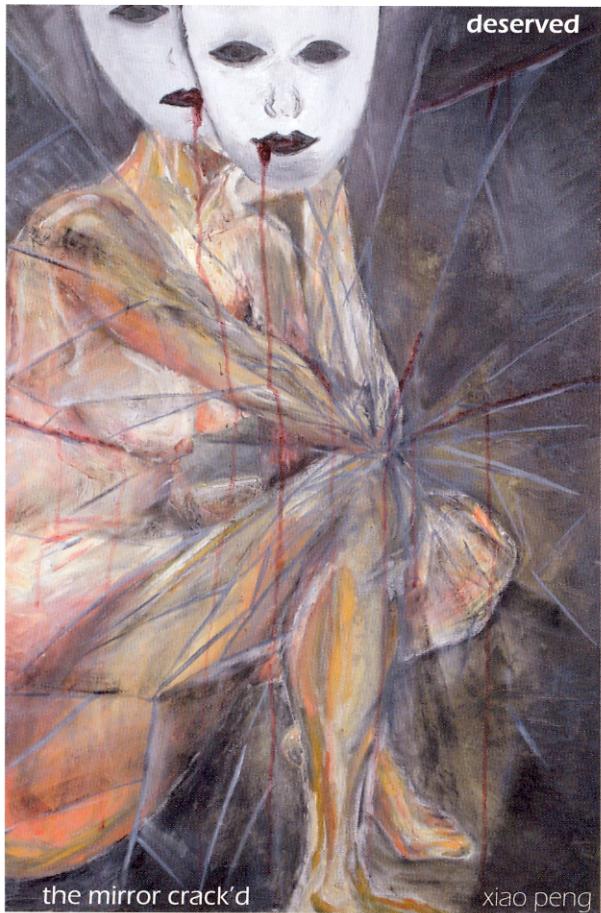
eric kel sic

anaffectionforfastsounds



# January 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4 2nd Term Begins	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 MLK Jr. Day	16	17	18	19	20	21 Add Day
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



the mirror crack'd

xiao peng

deserved

Before I even look in the mirror, I have my answer.  
47 grueling minutes laden with frustration, confusion, without pain or anger  
You lay prostrate across alternating patches of blue, white, and red. The  
comforter we bought together. The disheveled sheets that only days ago I  
lovingly laid over your bed.  
Half naked with one sock, you cover the space with that most vivid color of  
all, unmoving except for a strip of hair blowing in the wind.  
Dry-eyed and silent, I wash my hands in the dark, afraid to confront my  
memory of this reality.  
This conclusion is no surprise; this end was evident months ago.  
And yet I stayed.  
I waited.

Has this actually happened?  
I know you didn't mean it. This makes it worse.  
Do I have the strength to leave now  
and come back only to gather my things?  
Can I go through each day, wake up and know that you will not,  
cannot,  
do not exist?  
If this were last year, yes, I would easily walk out.  
But how can I deny this, something I will never be able to find again?  
How can I turn my back on my heart?  
How can I renounce my soul for my body?

Desire is indeed at the root of all suffering.

It was so difficult to find my shoes in the stark darkness.  
It is so natural to slip them back off  
sink into bed beside you  
engulf myself in your smell and my own coagulated blood  
Everything is quiet.

Maybe tomorrow...

But if you ever do this again, I will leave. Really...

Hannah Shafaat

## February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	President's Day		Drop Day			
26	27	28				

**for svenge**

my small hand rests upon his arm  
as we sit silently side by side  
the day's warmth fades into the night  
and for the darkness i will bide

my small hand rests upon his arm  
and soft sounds sift beneath the door  
an eerie glow shines from a lamp  
and casts a shadow on the floor

my small hand rests upon his arm  
my face hosts a suspicious grin  
for i now have a sadist's trophy  
this is one war i will win

my small hand rests upon his arm  
i flick the switch, slip into bed  
i leave it where it cooled and stiffened  
sidestep the pools where it has bled



anonymous

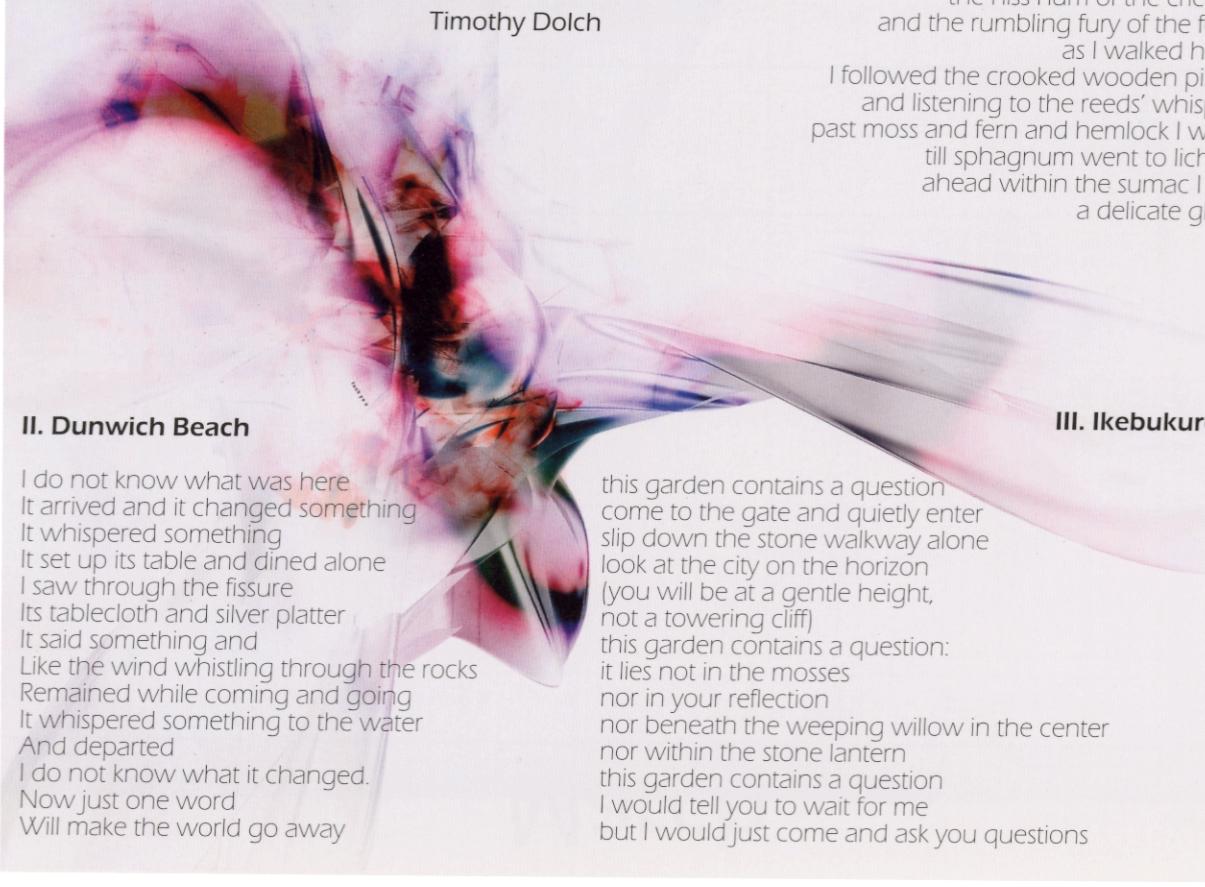
leaves david dow

# March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
					Last Day of Classes	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
					St. Patrick's Day	2nd Term Ends
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	3rd Term Begins					

## The Ambient Works of Brian Eno: Three Poetic Interpretations

Timothy Dolch



### II. Dunwich Beach

I do not know what was here  
It arrived and it changed something  
It whispered something  
It set up its table and dined alone  
I saw through the fissure  
Its tablecloth and silver platter  
It said something and  
Like the wind whistling through the rocks  
Remained while coming and going  
It whispered something to the water  
And departed  
I do not know what it changed.  
Now just one word  
Will make the world go away

### I. Triennale

the swamp's edge blends to brush:  
I heard the agitation of the cattails  
the hiss-hum of the crickets  
and the rumbling fury of the fowl  
as I walked here;  
I followed the crooked wooden pillars  
and listening to the reeds' whisper;  
past moss and fern and hemlock I went  
till sphagnum went to lichen.  
ahead within the sumac I see  
a delicate glow

### III. Ikebukuro

this garden contains a question  
come to the gate and quietly enter  
slip down the stone walkway alone  
look at the city on the horizon  
(you will be at a gentle height,  
not a towering cliff)  
this garden contains a question:  
it lies not in the mosses  
nor in your reflection  
nor beneath the weeping willow in the center  
nor within the stone lantern  
this garden contains a question  
I would tell you to wait for me  
but I would just come and ask you questions

ah, who cares for titles anyway

christopher erick moody

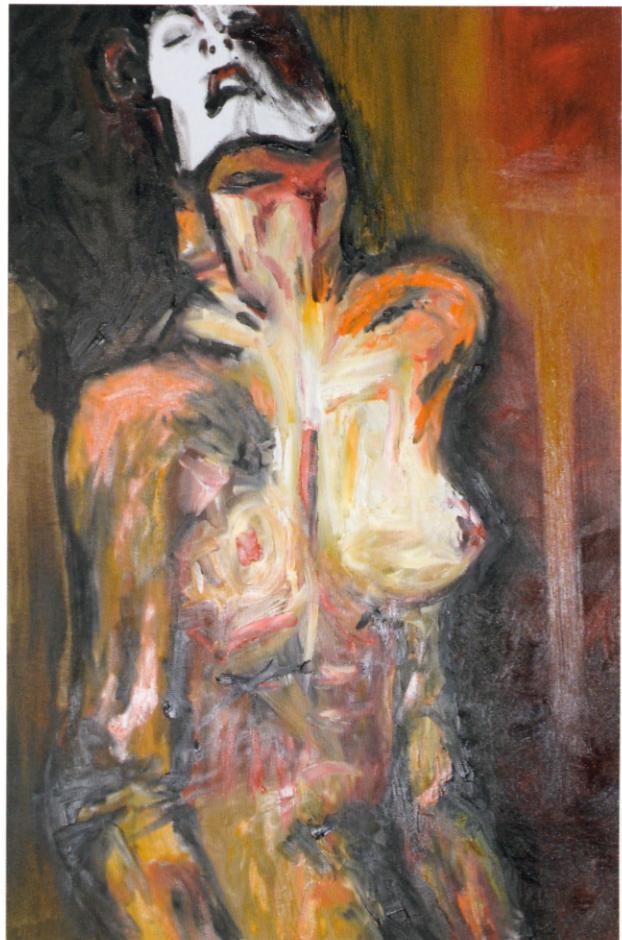
# April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 April Fool's Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 Passover	14 Add Day & Good Friday	15
16 Easter	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**Rigor mortis**

I fondle her icy breasts,  
 Speaking of passion and the red dust  
 And the goddess's forgotten stone.  
 I lead her through the rice-papered chambers,  
 The Faerie Pavilion,  
 As the mist creeps  
 Through the glow of red lanterns  
 Seeking fodder for its doom.  
 My lips find the pink nub of her nipple,  
 Tense in resignation.  
 Yet we are of the same flesh.  
 Sucking the dew from them,  
 I taste blood.  
 And remember  
 The old monk's warning  
 "Beauty and anguish tread hand in hand  
 The downward slope to death."  
 The black jade sheds tears for  
 A tomorrow she will never see  
 But she kills herself today.

Xiao Peng



# May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Mother's Day			Drop Day			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
Memorial Day						

**just a story**

An apple peel unfurls  
in one smooth single spiral  
from the edge of the knife.  
A continuous curve,  
stark line of beauty, perhaps,  
a windswept banner in green, yellow, and retrospective shine  
that leaves an echo in the back of your head  
inverted,  
retained for half a minute maybe,  
before it is promptly tossed  
away.

i. x marks the spot,  
the stopping point, the conclusion,  
the answer  
to the question that has yet to be asked.

ii. Little white elephants  
march across the mantle  
tracking invisible footprints on granite  
wiped clean only yesterday  
(or was it  
the day before?)  
Seven altogether  
and they never  
forget.

(continued on next page)

# June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					Last Day of Classes	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
					Commencement	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	SURF Begins					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Father's Day						
25	26	27	28	29	30	



mud cracks

rebecca strett

iii. The pink lady  
stands in the corner,  
a wish over extinguished candles  
of twelve too many years gone by.  
Where faded ribbons hold  
together in loose braids from the white handlebars,  
decaying weaves that still whisper of a tale  
born from a child's fingertips.  
A spider makes its home  
between two spokes of a rusted wheel,  
weaving a string of new memories across fifteen degrees of empty space,  
a lopsided silhouette of a dream catcher,  
only to be imperfectly attempted again the following afternoon  
(and again the next)  
because perhaps  
even spiders have dreams.

iv. Butterflies in her palms,  
she cradles a glass of ice in the sun,  
tea long since unremembered  
with a crushed arc of lemon like a broken rainbow  
to piece the picture together in reverse,  
while the frozen cubes melt away into obscurity.  
The light paints  
shades of interlocking circles across the table  
as symmetric whorls spiral outward along the sides of her glass,  
lost in the reflective glare,  
imprints of the butterfly wings  
that came to rest  
for a single moment.

v. The record skips  
a beat,  
half a second of black noise  
leaving the original up to the imagination  
(a game of fill-in-the-blank,  
or perhaps a not-so-educated guess).  
It plays again;  
a song that loses time with every subsequent repetition  
until at last  
the anomaly has evolved to become  
part of the piece  
itself.

vi. A glass of liquid amnesia  
reflects the faded stripes of the curtains in the study,  
elephants waltzing to an etude in e minor,  
echoes of fluttering wings in one ear  
and cobwebs to be brushed aside from the other  
as the candle on the desk goes out.

vii. Tell me a story, she says,  
backwards  
from the end to the beginning;  
that way  
at least I'll remember  
the outcome.  
Remind me  
(May I ask?)  
just once  
more.

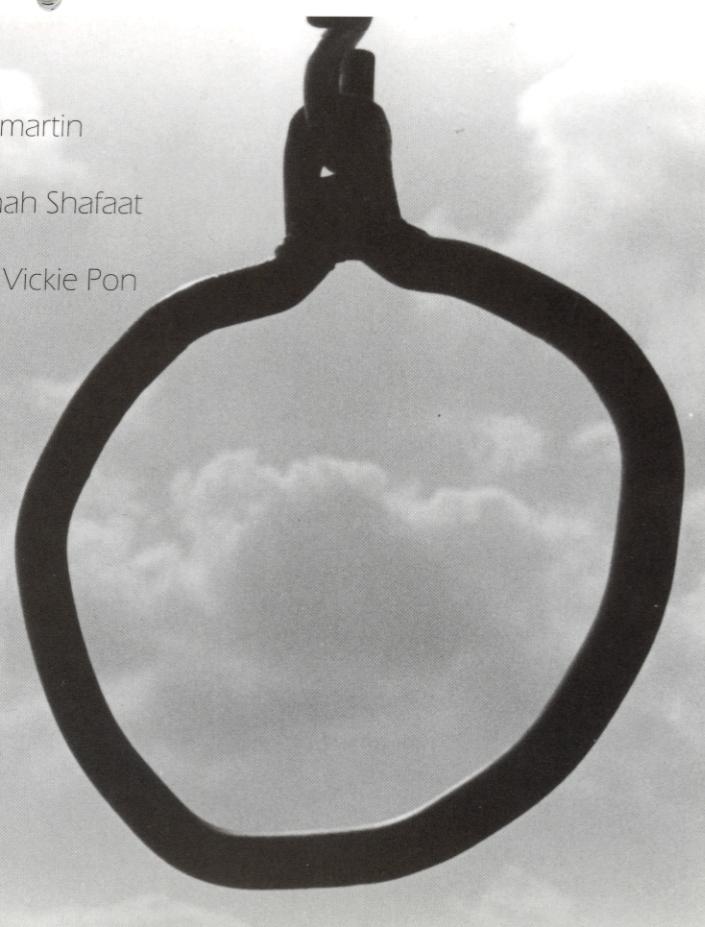
Elizabeth Reed

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krisy hilands

ring



The Totem would like to thank those who made this issue possible:

ASCIT                    MOSH                    HSS  
Words Matter            GSC                    Archives  
Campus Life            Caltech Y              SFP  
Admissions             Creative & Performing Arts  
Public Relations       Health Educator's Office

Thanks also to Kevin Trotter, Dorota Korta and the Caltech Community Art Gallery

Front cover            payphone                royal reinecke  
Back cover             capitalism                christopher erick moody

encroaching sand

joseph koehler

*Capitalism*

USA