

# Calabash

A JOURNAL OF CARIBBEAN ARTS AND LETTERS

Volume 3, Number 1: Fall/Spring 2004/2005

## Information about this work:

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*Party at the House of Isis*

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**URL:** <http://library.nyu.edu/calabash/vol3no1/0301109.pdf>

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*Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters* is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

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*Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters*

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*Susan Brennan*

## PARTY AT THE HOUSE OF ISIS

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The boy asked me, *What planet are we on?*  
I said, the one you can poke your finger in a Hostess cupcake  
at the same time a woman, wriggled in colors, climbs a spiral staircase,  
her vagina smiling beneath a towel  
and you can barely leash your own consciousness.

I put my ear to his thigh, his lap hot,  
as he leans his head back to kiss the girl  
on the sofa wrapped in a red boa. I remember  
the initial sting of my fuchsia birth. The swan-throated boy  
asks again, *What planet? Are you sure?* I inhale a wild crop of feathers

not daring to cough out – it suddenly occurs to me –  
thought blows the paint off, but the iridescent what-is  
remains. The Mistress of Ceremonies, in a crossbones sweatshirt,  
turns up the speaker, burlap coordinates of chords huff,  
with eyes and legs, they run away

and the neon green cage of my imagination  
circulates blue electric swans, beaks belled  
swarming towards a honey fire, the frame  
elaborating itself, collapsing on its own ears.  
The girl in crossbones (death) spills her (death) drink

and this is the planet where you say, say, (death), say  
that scrumptious word – winged, toothed, scaled –  
the lips get cut just saying it – oh! This is the home  
of flickering black diamonds, card tricks, bluebirds  
and all the hard berries they crave. You dwell

within the creamy creation, suck your wine bottle,  
evidence of the one vine, damn tangled. My ear against his thigh,  
I can hear his blood in a universal rush, like a thirsty millipede, to its creator.  
Haunted grapes bite at the back of my head,  
two girls, black eyeliner bleeds across their cheeks,

gold hoop earrings shimmer feedback elixir  
and the boy unravels into ink sugar rivers. My wings  
wrap the air and he, his lap pulsing, leans forward  
to gaze into my hot spiraled ear, the stairway getting darker,  
deeper into red coals, light inside light – the first big mistake.