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LONGWOOD COLLEGE
WINTER, 1961

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The Colonnade
LONGWOOD COLLEGE
Farmville, Virginia

Vol. XXIII

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No. 2

FROM THE EDITOR:

The purpose of a literary magazine is to foster creative writing and art. THE COLONNADE has the same aims in attempting to encourage individual expression. The contributors have tried to construct a meaningful pattern of perception within an artistic structure.

So far, you, the reader, are not objecting to statements that include *creative, individual expression* and *artistic structure*. These words seem like perfectly proper words to use when referring to the aims of a literary magazine. However, what do you think is "proper" for the contributions themselves? Do you demand that these works offer information like textbooks, or that they please you by saying things that you want them to say?

Fact hunting or using your favorite subjects as a checklist in reading poetry, short stories and novels are common measuring devices. Some readers search strictly for facts, testing creative work by its "realistic" qualities or looking for a guide to living. For this reason, these readers will prefer condensed versions of novels or skim along poetry and short stories, snatching every fact that they can find in them. Such readers feel that they avoid wasting time after collecting and counting all the facts to measure their quantity. This is a neat arithmetical bargain: the time spent in reading should have its equal in facts to the worthwhile reading.

It is obvious, though, that mathematical functions and artistic creations cannot be equated. No finished art product can survive the abstraction of any of its parts without damage to its unity. Would you remove a part of a painting, "View of Toledo," by El Greco, for example? Do you want to take out the river, buildings or sky to suit your purposes? Absurd? Then, literature, as an art, should be treated by the reader with the same respect he has for the other arts.

Therefore, in reading the contributions to THE COLONNADE, examine and turn over word relationships or character relationships to see how these elements are interlocked in the structure of the writing. An awareness of such relationships can mean more exciting reading than scrapbook-collecting of favorite themes and thoughts.

—R. L. C.

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CONTENTS

COLONNADE SKETCHES		4
HURLY-BURLY	<i>Eleanor Kevan</i>	5
ILLUSTRATION	<i>Judy Woodyard</i>	5
JOSEPHINE	<i>Donna Humphlett</i>	6
THE PRINCESS AND THE ROSE.....	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	8
ILLUSTRATION	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	8
THE STRUGGLE	<i>Gayle Ray</i>	9
LE PETIT SAMBEAU NOIR.....	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	10
ILLUSTRATION	<i>Sandra Wise</i>	10
THE TIGER	<i>Judy Detrich</i>	11
THE SMALL, DARK CHILD.....	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	12
ILLUSTRATION	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	12
MUMBO JUMBO	<i>Sandra Weaver</i>	14
ILLUSTRATION	<i>Lynn Davenport</i>	15
E. E. CUMMINGS: The Technique of His Poetry		
	<i>Judy Detrich</i>	16
THE COWLED VIEW	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	19
ILLUSTRATION	<i>Melanie Wilkes</i>	19
A GOD IN THE DUST.....	<i>Eleanor Kevan</i>	20
COMPANION PIECES: HOUND AND GAZELLE		
	<i>La Verne Collier</i>	16
ILLUSTRATION	<i>Natasha</i>	25



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COLONNADE SKETCHES

Judy Detrich is a junior English major from Hampton. A member of the *Colonnade* staff since her freshman year, Judy is at present incoming editor of the magazine.

Although she has made some attempts at poetry and fiction, she attempts neither seriously, preferring instead essays and journalistic writings. These, she feels, "call for some imagination as well as coherence and understanding."

Judy seems reluctant to state her preferences as to such things as art, music, or literature, reasoning that "my tastes really haven't become settled." At this point she nods with respect towards the classical art and tragic drama of the Greeks, and then hurries on to admit an enjoyment of such modern writers as Joyce, Eliot, Conrad, Yeats, Brecht, and a current interest in Samuel Beckett.

Among her treasured attitudes, Judy displays a dislike for "pigeons, squeaking shoes, phonies, prejudices, and confinements." Along the line of humor, she expresses extreme joy when observing the work of Jules Feiffer.

Judy's future plans include graduate work in English. She is tentatively considering college teaching as a career.

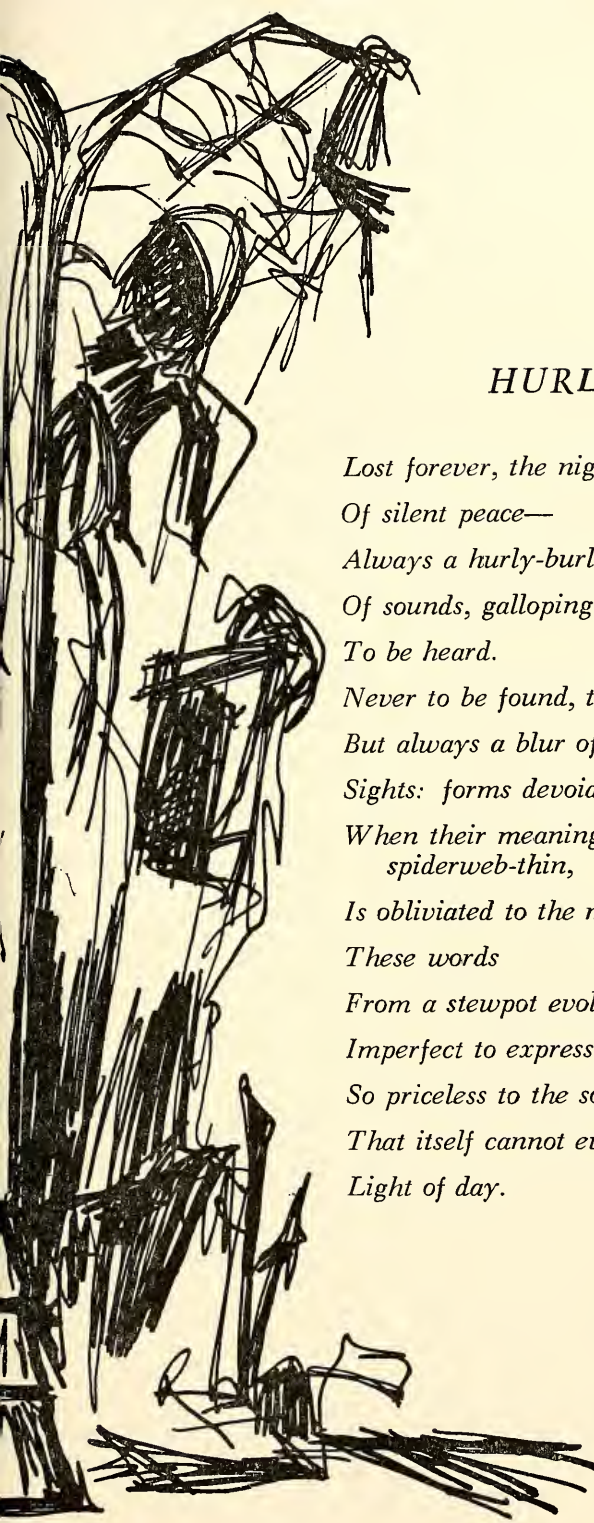
* * * *

The ideal combination of interests to be found in the business manager of a literary magazine might be an interest in business and in English. Such a combination has been found in Pauline Hunter Brightwell, business manager of the *Colonnade*. Polly, a junior business education-English major is from Charlotte County, Virginia. In addition to her work with the magazine, she is a member of Pi Delta Epsilon, Kappa Delta Pi, Phi Beta Lambda, and the Baptist Student Union.

The quiet elements of Polly's nature are blended with determination and definite tastes. "As far as music is concerned there are so many things I like—especially some of the Russian composers like Tchaikovsky," she stated.

Literature poses a perplexing problem for Polly for she finds it difficult to draw a line because she likes so much. She did express a particular liking for J. D. Salinger and Truman Capote, however.

Partly because she grew up in the country, Polly plans to try urban life upon graduation, and she wants to travel. Her immediate plans include teaching; however, she contemplates graduate work in the very distant future.



HURLY-BURLY

*Lost forever, the night
Of silent peace—
Always a hurly-burly
Of sounds, galloping one over the other
To be heard.
Never to be found, the perfect dark,
But always a blur of imperfect
Sights: forms devoid of meaning
When their meaning, always delicate and
spiderweb-thin,
Is obliterated to the mind.
These words
From a stewpot evolving,
Imperfect to express a secret longing
So priceless to the soul
That itself cannot evolve into the pitiless
Light of day.*

—ELEANOR KEVAN

Josephine

by Donna Humphlett

WHASSA matter with you? You want people to think you're queer or somethin'?"

All I asked Bud was if he'd ever thought of being a girl, and he jumped to the conclusion that I'm a fairy.

"No, I'm not a queer. I just asked you if you'd ever thought of being a girl, that's all."

You cannot talk to lame-brains like Bud. All he wants to talk about is sex and football. Sex in the vulgar sense, I mean. He cannot talk sensibly about it. Football, sure. But not sex. He's limited in that to how much he can get out of a girl. He wouldn't know how to discuss somebody's philosophy of the subject. And hell, the farthest he's ever been with a girl is a little making out. And he acts like he's had them all. God, that kills me.

Once I had a date with this girl, Betty Jane Lockhart. She's a pretty hot number. You know what I mean. Well, when I went out with her, we didn't do anything, sexy I mean. And I made the mistake of telling Bud we didn't.

"Whassa matter with you?" I think they're the only damn words he knows. "Boy, I'da known what to do."

I think he got sort of mad when I told him, "The hell you would have."

I hope people don't think I'm a fairy or oddball or something for acting the way I do. I mean especially the way I acted with Betty Jane. I'd just have to like a girl to have her. You know what I mean. I mean I'd feel dirty if I had a slob or something. I don't know, but I think I would. Maybe I just didn't feel like getting dirty that night with Betty Jane. I don't know, that's all.

Then one day I babysat with the little boy next door. And I took him for a walk in the woods. He got a big kick out of it. You know how little kids are when they see a rabbit or something. And he found an old snakeskin. He really got a big kick out of it, seeing all that stuff.

When we were walking out the woods and back on the road old Bud came zooming by in his car. Boy, did he think it was funny. My taking Jimmy for a walk in the woods. You can always tell what somebody like him has on his mind. Sex. It took him months to get over that.

I was the only damn boy who failed algebra last year. And I got a "D" on physical education. I did all right on the written tests, but

I couldn't do the stuff. Hell, who cares how many push-ups you can do? I don't. And that damned algebra. I'm not going to be an engineer anyway. I don't know what I'm going to do, but I'm not going to be a damned engineer. Bud is. And one of his lame-brained friends is going to be a physical education major. He'll probably be "Coach of the Year" someday. Big deal. And all the rest of the lame-brains will ask him for his autograph, if he can write.

I'm not doing too well in my classes this year. It's kind of difficult when everybody calls you Josephine when you stand up to recite. And when they're not saying it, you know that they're thinking it.

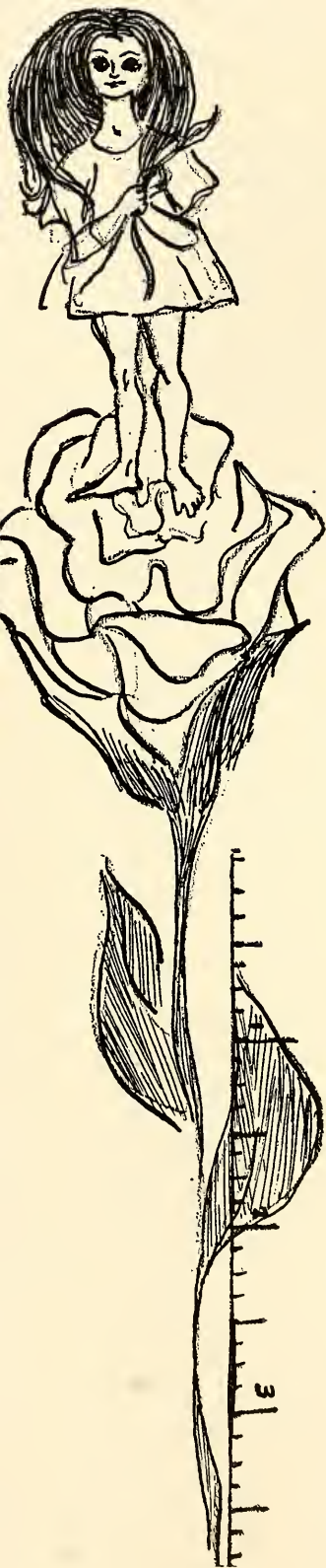
I've never won a medal or prize in my life, except one time I almost did. I'm good in history. History and English are the only subjects I've ever accomplished anything in.

The time I almost won a damn medal was in my sophomore year in high school. And Bud had to spoil it all. He had a bunch of matches in class. So I took one and tried to see if it would burn. I struck it against my zipper. The damn thing burned, and made the room smell like a sulphur factory.

The teacher came in and asked who'd struck the matches. I had to tell him. And when they gave out the medals that year, old Joe Selzkurt didn't get one. I had struck a match in class. Oh hell, I probably wouldn't have gotten it anyway. Mr. Bailey, the teacher, was the football coach and I never went to the games. I can't stand football, especially when somebody gets hurt. That's crazy as hell, playing a game that you can get killed in. But most of the guys at Graves High School seem to think that football is life itself. Hell.

Once to prove something, I don't know what, I went out for football. It was in my freshman year, and I don't know what happened, but all of a sudden all these guys were on top of me. Thought I was dying or something. I had a concussion and had to stay in the hospital for two days. Some of the guys were really worried, especially the lame-brain who had his damn knee in my ear. Maybe that's why I hate the stuff. Getting hurt and all, I mean. Who wants to play something that can kill you anyway. It's just a game; it doesn't prove a damn thing. And I didn't prove anything except I couldn't play football. Damn, I'd hardly ever touched a football before going out for the stupid team. Maybe I should have; then maybe I'd've known how to play. Then I'd prove I could play football, but what would that prove?





THE PRINCESS AND THE ROSE

Watch this ruddy child, russet-haired,
unharnessed by braid, shaking freely,
boldly maned, a rustic infanta.
She wields a wheat stalk like a sceptre,
but unconsciously.
Her opulently encrusted mud-marked feet
strut over the earth knowing it hers.

This child, royalty from an undeveloped country,
is unwanted at an adult ceremony
where a rose raised
in a cold glass vase
is a conversation piece.

To this princess, it seemed a surprise,
stopping the frosted word in
the coming of a sunburst bloom flaming
out of the clenched, jagged sepals,
the dragon-jawed bud.

An old St. George halted
the fires with no sweeping, swift swing
of a singing sword blade.
Instead, his hilt held
a blunt ruler to measure
stem, leaf, petal, sepal.

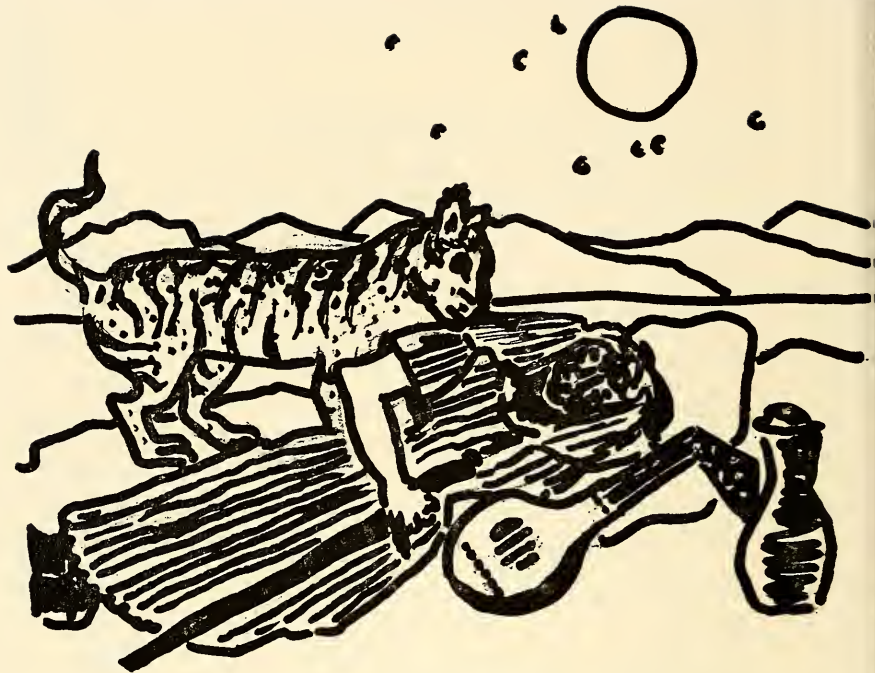
The ruler, lined like the spines
of a picked fish's back,
reduced the rose to the splendor
of a dead fish.

—LA VERNE COLLIER

THE STRUGGLE

The Northern Lights are there;
Look beyond their beauty.
Look,
The white light-good,
The red-evil,
Light mingles with the fiery red,
The air whines with struggle-hurt
The red is wrongly violent,
The light is strongly good.
Go away light!
It does—
Reluctantly—firmly,
They separate,
The light becomes stronger,
It bends and folds
Into a shape unknown to man.
Now it is alone
Pouring out its gleam with different degrees of intensity,
No—don't!
Stop! Don't pierce my shell!
The angry sea of red fades sadly
 into nothingness.
Listen—listen to the silent rumble of
 defeat,
The victor is quietest of all;
One last surge of light—he exhales,
Sheds his light, and
Walks softly away.

—GAYLE RAY



LE PETIT SAMBEAU NOIR

by Proust L. Collier

I LAY in the cool shadows of the thatched hut, watching the morning sun play on the gold-green of the trees outside of my window. I turned my head to the corner of the room where my umbrella was placed. The umbrella was green, and after I closed my eyes I could feel the rich oriental color pressing against my eyes to disturb my mind. The color caused me to remember the gaudy, mottled hide of the tiger that I had met several years ago. The tiger, self-sufficient in its viciousness, yet charming in its smoothly muscled poise, had taken the umbrella from me with complete aplomb, heightening its primal, regal qualities. I had been afraid, and attempted in no way to secure my umbrella again. A certain justice appeared in the tiger because it reminded me of my father who had frequently paced in an arrogant way around *la salle à manger* in his striped robe on sunny mornings. I had trembled in hunger and fear on those mornings, feeling the heavy flow of saliva as I thought of the possibility of having a hundred pancakes for breakfast. I despaired at being denied them by my father who considered himself just in protecting my health. He always moved quietly around the room in a leonine way, flexing his shoulders under the striped robe. I watched, admiring his nobility and hating his forcefulness at the same time.

I stared at the umbrella again, swallowing against the sensation of hunger while I trembled under my blankets.

THE TIGER

by Judy D. Faulkner

HE realized later that it had begun long before that. It had already begun the first time Black Jumbo brought him to the edge of the big jungle to earn for himself the name and state of hunter, provided he in his turn were humble and enduring enough. He had already inherited, then, without ever having seen him, the fierce destructive tiger who had earned for himself a name—the long legend of villages ravaged and rifled, of pigs and calves and even babies carried away and mangled and devoured—a corridor of wreckage and destruction and terror beginning back before little Black Sambo was born.

It was September. It was the hottest September he had ever remembered. For weeks they had been in camp, waiting for the weather to clear so that man and beast could run their yearly race. Before, there would have been a next time, after and after, but now he was six. He could say it, himself and Black Mumbo and Black Jumbo juxtaposed against the wild and fierce forces—not cunning, not superior, but towering, looming—the brute epitome and apotheosis of the animal state, the legend of tiger supremacy.

Sambo had seen it himself. For already he had met the tiger. It did not emerge, appear; it was just there, immobile, fixed, terrible. Afterward it faded into the undergrowth behind it, each time taking with it a part of Sambo—first his green umbrella, another time his red jacket, until now he was six and had nothing left to relinquish.

"I can repudiate it. It is mine to repudiate," he said. He had followed the hunt here to its end. Juxtaposed with his loss was the virtue he had painfully acquired—a long struggle ending in endurance and pity and tolerance and love and humility and pride. Now Sambo need wait no longer. He stood at the edge of a jungle clearing watching the tiger and his mad circling. The clearing seemed to be alive with frantic tigers, leaping, darting, whirling, not in a spiral nor a gyre, but in a frenzied circle, around the trunk of a primeval tree. Then Little Black Sambo noticed his possessions—his red jacket, his green umbrella, his purple shoes with crimson soles and crimson linings—neglected and cast aside by the tiger in his obsessive intent on self-destruction. By this time the tiger lay, like melted butter, around the tree. Sambo humbly bent down to gather his possessions, then proudly turned back to camp and to breakfast.

Black Jumbo gazed proudly at his son, starting a long oration: "Don't you see, you had to learn humility and pity and sacrifice. . . ."

"Yes," thought Sambo. But he dreamed of a stack of pancakes.





THE SMALL, DARK CHILD

L. Kafka Collier

THE jungle was warm and wet, and the leaves pressed down from overhead until it was almost airless. I moved in the semi-darkness, looking for my mother. The undergrowth became heavier; and as I was forced nearer to the earth, I noticed black ants eating through my purple shoes. They appeared determined to eat away the beautiful color, exposing my dark flesh. I tried to move away from them, but I moved too slowly, because my green umbrella became entangled in the serpentine stems of vines. Yet I had to hurry, so I lowered my knees on the black ants to push through the vines. Immediately, they ate through my blue trousers, embedding themselves in my flesh to become a part of me. I tried to pull them from my flesh, but they continued to wriggle until I could feel every part of their sectioned bodies going under my skin. Trying to ignore the pain, I pushed through the darkness, hoping to see the sunny place where I could eat the hundred pancakes that I had been promised. As the pain became more intense, I almost fainted. Somehow, I pushed away a large, heavy leaf and saw the bright clearing. There, a column of pancakes was waiting for

me. I forced myself forward, clutching my green umbrella to protect my eyes from the piercing, almost slicing, rays of the intense yellow sun. Halfway to the pancakes, I realized that I had no butter. I did not like dry pancakes, but I decided to eat them since I had not eaten in nine days. Suddenly, a tiger, hugely muscled and vividly yellow, lunged out of the undergrowth. I was senseless in my fear at this magnificent, terrible animal. I forgot the still-gnawing ants and my hunger, on seeing him. I felt the tiger's heavy breath as he moved nearer. I saw him moving deliberately toward the pancakes, too, and I trembled. He looked at my umbrella, and I dropped it in fear. He moved, terribly and magnificently yellow, nearer and nearer. I closed my eyes to the coming attack, sensing malice in the insidiously soft plodding of his steps. He stopped near me, and I forced my eyes open to see how I was going to be attacked. He had stopped, no sinews moving. I looked toward the pancakes which I thought that he had already eaten. The column still existed. However, they were not soft yellow and tender-textured. They were covered with black ants whose bodies, shiny and hard, crawled over the entire column. I watched, nauseated, as they devoured every pancake in the stack. Wriggling and bloated, the ants moved toward the still-staring tiger. He tried to turn but they crept onto his hide, covering every stripe. I watched weakly as the tiger gave an almost human moan while the ants infested his body. He was gnawed to nothingness before my sight. In the place where the tiger had stood a pool of butter was left. I became hungry again when I saw this. Then I saw, throughout the yellow pool, that the black ants were swimming. I almost retched, but I controlled myself when I recalled my umbrella which could still protect me against the sun. I walked toward the spot where I had dropped it. I stopped and trembled. The fine green silk of the umbrella had been chewed away. I knew that the ants had been here, too. A few still ran over the skeletal spokes. I sat down between the pool of butter and the umbrella, not desiring to go in either direction. I waited for my mother, but she never came. No one came to explain the black ants to me, and I sat for an infinity under an unmoving sun.



MUMBO JUMBO

by S. Spillane Weaver

IT was night time. Everything was dark, so dark I couldn't see the shine on my purple suede shoes. It was time for me to make the midnight scene.

I hitched up my blue pants and pulled my red jacket tight against my chest, so I could impress some chicks. I flexed my muscles, watching in the store window to see them ripple.

Then I felt it. Quick and sharp, it struck me on the back of my neck. I winced. Cursing, I ran seeking protection under a nearby tree. Fumbling impatiently, I found it, flipped the trigger, raised my hand level with my shoulder, and moved silently from under the tree with my green umbrella. God, I hate rain!

I crossed the street, pulling my collar up against the cold and headed to Lily's apartment. As I turned the corner I saw some guy coming out of the apartment building. I could tell by his shadow who he was. I didn't have to look at his beatup mug, with the scar running down his forehead, over his nose, and through his lip, ending in the dimple in his chin. It was Black Jumbo; I sensed it.

Angrily I hurried into the building. I didn't bother with the elevator. I ran up to the 32nd floor. I stopped in front of Room 320 and kicked open the door.

"Sambo, doll. I've been waiting," she panted.

She lay there on the plush green sofa in the leopard skin robe I'd heisted for her on one of my earlier jobs. Her long blond hair fell over her lush shoulders and down across her bare legs.

She stood up and started across the room toward me. Her robe fell from her shoulders and she moved like a cat, dragging her skin behind her. My pulse quickened as my eyes took in every movement of her body. I knew that body and I wanted every inch of it, and knew that I'd have it . . . soon.

Standing before me she said nothing, just seduced me with her eyes. Slowly she reached up and took my green umbrella, closed it, and threw it over in the corner. Then, she unbuttoned my red coat. My blue trousers were next.

She began unlacing my purple suede shoes, but I kicked her gently aside. Then I reached out and smacked her full in the face. "That was for Black Jumbo," I snarled. She whirled, but did not fall. I moved toward her. Grabbing her by the shoulders, I crushed her into my arms. As our lips met I murmured, "This is for me."

She moaned, melting into my arms like butter. We fell to the floor, and the noises from the city's jungle outside were smothered in desire.



E. E. Cummings: The Technique of His Poetry

by Judy Detrich

MODERN poets are faced with the problem which Marianne Moore expressed as making "old wine-skins new." That is, they must find fresh ways to communicate with fellow human beings about such things as nature, love, death, time, frustration, and loneliness. In an attempt to solve this problem, poets experiment with the mechanics of poetry and often change the traditional technical devices to fit their own theories. When these changes reflect sincerity on the part of the poet, as when Donne introduced his startling metaphysical conceits, they may become a successful and influential means of poetic expression. When, on the other hand, the poet develops a device which is merely clever, for example, the emblem poetry of the 17th century, it rarely lasts longer than an initial period of popularity.

E. E. Cummings is one of the artists who has made innovations. His poetry is, essentially, either lyric or satiric. Unlike Eliot or Yeats, he requires little intellectual background and refrains from the use of elaborate symbolism. Since his poems often express the things poets have written about for centuries, the originality of Cummings must be in the way he expresses what he feels. Consider, for example:

silence

.is

a

looking

bird: the

turn

ing;edge,of

life

(inquiry before snow

The poem gives several images of silence. However, the most startling things about "silence" are the strange typographical devices used. Because these devices appear to be so different and contrary to traditional poetic technique, some readers may suspect Cummings of not being altogether honest in his poetry. It is important, then, to understand his system of spacing, capitalization, punctuation, and syntax.

When reading Cummings' poetry, the reader is often aware of a feeling of movement which makes him respond more actively and more vividly. He is, it seems to me, responding to Mr. Cummings' technique. Cummings himself says that his theory of technique is not

complicated and can be expressed "in fifteen words by quoting The Eternal Question And Immortal Answer of burlesk, viz. 'Would you hit a woman with a child?—No, I'd hit her with a brick'." He continues to say, "like the burlesk comedian, I am abnormally fond of that precision which creates movement."

This may be the key to his poetry and to his poetical devices. His poems, he hopes, are of that precision which creates movement. Apparently, Mr. Cummings hates, above all else, people who are undead, that is, who are existing in, but not experiencing the world around them. This may explain why he has been so interested in figures such as Buffalo Bill, Picasso, and "tough guys"; these representatives are portrayed in his poetry as being full of feeling and vitality.

An illustration of Cummings' celebration of "the virtue of being intensely alive" is this poem:

... we're anything brighter than even the sun
 (we're everything greater
 than books
 might mean)
we're everyanything more than believe
 (with a spin
 leap
 alive we've alive)
we're wonderful one times one

Cummings' condemnation of being merely undead is illustrated in a description of the Russian people filing into the tomb of Lenin.

"... As the line unmovingly moves, I enter the tomb, I descend;
I view the human god Lenin; descend; I emerge; and then . . . I
marvel; not so much at what I have seen, as at what I have not,
seen." . . .

facefacefaceface

hand—

fin—

claw

foot—

hoof

(tovarich)

es to number of numberlessness(un

—smiling)

with dirt's dirt dirty dirtier with other's dirt with dirt of them-
selves dirtiest waitand dirtily never smile shufflebudge dirty pause-
halt.

Smilingless.

Some from nowhere (faces of nothing) others out of
 somewhere (somethingshaped hands) those know ignorance (hugest
 feet and believing) those were friendless (stooping in their deathskins)
 all-numberlessly
 —eachotherish
 facefacefaceface
 facefaceface
 faceface
 face
 :all (of whom-which move-do-not-move numberlessly) Toward
 the
 Tomb

The poems of protest, the portraits, and the lyric poems all contain
 Cummings' means of communicating movement and vitality, or lack
 of it.

The following representative poem serves to illustrate many of
 Cummings' techniques:

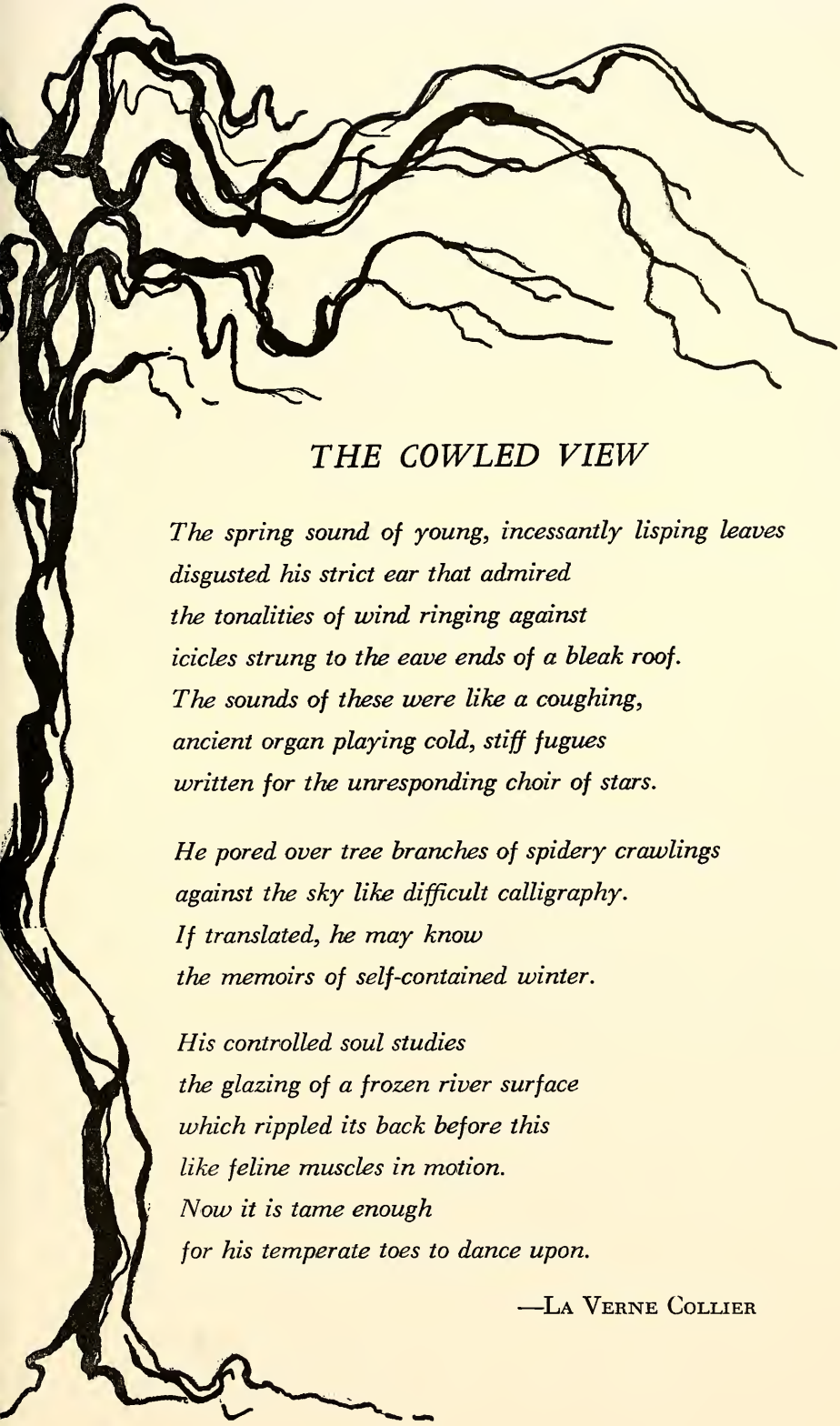
l(a
 le
 af
 fa
 ll
 s)
 one
 l
 iness

The poem at first seems to be little more than a mixing of letters.
 However, close examination reveals an image, a leaf falls, and a feeling,
 loneliness. Through the use of parentheses, Cummings can produce a
 simultaneity of thought; and the spacing arrangement allows the reader
 to feel the motion of the falling leaf.

The method of spacing has several uses. Not only does the arrange-
 ment force the reader to participate; but, as in Marianne Moore's
 poetry, the spacing may aid in the sense of the poem. For illustration,
 by the end of the next poem the reader can sense the falling and fatal-
 ness of the rain because of the arrangement of the words.

dim
 i
 tiv

(continued on page 21)



THE COWLED VIEW

*The spring sound of young, incessantly lispings leaves
disgusted his strict ear that admired
the tonalities of wind ringing against
icicles strung to the eave ends of a bleak roof.
The sounds of these were like a coughing,
ancient organ playing cold, stiff fugues
written for the unresponding choir of stars.*

*He pored over tree branches of spidery crawlings
against the sky like difficult calligraphy.
If translated, he may know
the memoirs of self-contained winter.*

*His controlled soul studies
the glazing of a frozen river surface
which rippled its back before this
like feline muscles in motion.
Now it is tame enough
for his temperate toes to dance upon.*

—LA VERNE COLLIER

A GOD IN THE DUST?

Man,
Most mutable of beings,
Fashions for himself a nook
In immortality.
What audacity of little mind
Takes from the truly deathless
Rightful eminence?
A rock,
Ever constant,
Exceeds this structure, soup-like,
Formed of rock and gas and time,
Easily bent
Or cracked
Or broken.
What is he to water,
Eternal rhythm, unbroken cycle,
Movements myriad
As the universe?
Whereas he,
Broken, faltering,
Moves not so close to God
As a drop of water.
He remains
Alpha, Omega,
The image of Himself, creation's God,
In his own esteem.

—ELEANOR KEVAN

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The spacing sometimes forces the reader to read slowly and sift the meaning and, then again, to read rapidly so that the words sound rushed, the way they might be thought or spoken. A good example of this use of space and elision is "Chansons Innocent I":

. . . the little
lame balloonman

whistles far and wee
and eddieandbill come
running from marbles and
piracies and it's
spring

The breathlessness and wistfulness of spring are both conveyed largely by the spatial arrangement. The arrangement assures that the poem will not be misinterpreted by a failure to read it properly.

Another phase of the techniques of E. E. Cummings which puzzles many readers is his system of capitalization. Although his principle is very unorthodox, it is basically simple. Instead of following the grammatical rules of the English language, Cummings uses capital letters only for emphasis. Sometimes it is a word that he emphasizes, sometimes a group of words, sometimes single letters. The emphasis placed on single letters often accents the sound of the letter. For instance, by first capitalizing only the "O"s and then capitalizing everything except "o"s, the contrasting sounds of the "o" are most emphasized in:

mOOn Over tOWns mOOn
whisper
less creature huge grO
pingness

whO perfectly whO
 flOat
 newly alOne is
 dreamest
 oNLY THE MooN o
 VER ToWNS
 SLoWLY SPRoUTING SPIR
 IT

Punctuation as used by Cummings is still another means of expressing and producing activity. Sometimes commas, periods, dashes, semicolons are inserted to draw particular attention to certain letters or to heighten the meaning of a word. Cummings often misplaces the punctuation, as he did the period in "silence." Placing the period at the beginning of the following line draws even more attention to the word itself.

The arrangement of words is perhaps the most puzzling innovation of all. Cummings gives his images a freshness and an ambiguousness or concreteness, as he chooses, by scattering his modifiers all over the page, or by leaving them out altogether. When the syntax makes the reader aware of the words or creates a more meaningful image, this innovation is an important contribution to the poetry. The line "with up so many floating bells down" demonstrates how the unusual mixing of words can be much more suggestive of the sound and movement of the image than if Mr. Cummings had written "with so many bells floating up and down."

E. E. Cummings seems to be concerned with conveying a first-hand perception of his experience. To aid him in his expression he has invented techniques of spacing, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization. It is unfortunate, I think, that so much emphasis has been placed upon his technical innovations. Although Mr. Cummings himself is partly to be blamed for the overemphasis on his technique. The following "poem", to me is nothing more than an experiment.

 r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r
 who
 a)s w(e loo)k
 upnowgath
 PPEGORHRASS
 eringint(o-
 aThe):l
 eA
 !p:
 S a
 (r
 rIvInG .gRrEaPsPhOs)

to
rea(be)rran(com)gi(e)ngly
,grasshopper;

ADHUC SUB JUDICE LIS

Poems like this are unfortunate because they appear to be the work of a clever show-off; the pre-occupation with image is little more than that. The same techniques used to make the reader aware of the rain or of the horrible, unlively existence of some Russian people are brought under suspicion by such light use.

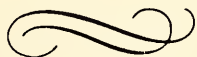
Luckily this type of poem is outnumbered by poetry as beautiful as "all in green went my love riding" or as ironic and satirical as "POEM, OR HOW BEAUTY HURTS MR. VINAL", or as revealing as:

no time ago
or else a life
walking in the dark
i met christ

jesus) my heart
flopped over
and lay still
while he passed (as

close as i'm to you
yes closer
made of nothing
except loneliness

E. E. Cummings' contributions to poetry as an innovator, a protestor, an imagist, a celebrator of love and spring have been influential. Of course, Donne, Pound, Yeats have had an influence on contemporary poets, but so has Cummings; for, as Marianne Moore has observed, it is seldom that you read the work of a young poet without seeing traces of Cummings, most of them unconscious traces.



COMPANION PIECES: HOUND AND GAZELLE

Curt words are a hoarse hound's bark
Hound-like, chasing and subduing
a brute word from another's leash
only angers the beast.
No time to tame.
To catch him, ramble
into a labyrinth of bramble
leading to the recess of a unique bloom.

Graceful speech has a gazelle's way,
leaping forward on lyrical hooves.
Harnessing the creature requires more than
reins.
Ride it,
the horns which seemed an arch of
refined line
become scimitars to gore
the movements of the mounted.
The head halts
in a tree from the springing buck's back.
Ludicrously, the brow bears a leaf tiara
like poetic laurel praise.
The body dangles
To the winds like
disjointed prose.

—LA VERNE COLLIER



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