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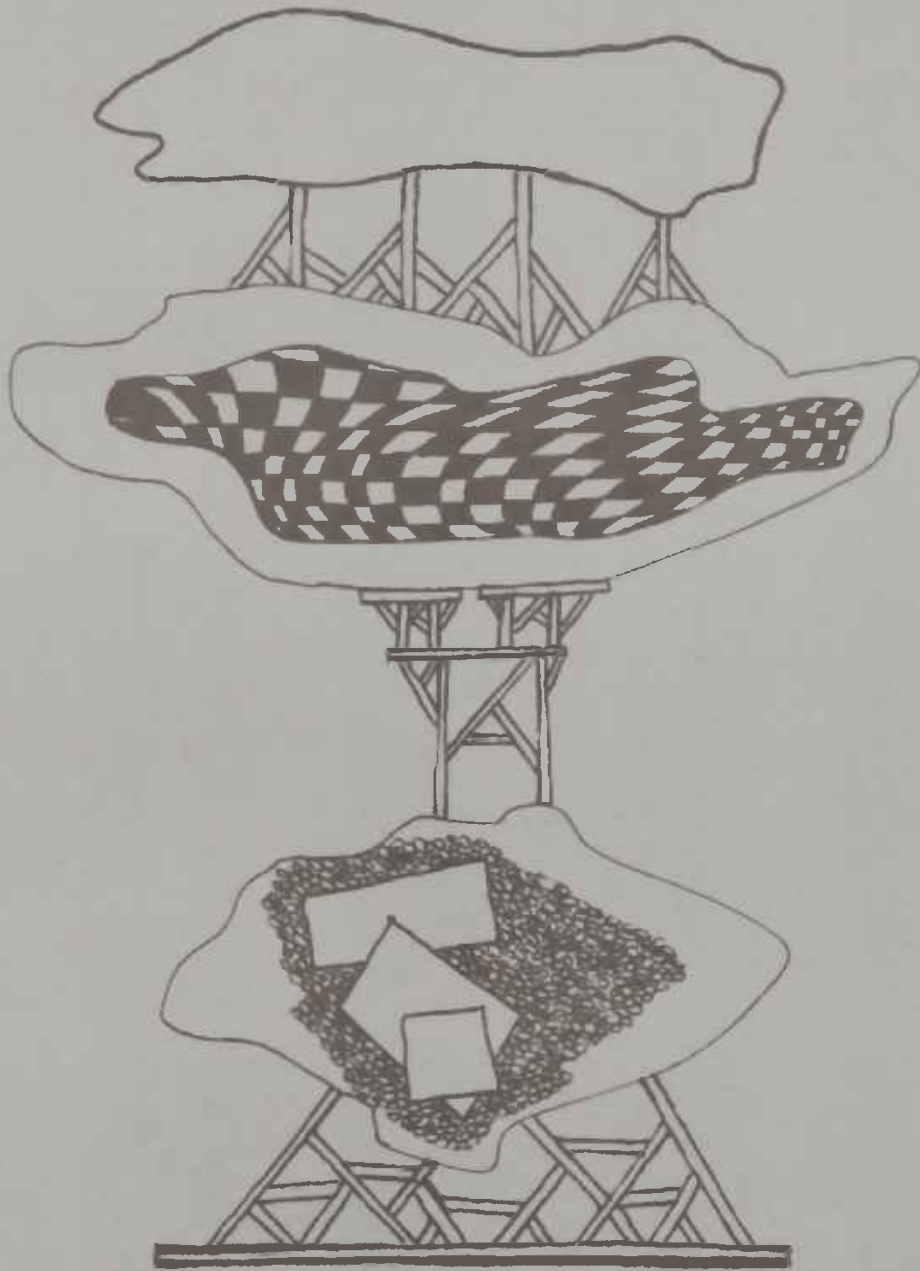
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*Instress 1983*

INSTRESS 1983

ART FORM	ARTIST	PAGE
Cover	.....	1
Credits	.....	2
The Earnest Construction of Clouds	Steven Davies	3
Michael and Sara (Tie, 2nd Place, Poetry)	Bernadette Kraitz	4
I Was, I Am	Sally Hawk	4
Poem	Sally Hawk	5
Photo	Nancy McCoy	5
Poem	Miles Copperthwaite	5
Poem	Leona Fleming	6
Poem	Bernadette Kraitz	6
Center Stage	Bernadette Kraitz	6
An Informal Meeting	Richard Matysik	7
Poem	Beth Bailey	7
Photo (1st Place, Photography)	Nancy McCoy	8
Poem	Anonymous	9
September 7, 1982	Sally Hawk	10
Photo	Nancy McCoy	10
Poem	Bernadette Kraitz	10
6:12 a.m., NYC (Tie, 2nd Place, Poetry)	Sally Hawk	11
Soul	Suk Soon Kim	11
Homecoming (1st Place, Poetry)	Richard Matysik	12
Photo (2nd Place, Photography)	Christine Jenkins	13
Poem	Pattie Kinter	13
Poem	Jerome K. Worth	13
In February	Anonymous	14
Photo	Nancy McCoy	14
Poem	Bernadette Kraitz	14
Photo	Nancy McCoy	15
Outstretched Arms (Tie, 2nd Place, Poetry)	Jerome K. Worth	15
Birth	Karen Fairweather	16
Mother Theresa in Her Egg	Stevan Davies	16
God's Foot	Sharon Palmiter	17
Illustration (1st Place, Artwork)	Bob Lizza	18
Illustration (2nd Place, Artwork)	Stevan Davies	19
Back Cover	.....	20
Editors	Bernadette Kraitz Jody Pallante Janeen Borelli	
Moderator	Dr. Richard Lynch	

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*The Earnest Construction of Clouds S/D*

## Michael and Sara

A little boy is writing  
His tiny finger etching in the sand  
Letters in a heartshaped form  
To his favorite braided friend  
Her hand cups her mouth  
Sandcastle surprise  
Their laughter sounds across the beach  
Tickling the waves  
And the tide splashes their feet.

Aunt Hopper

## I Was, I Am

Being with you warmed me.  
I was a cat whose eyes matched the gleam of brass pots near a living fireplace.  
I was a summer wind moving tree branches, lifting birds, to prove my existence.  
I was a shallow pool left between rocks by the sea, not cold, but just right  
for small feet.

Now it seems one-sided.  
There are fears of rejection, and lies that hold me.  
What happened to being honest as starshine?  
There is a pastel watercolor of sand and sky  
waiting to be completed by the Master Painter.  
I am in the picture, sitting on a stone,  
listening to the waves,  
wondering.

Sally Hawk

## Poem

We are so small.

There are miles of forest  
gallons of ocean  
tons of sand  
billions of people  
(millions of hungry, and more)

Besides hundreds of many planets  
Besides one Being, smaller than Nothing  
larger than Infinite

And in it all, so full of people, places, things,  
Our eyes met.

Sally Hawk

Here in the east  
the earth strains  
and as though a greater effort  
had produced them  
trees grow instead of corn.

But the high places are not  
straining  
as they thought in the old days  
to touch something;  
they are straining to complete themselves.

Miles Copperthwaite



*I found myself sitting  
Here with a smile  
On my face and  
Just for a moment  
I stopped to  
Consider its source.  
In that tiny  
Moment I realized  
That I not only  
Had a smile on  
My face but also  
A smile in my heart.  
And it was then that  
I discovered the source.  
Thank you.*

*Leona Fleming*

Flowers wilt in the humid night  
Throats choked with steam  
An August sauna ticking in the clouds  
A web of darkness drenched in heat  
Crickets rasp for water  
    in sweating grass  
The tired wind limps through the sky  
And roses and lilacs  
    sink  
        beneath  
            its  
                feet.

Bernadette Krantz

## Center Stage

Skin radiating from spotlights  
Lines rushing for the balcony  
Whip through my ears  
    while in the first row  
Words trickling from their faucet minds  
Turn off and on easily  
Faces masked with rehearsed roles  
Peeling off one . . . another remains  
Until skin smothers  
    underneath a plastic grin.

Bernadette Krantz

## An Informal Meeting

There he stands, Commander William Pike,  
Chairman of the board, master of hype;  
With hands in his pockets, checking the clock,  
He's captured in gestures others might mock.

He's a man of ledgers, counting and toll.  
He says, "You know, there's so few free souls."  
He's a man based on reason, freed from despair;  
You can tell from the part in his receding hair.

He laughs and tells you it's absurd  
To find meaning and worth in difficult words:  
"Life's a passionate joke," he screams, adding,  
"And truth, you'll find, an irreverent dream."

He's freed from contract, commitment, and sin.  
He's emptied of conscience, absent of whim.  
He downs his coffee and again he states,  
"Remember mathematics, quotations and dates."

Walking down the aisle and just out the door,  
He again checks the clock, "My God, past four!"  
And down the street he walks with intent,  
Off to a meeting, there's a soul to repent.

He's half a man and yet, half a child,  
With half a frown and half a smile.  
He'll be home for dinner by quarter past five,  
And mix two martinis to forget he's alive.

Richard Matysik

Outside, it is cold and raw.  
My heart too is raw. Touched by sharp things . . . painful things.  
Bitter pangs . . . earnestness.  
You gave me your soul. Was I there for you?  
Today, I hurt. Wanting to give without thought of return. But needing  
Something more. Willing to take the risk.  
Patience . . . The time will come  
When it's right.

Friend . . . Gentle Wind . . . So free to be just where it is . . . NOW.  
Searching. In need of healing.  
Have I looked quite far enough?  
Take time  
to  
watch  
the  
river  
flow.

Beth Bailey





October morning  
so good to me  
giving me all of your dimly lit  
color this soft day  
holding back winter's  
white ocean  
your light still pale as the ocean  
when the fog drifts in  
and shreds of tangled sea mist  
hang from half-fallen trees:

no sound is here now  
only the ghosts of sound  
footfalls deadened on the soft  
green carpet of moss,  
and October grass  
nuzzled by familiar faces  
and two unfamiliar feet  
intruders both  
but the mist cries no warning;  
it whispers.

Anonymous

September 7, 1982

A surprising chill, it came all-at-once-with-grey-clouds,  
set the trees shivering before the Colormaker could touch them.  
Summertime runners, tan-worshipping sunners,  
were chased indoors.  
I went outside to taste it all,  
The chill quiet of no Indian summer.

Sally Hawk



A grey truck mowing the highway  
Orange sky paints a rich view  
The driver joining a country station  
Following songs with mis-heard words  
The backseat passengers listening  
Without any ears  
An unseen face awaits him  
A voice he's never heard  
Like a tangent . . .  
He crosses another state  
And the radio gathers friction  
in the metallic night.

Bernadette Krainz

6:12 a.m., NYC

Sad water.

Dirty river.

Hopefully the only place where the shrill screams of ocean birds  
sound like cries for help.

In the morning you can pray the fog will lift on a clean beach,  
a passage to the sea . . .

The gulls laugh at you for wishing,  
As the day begins in the city on the Sound.

Sally Hawk

## Soul

My soul, the eye that sees everything  
in depth and with clarity, is the  
ear that hears the truth of other souls,  
the sounds that cause me to tremble.

My soul waters my eyes when I meet sincerity;  
it thirsts for fresh air and ideas.  
It seeks to flow beauty through to your souls.

My soul insists on honour, dignity, integrity  
truth and respect;  
most of all to create and create and  
create--forever--without end,  
like the waves of the ocean.

My soul searches for the sublime and  
beautiful and seeks the perfect  
structure of the universe.

Suk Soon Kim

## HOME COMING

There are so few windows to the world,  
So few doors to open for the passenger  
Who sits quietly as the train leaves  
The station for the city.  
The rhythm of moving metal stirs the mind  
(Quick now, here, now, always-)  
But does not move the heart, and the  
Passing panorama quickly changes:  
The open fields harvest houses grown  
Close together, the treeline and hedgerow  
Melt into rites of passage for vehicles  
Whose only intention is to conduct business.

There are so few windows to the world  
To the traveler who has a particular destination,  
And who is intent upon arriving there  
At a particular time to witness the tolling bell.  
The mind is focused; the heart is silent.  
It is the same journey whether going to Rome  
Or to Paris or to London.  
It is the same journey regardless of the  
Bridges you choose to cross.

There is though another road on a different journey  
To a place that has no final designation  
(Perhaps to an open field near a bonfire).  
It is the way of the whale, the salmon, the butterfly,  
To a place where people gather at Christmas time,  
Where each face is a window and each thought  
A door that opens freely, where memories  
Are gathered and burned in the heart  
Like fallen autumn leaves,  
To be remembered each spring as the first buds  
Return to the barren trees.

Here, at this place, when the snow falls  
The heart will remain warm in a  
Windless cold that is the heart's heat.  
Here, at this place, where the journey has ended  
At anytime of the year, listen. Listen closely,  
And the music of the wind and of the soil,  
And the sound of the water, of frost and fire  
Is the song once heard long ago;  
But again you hear it as at its first singing.  
It is to know it again for the first time.

Richard Matysik



The Arbiter's sagacity commands  
 The ocean's moisture to ascend and fall  
 In ever wanton measure to the lands.  
 Eternal motion of the time does call,  
 For man's transgressing these diurnal laws.  
 It's hapless how he rules his precious sands.  
 A dismal portrait from discord I draw,  
 If we keep eroding God's and nature's bands.  
 A tiny raindrop, falling from the mist,  
 To earth, ensures the drop where there he's kissed.  
 Departs his youth in the chaotic stream,  
 He's reached the sea; what wisdom has he seen.  
 But teach the children, show affection so,  
 The streams more cheerful, caring waters flow.

Jerome K. Worth

*The clack of wheels,  
 the roar of engines,  
 visions of memories  
 shared by many  
 Emotions of great variety  
 rise through those  
 returning again  
 remembering again  
 a by-gone age.  
 Years have passed  
 now you arrive  
 to take a ride  
 on a sentimental journey  
 Passing through barren halls  
 the rooms sleep  
 time seems to roll back  
 encircling all who have left  
 welcomes are heard  
 shared by all  
 a special greeting  
 shared by all.*

*Pattie Kinter*

## In February

Remember you said  
that we could write a poem together  
and I refused, thinking  
what's the point, not thinking  
of the pleasure that memory would make.  
Fourteen months are gone  
now scented firs and cool twilights  
are more dear to me  
for your sake  
than ever for themselves.

That time will not come back to me,  
and I would like to write a poem  
about blue flowers  
with you  
without having to explain.  
If you come north  
next spring  
maybe we can go look at the flowers  
before the other thoughtless man comes with his machine  
to cut them  
and try again.

Anonymous

My palm hugs the windowpane  
Icicle lips bite a finger  
Hand lost in gray glaze  
. . . the other locked initials in a heart  
Eyes that skip between sidewalks  
    played hopscotch with your smile  
Fingers point toward your direction  
Tree branches broken in wind  
Limply breathing your name  
I run to find my mittens  
    as our initials melt in glass.

Bernadette Krantz





**Outstretched Arms**

*The snow billows down from heaven,  
Adorning the pine's needles with a magic innocence;  
The maples, their limbs outstretched, attempt  
to garner the descending whiteness.  
All the while, the snowflakes change,  
Making it harder for the trees to catch the snow.  
The wind momentarily tries to shake the innocence from  
the trees,  
But suddenly, the wind ceases,  
Letting the snow cleanse the world.*

**Jerome K. Worth**



*Birth*

*The dawn is breaking,  
The little whispers resound,  
Cries of innocence  
Stir activity throughout,  
Conquering solemn darkness.*

*Karen Fairweather*



*Mother Theresa of Calcutta in Her Egg S/D*

## G-O-D ' S F O O T

If I were a r-o-c-k I would ask,  
    "Whose f-o-o-t kicked me onto this road?"  
See, I'm such an awkward rock and that foot left me on the top of a  
    c-r-a-z-y, steep hill.  
Because my d-i-m-e-n-s-i-o-n-s are so odd, I can't stop rolling.  
Just when I think I've finally stopped, I pick up speed out of n-o-w-h-e-r-e  
    and roll some more.

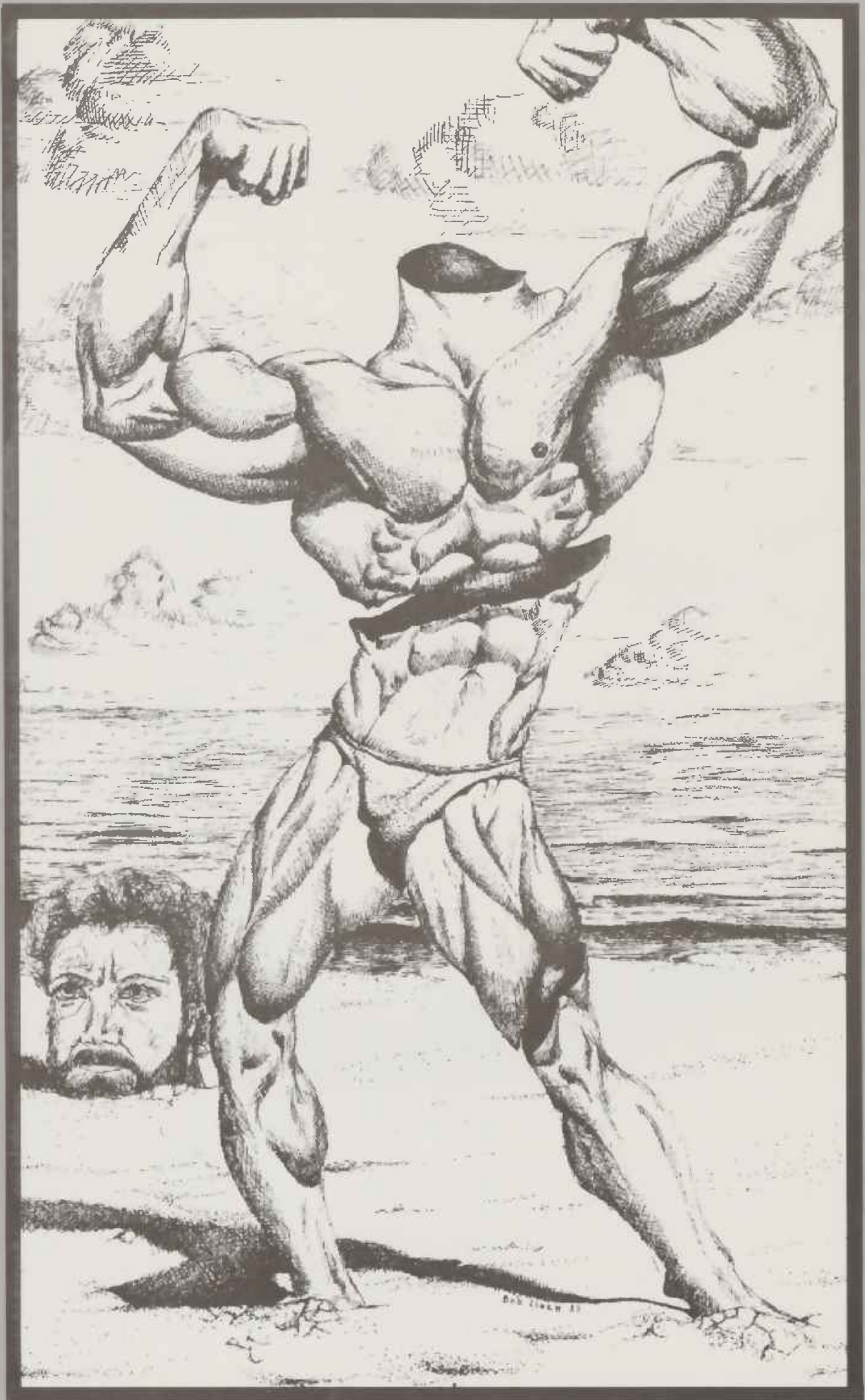
Why can't I be flat and s-t-a-t-i-o-n-a-r-y like so many I keep passing?  
I wish they'd all stop staring at me.  
I shouldn't be so sensitive.  
I actually stopped long enough the other day to chat with an orange-gray  
    cousin of the Slate family.  
He seemed so pleased at my p-r-e-s-e-n-c-e.  
He confessed that he had wished that I kept going because I c-r-e-a-t-e  
    a b-r-e-e-z-e as I pass that is very refreshing.  
I guess flat rocks can't get much f-r-e-s-h air.  
How sad that must be for them.  
But at least they don't cause harm to anyone.  
The other day I rolled over a black ant who had g-r-o-c-e-r-i-e-s on  
    its back and I crushed it.  
I felt awful.  
I wish I could put a steering w-h-e-e-l on this force that pulls me on--  
    this G-R-A-V-I-T-Y.  
I never know what's going to happen next!

W-A-I-T!  
What's that I see?  
The E-N-D of the road?  
Ahhhhhh, what a r-e-l-i-e-f.  
I'm stopping . . . I can't believe it!  
What a joy to finally be at r-e-s-t . . .  
                                    S-t-a-t-i-o-n-a-r-y, at last.  
As I sit here at the end of this road, I am shocked at the question that  
    I was just asked.  
Someone I hardly r-e-c-o-g-n-i-z-e-d just asked me if "I" believe in  
                                    G-R-A-V-I-T-Y  
    and if I've believed in It all my l-i-f-e.  
He asked if I believed that G-R-A-V-I-T-Y was there for me as an  
                                    i-n-d-i-v-i-d-u-a-l  
    and that it affected me directly and personally.

All I can say to this o-b-j-e-c-t is that

    "The force came from the F-O-O-T . . .  
        and all I want to know is,  
            Whose f-o-o-t kicked me onto that road?"

Sharon Marie Palmiter





*Tennessee Williams Reincarnated as the Sweet Bird of Youth S/D*

