Wisconsin Academy review. Volume 41, Number 3 Summer 1995

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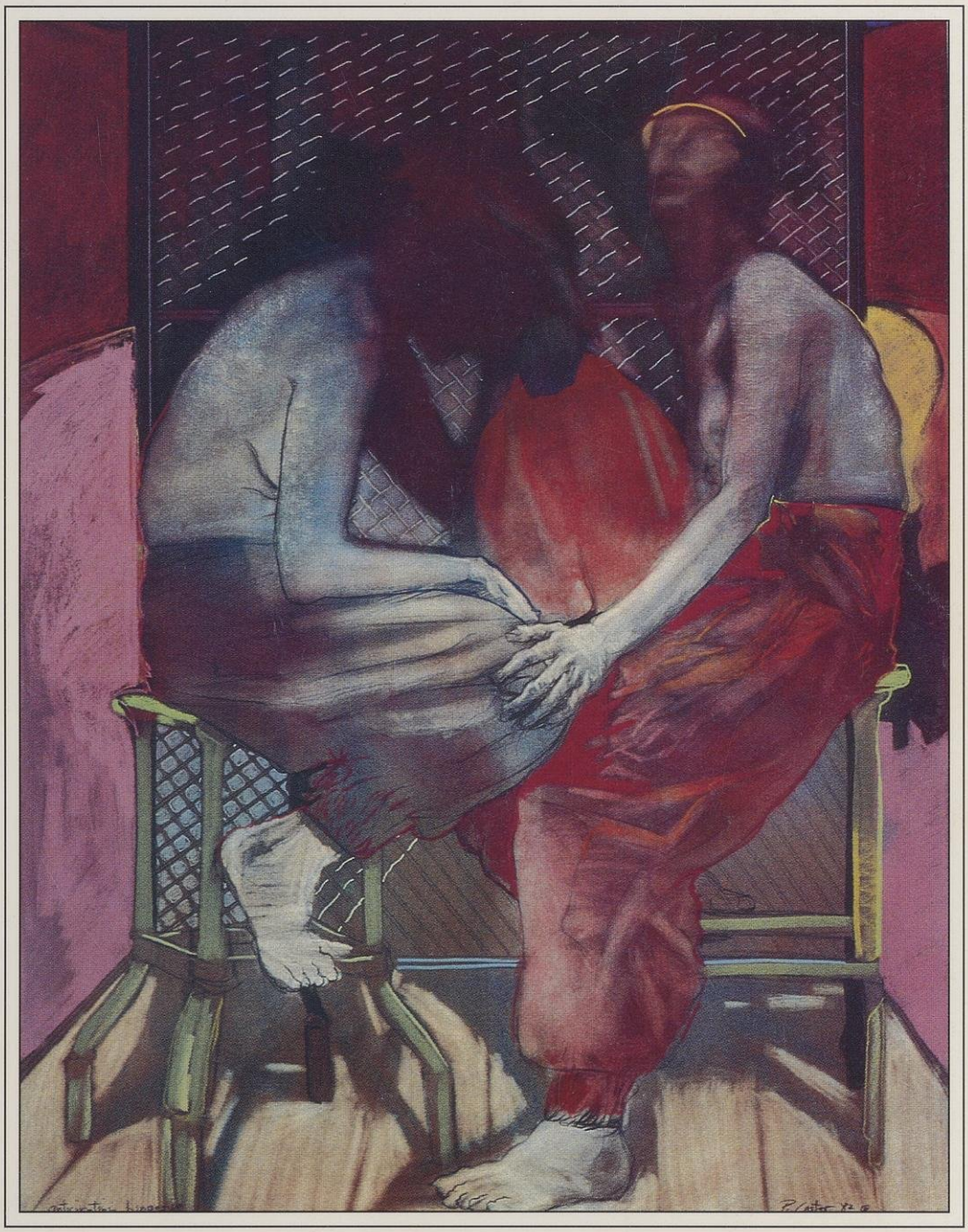
FRAN HAMERSTROM'S CHILDHOOD
JAZZ, ART, AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Wisconsin Academy Review

A JOURNAL OF WISCONSIN CULTURE



Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters

Summer 1995 Volume 41, Number 3

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Lyle Mays, keyboard artist

Cover: Drawing from "Elevator Women" series by Paul Caster. 42 x 54 inches. 1981. Photo by Robert Smith.

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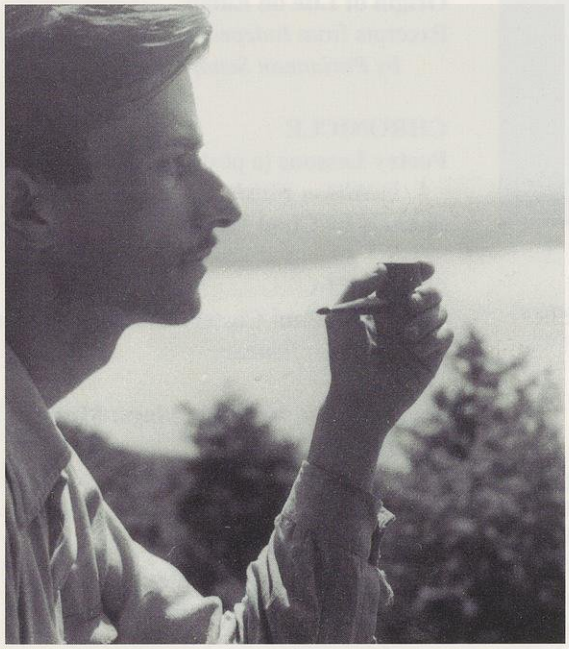
125 YEARS

The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters was chartered by the State Legislature on March 16, 1870, as a membership organization serving the people of Wisconsin. Its mission is to encourage investigation in the sciences, arts and letters and to disseminate information and share knowledge.

Editor's Notes

I have mentioned before that the *Review* often takes on a life of its own as it makes its way to the final production stage. Sometimes a theme emerges, as with the issue relating to northern Wisconsin and the national forests (Spring 1994) or the issue commemorating World War II (Summer 1994).

With this issue it is a spirit that has emerged rather than a theme, for the articles are unrelated when one looks just at the subject matter. But a freedom of spirit seems to emanate from this eclectic assemblage, one that is almost visceral, and it radiates from the full range of disciplines represented here—sciences, arts, and letters. At first there was a hint, then an awareness, and finally an acknowledgement that, yes, this issue indeed was headed toward becoming a celebration of the free spirit—a salute to individuals who have done what they wanted to do and rejoiced in their choices.



Chad Walsh

This year, as many of you know by now, marks the 125th anniversary of the Academy's founding, and we continue to be aware of our somewhat awesome past as we carry out our various projects. While there is nothing expressly relating to the Academy's history in this issue, the people we get to know here—the scientists, artists, and writers—are the kinds of individuals, I believe, who exemplify what our founders had in mind when they declared the Academy's mission and set about to begin establishing a tradition for the Academy to build upon.

Whenever possible we like to feature something by or about one of our distinguished Academy fellows. This time we offer excerpts from the recently published memoirs of wildlife biologist Frances Hamerstrom, *My Double Life*, published by The University of Wisconsin Press. Fran Hamerstrom surely is one of the best examples of a free spirit to be found in Wisconsin today—or yesterday, for that matter. Her book is personal, lively, touching, and inspiring. Read it and you'll see.

Periannan Senapathy is another scientist with a mind of his own and the courage to challenge traditional thinking. He's even willing to take on the theories of Charles Darwin! The Academy has encouraged research and exploration since its inception—indeed, investigation and discourse were germane to the motives of those early founders—and it seems appropriate that we offer a summary of Senapathy's ideas as to what manner of activity might have taken place in that mysterious primordial pond. Incidentally, Darwin himself continues to be in the news. *Charles Darwin: A Biography—Vol. 1, Voyaging* by Janet Browne has just been published by Knopf (605 pages, $35), and according to one reviewer, ". . . the uproar is not yet over. Stay tuned!" You'll find acquisition information on Senapathy's book at the beginning of the piece on his research.

My years as executive director of the Wisconsin Library Association resulted in many fine experiences, one of which dates back to 1982, the year I began working for the association. That was the year Chad Walsh won the Banta Award for his 1981 collection of poems, *Hang Me Up My Begging Bowl*, and I had a chance to meet him at the fall conference awards ceremony. It was an honor to shake hands with this poet, teacher, editor, and theologian, somewhat frail even then but visibly pleased to be honored by Wisconsin's library community. It is a pleasure all these years later for us to hear from his daughter and become a little bit acquainted with her through her moving reminiscence of her late father.

Certainly the muses shine through in the spirits of artist Paul Caster and musician Lyle Mays and in the thoughtful and sensitive profiles provided by the two contributors who have written about them and their work. Our thanks to Tom Bliffert for helping to make the special color section possible.

Poetry, reviews, book notes, and an Inside the Academy feature on a science education collaboration with Wisconsin Public Television complete this issue.

Wisconsin Academy Gallery schedule

June:	"Maps of Encounter: The French in 17th-Century Wisconsin." 125th anniversary exhibition, based on the map collection of George Parker
July:	John W. Ford, mixed media
August:	Anthony Pessler, paintings

Faith B. Miracle

CONTRIBUTORS

- j. bronner is a young writer living in Madison. This fall he will attend the University of New Orleans where he is enrolled in an M.F.A. program. This is his first published poem.
- Paul Caster studied sculpture at the Layton School of Art and Design in Milwaukee and metal casting at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville. He began teaching at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design full time in 1979, where he served as fine arts chair "a couple of times." In 1985 he studied anatomy at Marquette University and includes figure drawing and anatomy in his teaching curricula. He recently was invited to be a visiting artist at the University of Houston, and in March 1996 he will have a one-person show at the Perimeter Gallery in Chicago. In 1981 Perimeter Press published a book of his drawings. His work is in private collections in this country and abroad.
- Brent Dozier, Madison, is a fairly frequent contributor of poems to the *Review*.
- R. Virgil (Ron) Ellis, professor of English at the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, is an editor, publisher, widely recognized poet. He is also a well-known performance poet and has appeared throughout Wisconsin and beyond. His books and albums include *The Blue Train, Wind Gauge, Open My Eyes,* and *Lunar Crescent Wrench.*
- Pamela Gemin has taught writing in the University of Wisconsin System for more than ten years and currently is teaching classes in composition at the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh. Her poems have appeared in numerous regional and national journals.
- Harry Harder is professor of English at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. He has recently started writing again, "a pleasure I have too long denied myself." He and his wife enjoy summers on Hemlock Lake, just north of Rice Lake, and he admires the work of Gerda Lerner, whom he has never met. He has, however, "had the pleasure of meeting her cat!"
- Daniel P. Kunene's three-part chronicle of his return visit to his South African homeland after thirty years in the United States appeared in the recent Fall, Winter, and Spring issues of the *Review*. His late wife, Selina, accompanied him on his journey, which took place during the summer of 1993. Kunene is a professor of African languages and literature at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.
- Bruce Renner holds an M.F.A. degree from Columbia University and lectures at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. He also was a lecturer in the English and comparative literature departments at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and for a time taught creative writing at various universities and on Indian reservations in the northwestern part of the country. His work has been published widely and he is currently working on a novel, a collection of poems, and a book of essays. For approximately twelve years he has lived on a farm in southwestern Wisconsin, and his writing is strongly influenced by both the landscape and the people who live nearby. Bruce is a member of the *Review* editorial advisory committee.
- Periannan Senapathy is president and chief executive officer of Genome International Corporation, a biotechnology research and development firm in Madison which specializes in computational analysis tools for advanced genome research. Prior to founding the firm, Senapathy spent ten years in genome research for the National Institutes of Health (1980–87) and the University of Wisconsin–Madison (1987–90). His research findings have regularly appeared in various scientific journals.
- Loretta Strehlow has published fiction, articles, and poetry and has taught creative writing to adults at Milwaukee Area Technical College and in the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Urban Outreach Program. Poetry, she says, is an anchor: "It is a way of clarifying my life . . . I can think of no better way of staying in touch with what is truly important than reading and writing poetry." She lives and writes in Cedarburg.
- Richard Terrill, now a professor of English at Mankato State University in Minnesota, taught at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire and also worked in Wisconsin as a musician and a writer. His poem, "The Possibility of Love," was published in the Spring 1992 *Review*, and his poems have appeared in numerous other journals. His book *Saturday Night in Baoding: A China Memoir* (1990) was given an outstanding achievement honor by the Wisconsin Library Association, and he also is the recipient of a Wisconsin Arts Board fellowship. His most recent book is *The Cross and the Red Star* (1994).
- Alison Walsh grew up in Beloit and graduated from Barnard College. She now lives in San Francisco, where she writes and works part-time as a media escort.
- Wendy Wirth-Brock graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and is currently an associate academic librarian at the University of Wisconsin Center-Fox Valley. She lives in Neenah.

Fran Hamerstrom: A Passion for the Wild and Free

Excerpts from *My Double Life: Memoirs of a Naturalist* by Frances Hamerstrom

"... This book describes my development on the long, rewarding road to discovery and toward becoming a defender of our natural world."

Fran Hamerstrom

An actress comes to dinner

My parents entertained a variety of notables. Carl Zeiss and my father shared the same passionate enthusiasm for telephotography. "Look," Zeiss would explain, "that castle was eleven miles away and here it is photographed as though it were just across the river!"

My father muttered, "Fabelhaft," appreciatively.

Then Zeiss opened a large black bag and pulled out a round piece of glass. "Look, such a lens—and not a bubble in it!"

My father held the lens carefully up to the light, shaking his head in admiration.

"Frances!" My father's voice was always loud. "Come here. Look at this lens—not a bubble in it!"

"Yes, Father."

My interest in pieces of glass, especially those without bubbles, was minimal. But I knew what to say: "Fabelhaft."

Then someone really *fabelhaft* came to dinner. It was an actress. She wore make-up. Bright reddish lipstick, and her nose was powdered. It was quite a contrast to my mother's rather large and very shiny nose. My father disapproved of makeup. The actress smelled of tobacco, so I knew that she must have come by train. Trains always smelled of tobacco. And ladies don't smoke.

After dinner the grownups withdrew into the drawing room, and the children were called in to say goodnight. The actress lowered herself into a chair, crossed her *knees*—not her ankles—and pulled a pink enamel cigarette case out of her evening bag. She leaned a little farther back and put a cigarette between her lips.

Frances Hamerstrom, scientist, writer, Academy fellow.

Father jumped to his feet. He dashed to a small table and seized a box of matches, and then with a flourish, he lit the lady's cigarette!

The actress had a lovely, low, lilting voice. She smiled up at my father, gave a little sigh and murmured, "I so *adore* my after-dinner cigarette."

❦

Christmas that year was the first time I ever remember doing anything naughty. I did two wrong things, but only one was found out. The first was launched because Bertram was taken to the barber to get his hair cut for the first time in his life. Anna brought him home afterwards. His hair was very short indeed and his cheeks were smudged with tears. I could hardly wait to find out what happened.

Bertram said, "The barber tied a towel around my neck so tight I could hardly breathe. Then he pushed my head and

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$16.95 soft cover. 316 pages, illustrated. Also available in hard cover, $35.00.

pushed my head and cut my hair. After that he rubbed my whole head and he got a brush and brushed all around my neck."

For Christmas, among my many toys was a large doll with a porcelain face, eyes that would open and shut, and curly hair. Bertram and I played barber. Bertram tied a handkerchief around the doll's neck as tightly as he could. I got some scissors from the sewing table, and pushing with considerable violence and cutting with dispatch—the doll got a haircut.

Anna appeared, and Anna was in a hurry. "Come children" (she didn't notice the bald doll), "come right now. The Warteiners have invited you to come to see their Christmas presents."

Anna hurried us next door to the Warteiners and left us there, saying she'd be back in about an hour.

"Let's play barber! I will let *you* put the towels on."

The older girl hesitated.

"Find some scissors and a brush. If you are good, I will let you brush up the hair at the end."

It was the happiest day I had playing with dolls in my whole life.

Alex and Gerhardt, the big boys, came into the Warteiner nursery and shouted their approval. Alex was smoking a cigarette!

"Alex, I very much need a cigarette."

"What for?"

I half-closed my eyes, as I had seen that lovely lady do, and said, "I *adore* my after-dinner cigarette."

Gerhardt gave a little snort. Both boys stared at me. Finally Alex asked, "Do you know how to smoke?"

"No, but you could teach me."

He did. And then I begged a cigarette from him to take home with me.

At teatime Anna discovered my beautiful doll with her hair lying all around her on the floor. And Herr Warteiner came over to report the damage done to the Christmas dolls at their house.

I was punished and put to bed.

I sneaked out into the hall and got some matches. Then I climbed out of my window and sat on the roof. I smoked all by myself, and I murmured, "I so *adore* my after-dinner cigarette."

Before the haircut.

• • •

Just a bowl of goldfish

I had not expected to find that I had *two* grandmothers. The unexpected one, Grandmother Chase, lived alone, with one son, and then besides: there was her companion, Miss Patchell; Waliser the coachman, Timothy the gardener, Maggy the cook, a seamstress, a waitress, an upstairs maid, a scullery maid, and various accommodators. The maid servants slept up in the third storey—where a stuffed moosehead was mounted near the top of the stairs. The men servants either slept in the village with their families, or above the stables.

Grandmother Chase, known as "Granny," invited us, poor Helen (so plucky) and dear Laurence (her husband) and the two dear children (Bertram and me), and my governess Fräuta to stay at Chesham, the family house in Brookline just outside of Boston. Chesham was a great house—not just big, *great*. There were plenty of rooms left over for guests after we all moved in. We stayed a year.

Granny's son, Uncle Billy, lived in a suite, more or less shut off from the rest of the house. I don't know where his valet Dimitri stayed. I was sometimes allowed to wade in Uncle Billy's bathtub. It was made of tile; steps led down into it; and it surely could have accommodated two Roman emperors simultaneously.

Uncle Billy's grand piano was in the library and so were most of the books in the house. The library was so-to-speak neutral ground. It was Uncle Billy's domain, but the rest of the household were welcomed there from time to time. Uncle Billy

had some low tastes. He preferred operetta to classical music, and we were never allowed to even look at the comics. One Sunday afternoon Bertram and I noticed that one of the cushions of a window seat had slipped aside, and that just a small corner of the Sunday funny section of the newspaper peeped forth. Bertram and I pulled this treasure out and slipped into Uncle Billy's bathroom where we could read in peace.

After glorying in this naughtiness, we returned the funnies —trying to push them under the seat cushion. But something was in the way. The something was a bar of Baker's chocolate, *and* a packet of cigarettes. Dear Uncle Billy.

❦

Bertram and I were absolutely forbidden to go below-stairs, where the servants seemed to conduct a never-ending party in the kitchen-living room. It was not very hard to get down there because I was encouraged to take an interest in flower arrangement. Dear little Frances busy in the flower room, snipping stems and arranging garden flowers in vases, was smiled upon. The flower room was just one step from the staircase down to the kitchen. Maggy let me cut cookies with a cookie cutter. And she let me eat all the little pointy fragments left over after cutting round cookies. I still consider uncooked cookie dough one of the world's great delicacies.

There was a lot of laughter below-stairs. Sailors, policemen, gardeners, and others came to court Granny's maids. Norah, the waitress, was walking out with a sailor.

"Chesham," Grandmother Chase's house where the very young Frances preferred "below-stairs."

Bertram and I lived in a household with about twelve grownups—plus visiting aunts, uncles, and Grandmother Flint—most of whom kept telling us what to do and, most particularly what *not* to do. It was Norah's sailor who taught me skills that have never left me—and may, upon occasion, have saved my life. He taught me to tie knots—good knots to be trusted. And I have dangled from cliffs trusting the knots he taught me. (Upstairs, I was learning lace-making.) He taught me how to climb ropes; and I have been at home on a rope ever since. And he taught me how to fall. Over and over again he threw me onto the kitchen floor. First he made it easy for me to roll with the tumble so as not to get hurt, and then he tossed me with vigor, making it progressively more difficult to roll.

❦

Granny kept complaining that every time she got a new maid (fresh from the Old Country) properly trained, the girl got married and left her service. I was prepared to have the young maids leave. I was not prepared to find Maggy, the old cook, crying and leaving with her suitcase packed. She had told me such wonderful animal stories.

Hilda, the new cook, welcomed me below-stairs, but she was afraid that uncooked cookie dough might be bad for me.

I missed Maggy—she had such a wonderful smell, and she never worried about uncooked dough, and the animals she had known as a child were part of my longings.

I suppose Maggy had been fired. Nobody told children about things like that. Some months later, I happened to be near the door when the bell rang. Dimitri opened the door and there stood Maggy, wrapped up in a shawl and smiling. She held out a bowl of goldfish. The goldfish were swimming, and breathing and blowing bubbles. They were alive! I held the magic bowl in my hands, hardly able to breathe with delight.

Then one of the grownups spoke. "Tell Cook you cannot accept this present." I held more tightly onto the bowl.

Two of the goldfish alive, real, swam behind some waterplants and reappeared.

"Say 'Thank you' to Cook."

My whole world was in my hands.

"Thank you."

"Now, hand Cook the bowl."

• • •

My treetop world

My childhood held a nebulous mosaic of worlds that belonged to me because no grownup could interfere with them as long as I kept them secret. They were varied and precious: my animal hospital, my guns, my meadow, my nights under the sky, and my treetop world, which I perhaps considered the safest of all.

Treetops were part of my life. When the leaves were on the trees no grownup could spot me. I felt as safe as though I were in a deep hole way underground. Sometimes I climbed high into the treetops with my mother's pearl-handled opera glasses to watch the warblers. Sometimes I climbed to a small pool right in a treetop, where birds came to drink, and sometimes I just hid in the treetops when I wanted to cry.

No one had told me about tree surgeons.

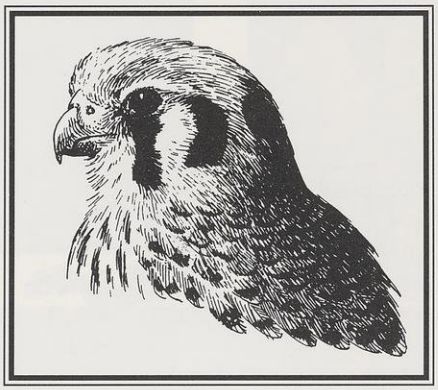
One day when I came home from school a great silvery branch, rich with a succession of flicker nesting holes, lay broken on the lawn. I crouched and listened at each hole to see whether anything alive was trapped deep within. Nothing stirred. Then I looked at the route I had shinnied and climbed to listen to the calls of young flickers buzzing like eggbeaters. My path just led to a hole in the sky—nowhere. The whole limb had been sawed off.

A truck, heaped high with wood, mostly dead, stood at the far end of the driveway. The open-ended maple branch—home of the flying squirrels—had been sawed off too and was nowhere to be seen, probably just thrown onto that truck. The phoebe's hunting perch hung broken, twisting and twisting and untwisting slowly in the late afternoon.

Numb with pain, I looked to see what was left. Lord knows I had no heart to climb. But I was relieved to see that my great maple was still standing. A raccoon sometimes spent a day down in a big hole left by a branch lost long ago. In winter frost rimmed the hole—frost from his body heat when he was in residence—and in summer, spiders spun their webs across the entrance. Old cobby webs suggested that nobody was at home, but fresh, neat webs could have been spun while the raccoon slept down in his hole.

Protest would have been impossible even if I had not been in school. My father was in power; he would not have listened.

After a few days I felt like climbing again—my fingers and toes found each familiar hold as I swung up into the old maple and disappeared from view. I could hide there; perhaps that's why the coon liked it too. As I climbed higher, I paused to check the coon hole on my way up. It had been stuffed with cement and painted a bilious green. The delicate, torn cobweb at its lower edge had no story to tell.



If kings and queens could train falcons in ancient times, so could I.

My first falcon

Snow blew in big puffs around the corner of the house, and twirled behind the hydrangea bushes. Moynihan walked up the driveway much more slowly then he usually walked. He was slightly bent over to shelter something.

I ran to meet him. Ever so gently he pulled a bird out from under his coat. "Something else for your hospital—look out for her feet."

And then the something else was in my hands.

"It's a hawk. You'll have to feed it meat—just meat."

I opened my jacket and held the bird under the thick cloth—as much to hide it as to protect it from wind and snow.

"Oh, Moynihan! She's beautiful. How did you get her?"

"She was just a-hanging and couldn't seem to get away."

"Where?"

"Up against the poultry wire that the sweet peas got trained up on last summer."

The bird had huge eyes—dark, like pools in a swamp. She was brown and black, with a light, streaked breast. Then I looked more closely. She had a *notched* beak. "Moynihan," I almost whispered, "she's a falcon!"

If kings and queens could train falcons in ancient times, so could I.

"Fräuta, how did the kings and queens train falcons in ancient times?"

"I don't suppose anyone really knows. I have a feeling that they had someone to train their falcons for them. Perhaps we could find a book . . .?"

My family had hundreds of books, but I was quite sure that none would deal with the matter at hand. The early autumn flurry of snow had melted entirely, so after lunch I got on my bike and pedaled two miles to the Milton Public Library. (I was not allowed to enter the public library. One might pick up diseases from the people there. They probably had germs.)

The librarian was a nice person dressed in gray, and a lady. She found me books. "These are rare volumes. You may read them here, but you may not take them out."

I opened the biggest book first. The print was strange.

"It's printed in Old English. I doubt that you can read it. It belongs in the rare book section. Shall I take it back?"

"No!"

The librarian sighed, and went back behind her desk.

The print was rather like my German books. I could read Old German printed; I could write old German script; and besides I could read and write modern English. The trick to reading Old English was simple. Just find a few words that you can recognize and in a few minutes you can decode the rest. There'll always be a few words you don't know, but frequent guessing often brings words closer than a dictionary ever can.

I was puzzling over a long word when the librarian interrupted me. "Are you pretending to read that book?"

I ignored the question. What does *austringer* mean?"

"Austringer? Who taught you to read Old English?"

"Nobody."

"Well!"

She took my hand. "Now let's go to the dictionary."

It was the biggest dictionary I'd ever seen. It was fastened to a special stand. And there was what I wanted.

Austringer: one that keeps goshawks.

I also looked up *Jess:* a short strap fastened around a falcon's leg, to which a leash can be attached.

Creance: a fine line for a hawk during training.

Rangle: gravel fed to hawks.

Musket: male of sparrow hawk.

Then I looked up the falconer's knot. It was a new knot— one that the sailor had never taught me. There was a picture, so I tried the knot out with my shoelace.

Then the lady in gray was at my side again. "The library is about to close . . ."

"Oh!" I jumped up. "I'll be punished."

Going to the library was naughty, but not really wrong.

"Not for all the capitals in Europe and the wealth of the Indies would I give up what I had now: love, adventure, and public service in the unmapped wilds of central Wisconsin."

Fran Hamerstrom
My Double Life

Will she die without rangle?

I knew perfectly well that what I was going to do next was wrong. My falcon needed jesses—and I was going to steal the leather. Sometimes, when my mother was going out in the evening, I was allowed into her dressing room while she added the final touches. She put some sort of powder onto the suede surfaces of her ivory-handled nail buffer, and polished her short, rounded fingernails; she poured a small amount of Eau de Cologne onto her fingers and dabbed a little at the base of her throat. Then she went into the bedroom and pulled out the second drawer of her massive bureau and selected a pair of opera gloves.

The opera gloves were of white kid. They were long, reaching almost to the elbow. Each pair was wrapped in dark blue tissue paper to keep the leather from yellowing.

I needed one glove, but I reached down toward the bottom of the pile of tissue-wrapped gloves and I took two so I wouldn't be found out; one glove would surely be missed, but a whole package might not be. It was stealing—different from filching lump sugar and figs. I knew I was doing wrong and I thought about it quite a lot.

Cutting up the glove didn't trouble me at all. It was beautiful leather, strong and soft.

I can't remember what I did about supplying my falcon with a leash, swivel, or perch. She liked to sit on my hand and I liked carrying her about behind the stables and in my meadow.

My kestrel was the most secret friend and possession I've ever had. I dreamed of someday hawking on horseback. Knowing perfectly well that the reins are always correctly carried in the left hand, I made a point of carrying my bird on my *right* hand—a habit that has persisted more than seventy years.

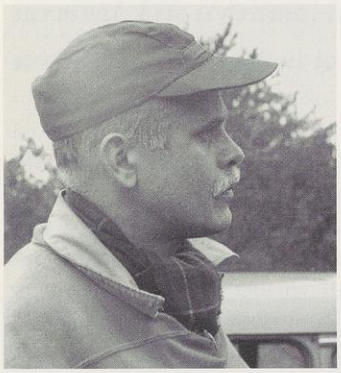
My falcon learned to come to my glove when I whistled; she sometimes preferred to ride on my head, and she ate uncooked meat that I easily helped myself to from the kitchen and pantries. Rangle was my major problem—*rangle:* gravel fed to hawks.

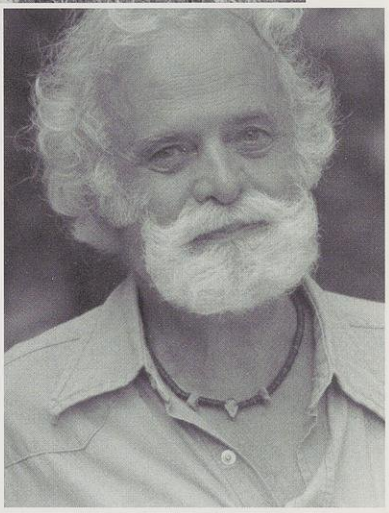
The driveway was frozen solid. Sleet and snow molded the gravel into one impenetrable chunk. Perhaps among the gravel I could find some suitable round stones. The rest of my outdoor world was not only frozen solid, but covered with snow too. I broke two kitchen knives trying to dig rangle out of our gracefully curved driveway. Then I gave up.

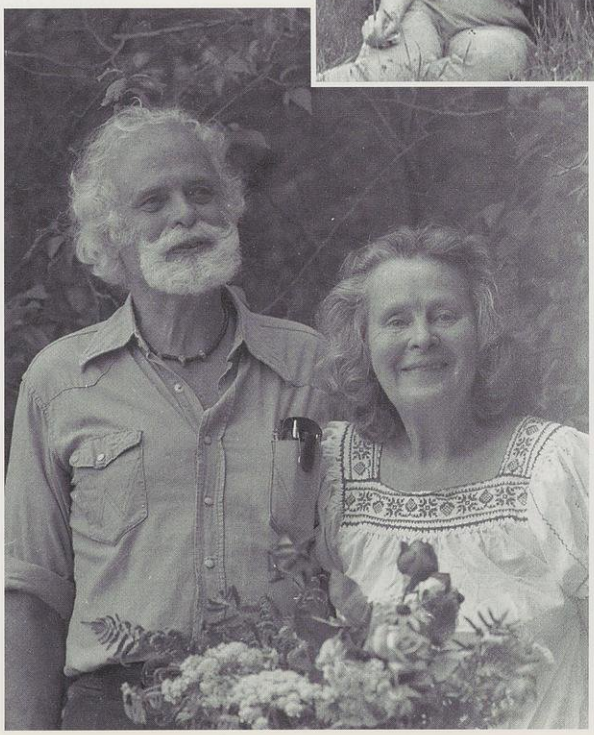
As soon as I found out that I couldn't give my bird rangle I started worrying. Maybe she's sick? Perhaps she won't live until spring?

But she did. She lived and I took her hunting. At dusk, English sparrows flocked in to roost in the ivy that covered the stone walls of the church. It seemed my falcon could see even better than I as deep dusk turned into street-light night. She fairly pounced into the ivy to make her kills. I rewarded her with tiny scraps of butcher meat, and stuffed sparrows into my pocket.

The year was 1919. I was twelve years old. I had learned from the old, old books. There were no modern falconry books in the library. I was alone. And I thought I was the only living falconer in the world.







Moments in the lives of the Hamerstroms.

Frederick and Frances Hamerstrom.

My relationship with my falcon was intensely personal and intensely secret. I never talked with anyone about her. I never gave her a name.

For part of my life, she was my whole world. ❧

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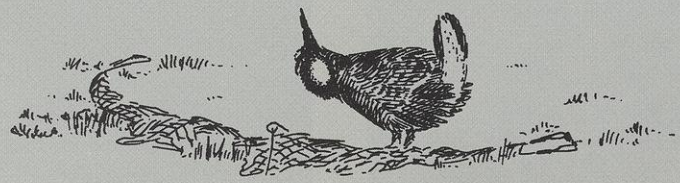
About the author

Frances Hamerstrom has been acclaimed worldwide as a wildlife biologist, author, and expert on raptors. She was the only woman to receive a master's degree under Aldo Leopold and the first woman (and the first American) to be elected an honorary member of the German Falconry Association. She and her husband, Frederick, who died in 1990, came to Wisconsin in the 1930s and moved into a pre-Civil War farmhouse near Plainfield. Together, they did important research on the prairie chicken—research critical to the preservation of that species—and "became the spiritual parents of an entire generation of conservationists."

The daughter of an heiress and an international criminologist, Fran was born in 1907 in Boston, and she traveled throughout Europe during the first four years of her life. Her family eventually returned to the Boston area, where she grew up. She did undergraduate work at Smith College and Iowa State College and received an honorary doctorate from Carroll College in Waukesha. She has written twelve books and more than 150 scientific papers.

In 1980 Frederick and Frances Hamerstrom were elected vice presidents of sciences for the Wisconsin Academy, and in 1984 Frances was named a fellow of the Academy.

Today she continues to write (and plot new adventures!) at her home near Plainfield.



Standing Darwin's Wisdom on Its Ear? A Different Theory on the Origin of Life on Earth

Excerpts from *Independent Birth of Organisms* by Periannan Senapathy.

Where did we come from? It seems such a simple question to carry such a monumental significance, and to have kept us stumped throughout human history. And yet after all these millennia the question remains unanswered—at least definitively. Despite the best efforts of generations of capable scientists, the origin of life on Earth remains as great a mystery today as it was at the dawn of human curiosity. Much of our fascination with life on Earth surely derives from its diversity: a seemingly endless variety of fantastic creatures, each playing an often mysterious part in a complex global interplay of survival. Life is drama, intrigue, splendor, grace, whimsy, passion—and so much more. Life is beautiful, and it's only natural for us to want to know where it came from.

Many theologians, secular philosophers, and poets—and even many scientists—have been content to answer the question abstractly, in terms of a divine spark that somehow transformed inanimate matter into living organisms. But such explanations tell us only "who"—not "how." Science is obliged to characterize the "spark" and the "somehow," whether or not the process can be attributed to divine intervention.

Thanks to this past century's breathtaking advances in science and technology, we seem to have arrived at last at the outskirts of a definitive answer. Today we find ourselves pondering a mountain of scientific information extracted from the living world, and with it we can uncover new clues to the origin of life on Earth. Among the most significant of our observations is the fact that while there are many similar species that are essentially the variants of a single organism, there are numerous organisms that are unique and distinct. Many similar species of snails, for example, occur as slight variations of the same basic snail organism, while snails as a group are unique and absolutely distinct from other groups such as crabs. Most organisms exhibit unique body parts—distinct kinds of mouths, eyes, digestive systems, sensory organs, and other appendages—that are well suited

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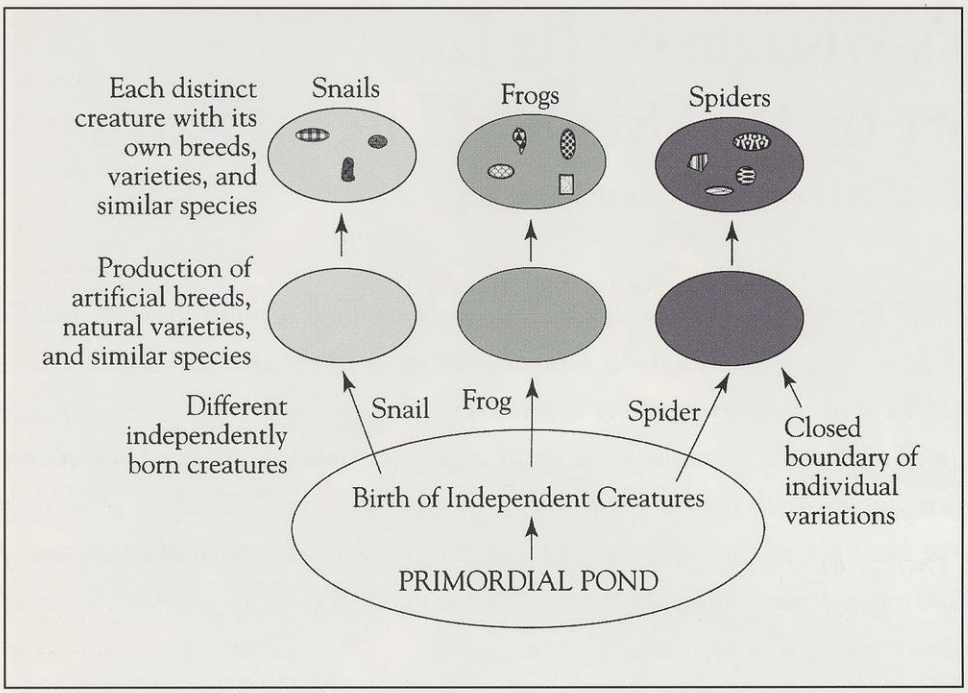

to their organisms' particular lives and environments. This complex scenario of wildly different organisms, from dragonflies and crabs to dinosaurs and blue whales, each uniquely suited to its environment, suggests strongly that some unifying principles must have governed their origins.

The search for these principles is among the most intriguing challenges ever to confront the human mind, probably because its denouement will explain who we are and where we came from. Any scientific answer to these questions should invoke plausible and logical mechanisms to explain the whole scenario of all life on Earth, in every detail—its origin, certainly, but also its history and future.

Darwin's theory of evolution, published in his book *Origin of Species* in 1859, has been the most accepted theory for the origin and diversity of species on Earth for over a century. It has been one of the greatest concepts in biological science and has been the most convincing of all explanations given so far on the origin and diversity of creatures. Intense research in various disciplines has appeared to support this theory. Its basic components, natural selection and adaptation, seemed to finely explain not only the origin of species, but also the perfect fit of organisms to their environments and their relationships to each other.

Despite the fact that Darwin's theory has been one of the most convincing explanations, it should be noted that there have been monumental problems with observed facts that go against the theory. In fact Darwin's theory has never been proven in the past 130 years—although some scientists assume that it is well established based on some genetic and organismal similarities. There are many major scenarios of life on Earth that are unexplainable by evolutionary theory. For instance, according to the fossil record, multitudes of unique creatures abruptly originated in a simultaneous burst when multicellular life first originated on Earth. This cannot be explained based on evolutionary theory. The second problem is about classifying or grouping organisms based on assumed evolutionary connections among them. Organisms are classified into sets of similar organisms first. These groups are further arranged in a nested manner based on assumed evolutionary connections—many species into one genus, many genera into one family, many families into one order, and so on. However, the larger groupings, or the "higher taxa," are found to be unconnectable by evolution. If creatures on Earth had all originated by evolution from one original ancestral creature as the evolutionary theory states, then the higher taxa should be connectable by evolution. The third problem concerns the evolution of highly complex organs such as the eye. Many evolutionists themselves agree that it is far too difficult to evolve highly complex organs by evolutionary means.

Even with these crucial problems, Darwin's theory works for some aspects of life's scenario making one marvel at the beauty of the theory. There are scientists who completely believe in Darwin's theory, there are those who are almost completely against the theory, and there are those who are in between. The presence of physical and genetic similarities among sets of organisms has been considered in recent times to be very supportive of Darwin's theory of descent with modification. Thus, even those who very well understand the crucial problems existing for the theory are either ridiculed by those who strongly believe in the theory or ignored, for there is no other alternative scientific theory to the theory of evolution. People believe that even though Darwin's theory of natural selection is able to explain the origin of creatures to some limited extent, somehow all organisms should have evolved from one original creature on Earth by some yet undiscovered evolutionary mechanisms. This is essentially the story of the theory of evolution in our society today. . . .

Darwin's theory states that all organisms evolved ultimately from one or a few original organisms and gives a mechanism for the change of one organism into another. Darwin did not offer an explanation as to how the first organism could have originated from inanimate matter. He simply stated that life had been "originally breathed into a few forms or into one," and that from so simple a beginning, endless forms have been and are being evolved. So far there has been no convincing explanation concerning the origin of the first one or a few organisms from inanimate matter, except for some nebulous and vague speculations.

This prompted me to become very interested in the question of how life itself had originated. I took a molecular biology approach, studying sequences of DNA and proteins, to find out how the genes of the first creature could have originated. Based on already established facts about chemical evolution and simulation experiments, I was convinced that the genetic (DNA) sequences in the primordial pond on Earth (the pond where life is supposed to have originated) must have been random, and that they must have coded for the proteins of the first cells. With this in mind, I intensely studied the properties of random genetic sequences to understand how they might have coded for proteins. While studying this problem, it suddenly occurred to me that genes could have been abundantly available in the primordial pond, and genomes (collections of genes) of different organisms could have been assembled independently from this common pool of genes. It immediately showed that numerous creatures could have been born independently from the primordial pond without evolutionary connection. If so, I realized that this concept could solve the many problems unresolved by Darwin's theory. I began investigating DNA and proteins, using the computer to simulate random sequences, to prove that genes could in fact occur in the primordial pond.

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From the published results of experiments simulating primordial Earth conditions, I was convinced that the primordial genetic sequences had been random. If this were true, the primary question was: How could the very first genes have come about from these sequences, and code for proteins? Beginning in 1980, while at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, I spent a great deal of time studying genetic sequences trying to understand the problems of the origin of life. I became immersed in this problem and continued my extensive research in random sequences, comparing them with the sequences of living organisms. What I learned from these analyses convinced me that genetic material must have been abundant in the primordial pond, and that it must have consisted of random nucleotide sequences. Genes simply occurred by chance in these extremely long DNA sequences, from which they randomly recombined to produce the first cells.

I then came to realize that, given a sufficiently large pool of genetic sequences in the primordial pond, almost any gene could have occurred in it. If this had in fact been the case, then complete genomes—for unicellular and multicellular organisms alike—could have formed by the random assembly of these genes. If multiple copies of the same gene or multiple genes for the same function existed in the primordial pond, then several genomes capable of forming various organisms could have been separately and simultaneously assembled in it. This hypothetical scenario, if proven to be true, would explain the absence of the so-called "missing links" between successive organisms in the assumed evolutionary pathway, which could not be explained by Darwin's theory.

Intrigued by the possibilities, and by their implications for evolution and modern biology as a whole, I began my investigations by devising methods to test the hypothesis using computer techniques. I analyzed the available genetic sequence information acquired from living organisms. A protein sequence database was available from the National Biomedical Research Foundation prior to 1980, and a DNA sequence database, which became a boon to my studies, was just being established in 1982. My proficiency in computer

Life is beautiful, and it's only natural for us to want to know where it came from.

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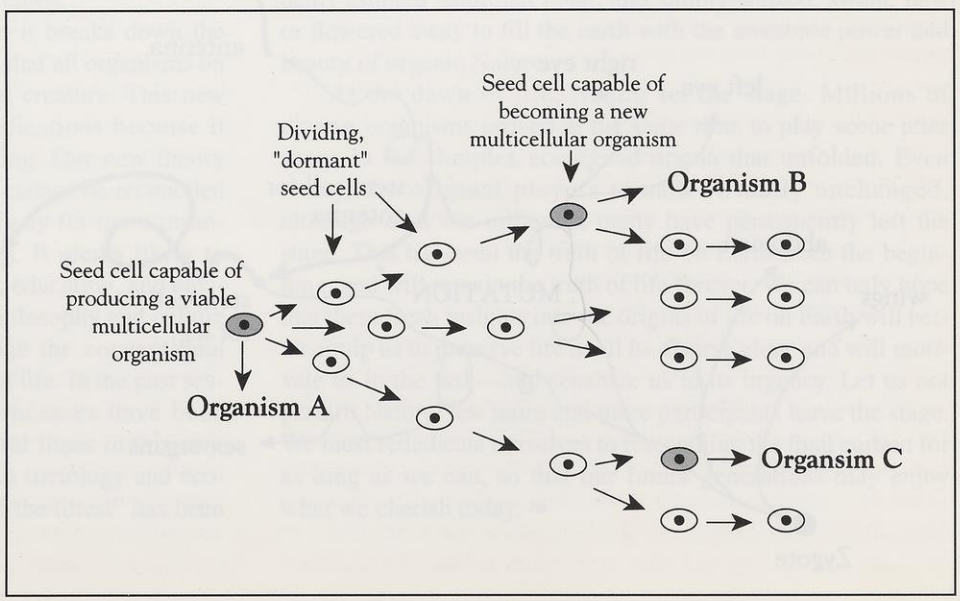

programming helped me to formulate the right questions to ask concerning genetic sequences, and the computer began to rapidly deliver answers. I thus left experimental molecular biology behind to investigate these problems, and soon found myself devoting all of my time to this work using computers at the Division of Computer Research and Technology within the National Institutes of Health.

From the outset I understood that, if my hypothesis were true, then the primordial pond must have contained the complete genes for any given animal or plant, so that its genome could be directly assembled from these genes in the primordial pond. I worked out several details about how these genes could have formed from the primordial genetic sequences, which I assumed to be random. Over the next several years of extensive analysis I verified that my original assumptions were correct—that genes could in fact occur in the large sequence pool of the primordial pond. Computer simulations helped me to show that eukaryotic genes—those of all animals and plants—could occur directly in the random genetic sequences in a primordial pond, and that a vast number of genes could have assembled randomly into numerous genomes. I then determined the basic mechanisms by which different sets of genes could form distinct genomes from the gene pool of the primordial pond, leading to the independent birth of multitudes of organisms.

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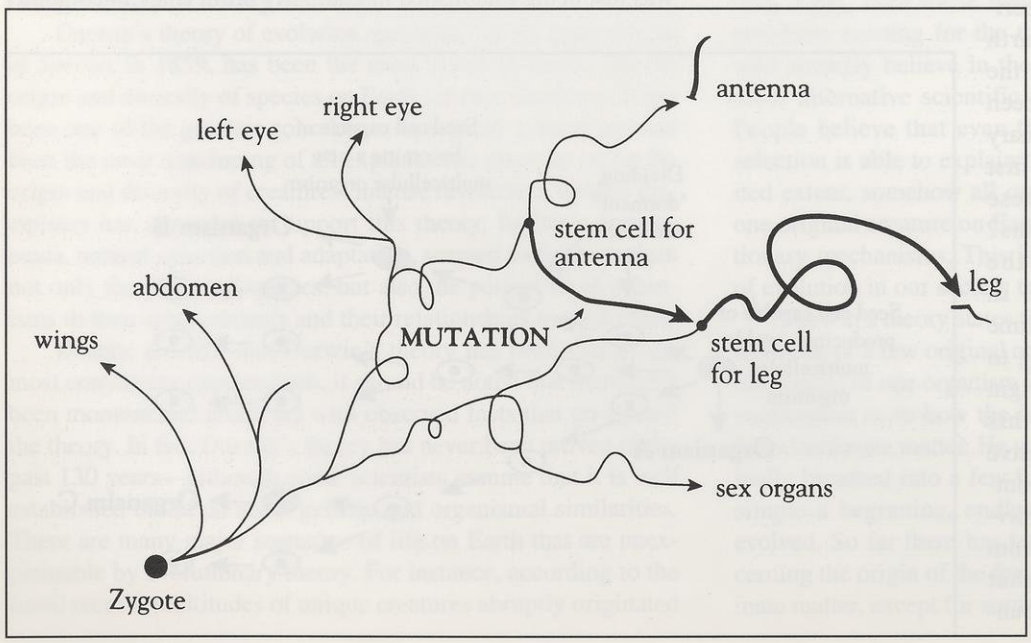

The extensive series of observations and research I carried out over a period of twelve years form the basis for my theory of the independent birth of organisms. This can be briefly summed up in the following: It was discovered only in the late 1970s that eukaryotic genes were split into exons (coding sequences) and introns (intervening, unused sequences). This is one of the most important discoveries in genetics, and is crucial in understanding the origin of not only these genes but also of the genomes and indeed, the organisms. However, the reason for this split-gene architecture was not known for several years. In my work with random sequences, I found a reason why genes were split: If primordial DNA were random in sequence, and if genes simply occurred in the sequences, then the only way they could occur in the sequences was in a split form. Then useful genes, complete with their split architecture and without any need to be evolved from shorter coding sequences, could simply be selected from among those available genes in the primordial sequences and assembled into genomes. This indeed revealed several important facts to me: 1) the primordial sequences were random; 2) genes simply occurred in the primordial DNA; 3) the split nature of genes increased the probability of genes in the random sequences tremendously and made it possible for almost any gene to occur in the primordial pond's random sequences; 4) because the first genes occurred with a split structure, the first cells were eukaryotic, directly assembling their genomes from the primordial pond; and 5) if the full complement of genes to make a genome of a multicellular organism were available in the primordial pond, then these principles enabled the direct assembly of these genes into not only a eukaryotic single-celled organism, but also into a seed cell, an egg like a zygote, which could give rise to a multicellular organism.

The fossil record confirms that no fundamentally new creatures have appeared on Earth in a very long geological time, and this is a sobering reminder that we must do everything humanly possible to preserve these beautiful creatures for future generations to cherish and enjoy.

All these reasons enabled complex cells to appear, for instance a eukaryotic cell with a nucleus and other organelles, selecting and assembling all the

required genes directly from the primordial pond. I could in fact show that the probability of forming the genomes of multicellular organisms is not too different compared to that for a unicellular organism. Likewise, the probability of independently assembling different genomes for many multicellular organisms is not very different from the probability of forming a genome for one multicellular organism, however anatomically complex an organism was, from worm to human. This is because there is not much difference in the complexities of the genomes of organisms at extreme ends of anatomical complexity. Therefore, if sufficient numbers of genes were available to make one viable genome in the primordial pond, it would inevitably enable the assembly of numerous genomes simultaneously, and consequently multitudes of diverse organisms. Since I made the original assumptions in formulating the new theory of the independent birth of organisms, the results and principles derived from my extensive computer studies involving simulations and sequence analyses over the next several years, along with a few already known principles, made it all too clear that the multitudes of diverse organisms on Earth must have originated separately in the primordial pond and that the logic of my theory must be correct.

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Each creature that originated in the primordial pond has lived forever as fundamentally the same creature, diversifying only slightly to produce incidental variations of essentially similar species. Perhaps the greatest practical significance of this new theory lies in our recognition that new creatures will not and cannot evolve to replace organisms that become extinct. Except for similar variations of existing organisms, no new creatures will ever rise again! The fossil record confirms that no fundamentally new creatures have appeared on Earth in a very long geological time, and this is a sobering reminder that we must do everything humanly possible to preserve these beautiful creatures for future generations to cherish and enjoy.

The new theory is important because it breaks down the conventional barrier to biological thought: that all organisms on Earth evolved from one original ancestral creature. This new notion is likely to have significant ramifications because it brings out an entirely new way of thinking. Our new theory accommodates most of the evidence that cannot be reconciled with evolutionary theories, and paves the way for more meaningful biological and biomedical research. It seems likely to carry tremendous implications in research, education, and environmental protection, and in the general philosophy and culture of people, for it will significantly change the conventional Darwinian way of thinking in every walk of life. In the past several decades virtually all biological processes have been explained in terms of evolution, and several times in this century the concept has even been extended to sociology and economics, where the doctrine of "survival of the fittest" has been cited to justify a number of political agendas. Our theory of the independent birth of organisms stands all of this conventional wisdom on its ear.

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Our explorations have shown us that the endless beauty of life on Earth appeared all at once. Incredible as it may seem, this immense splendor of the biosphere came into being in a geological instant. And it happened inevitably from the chemical reactions of a single primordial pond. . . . All living creatures suddenly erupted from that pond, and simply walked, swam, flew or flowered away to fill the earth with the awesome power and beauty of organic Nature.

At the dawn of life, Nature set the stage. Millions of diverse organisms arrived at the same time to play scene after scene in the complex ecological drama that unfolded. Even today, the original players remain virtually unchanged, although over the millennia many have permanently left the stage. This has been the truth of life on Earth from the beginning, and will remain the truth of life forever. We can only hope that these fresh insights into the origins of life on Earth will better equip us to preserve life in all its diverse glory and will motivate us to the task—and sensitize us to its urgency. Let us not perturb Nature, lest more and more participants leave the stage. We must rededicate ourselves to forestalling the final curtain for as long as we can, so that our future generations may enjoy what we cherish today. ❧

The Theory

Perhaps the greatest appeal of the new theory lies in its unification of biological processes into a single, coherent process at the molecular level, without any evolutionary connection of organisms. This may have significant ramifications in many facets of biological science and research. All of the common biological phenomena—commonality in genes, biochemical materials, and biological processes—in all of Earth's unique creatures are independently derived from the organisms' independent origins in the common primordial pond. The new theory reveals the immense power of the prebiotic processes in the primordial pond in giving rise to numerous unique creatures directly from it. It demonstrates that life was not an accident; its simultaneous expression in numerous independent creatures was an inevitable consequence of the biochemical richness of Earth's primordial ponds.

Periannan Senapathy

Poetry Lessons

by Alison Walsh

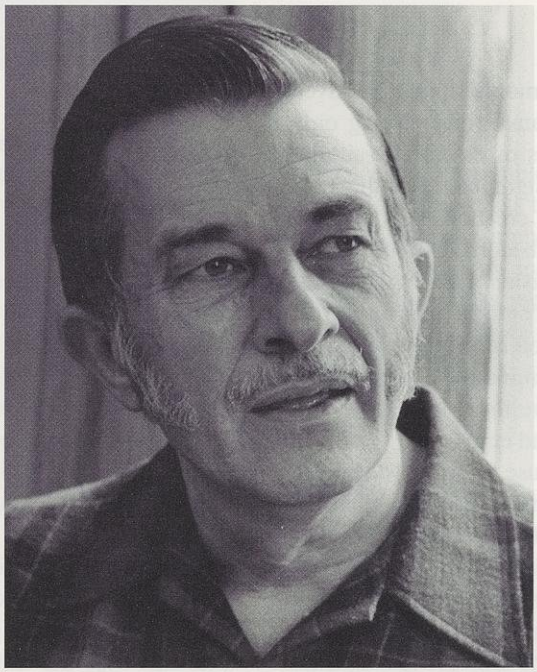
Chad Walsh (1914–1991) was professor of English at Beloit College from 1945 to 1977. In 1950 he co-founded the Beloit Poetry Journal. *In 1977 Walsh was named a Notable Wisconsin Author by the Wisconsin Library Association, and he was honored by other state literary groups as well. In 1982 he received the Banta Award for his collection of poems titled* Hang Me Up My Begging Bowl. *Each year the* Beloit Poetry Journal *(which is still being published out of Ellsworth, Maine) offers a Chad Walsh Poetry Award, the gift of Walsh's family and friends. Editor.*

Dad,

You've been dead for almost four years, and I miss you more keenly now than I did when you first died. I've been thinking about you a lot lately and I'm ashamed at how little I know about the first half of your life. I used to babble on to you endlessly about myself, but I never sat down and asked you to tell me your stories, and you never volunteered them. Most of what I know about your early years comes from reading your poems.

I do know that your first memory was of the honeysuckle-covered veranda at the house in South Boston, Virginia. You lived there from the time you were born until you were six years old. Your father was a doctor; men tipped their hats to your mother when she walked by.

Unfortunately, your father had never graduated from medical school, or college, or high school, or even grade school. In fact, he'd never gotten beyond fourth grade. A posse of enraged townspeople eventually discovered the truth and ran him away, leaving your mother, your two much-older brothers, and you behind in disgrace. You rarely saw your father again.



Chad Walsh (1914–1991)

I think it was in 1920 that your mother moved all of you to Marion, Virginia. You had a recurring dream that your father would come riding back on a big white horse and take you grocery shopping. Finally the dreams stopped. Twenty-five years later your father had been dead for months, buried in a pauper's grave in Norfolk, before you learned of his death. "Some day if I dare/I shall visit his grave," you wrote, but you never did.

I know that you lived in desperate poverty, sometimes stealing fruit from a neighbor's orchard in order to eat; that you had a parrot; and that you and your brother Ulysses were defiant pagans. You became a pretty good fighter because you were so often attacked by gangs of little Christians trying to teach you the error of your thinking. Your teachers considered you a genius—probably not a difficult label to attain, given the general level of learning in Marion—which further alienated you from your schoolmates.

In fourth grade you discovered poetry. Your teacher, Miss Mehitabel Mimser, gave all her students an assignment to write a poem. You remembered your poem until your dying day, even when you were in the last stages of Alzheimer's. I wish I'd written it down; I can only remember the last two lines:

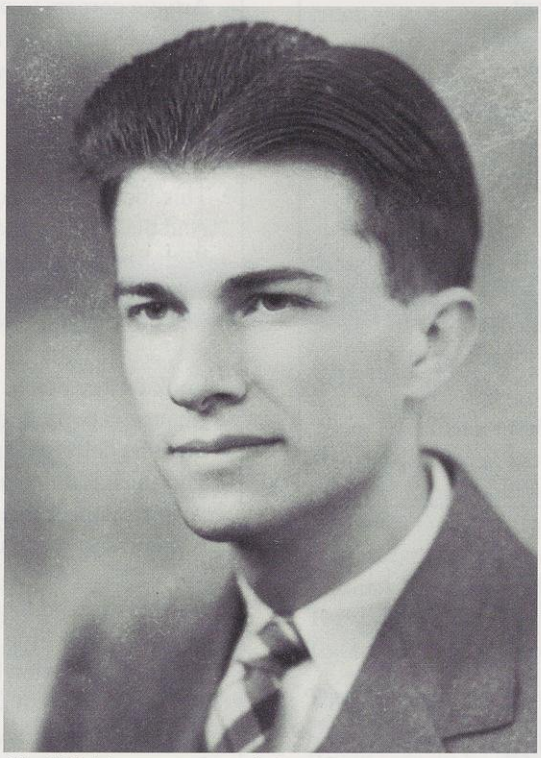
Scary shadows, purple/black
Whistling softly, not looking back.

From that moment on you knew you were going to be a poet and were willing to do whatever was necessary to make it possible. Mainly you knew you needed to get out of Marion.

This proved unexpectedly difficult when, in high school, you were diagnosed with tuberculosis and told you had only a few years to live. You spent the next three years roaming the woods, worshiping frogs, learning about trees and flowers and the pleasures of solitude. Finally the doctors figured out you had rickets, not TB. Within a few years you were at the University of Virginia, and, like your first poem foretold, you never looked back.

I try to imagine you at the University of Virginia—a gawky, awkward, white-trash boy from the hills, surrounded by fraternities and athlete-gods and old Virginia money, and I can't quite do it. But you survived it all, even the constant gibes about your suspected sexual orientation because you wore a beret and smoked a pipe, your idea of sophistication. You even flourished there, graduating Phi Beta Kappa and winning various other academic awards. From Virginia you went on to the University of Michigan to get a Ph.D. in linguistics. And here Mom enters the picture and I can no longer write only about you, because everything you did from that time on was connected with her.

Poetry may have given you a reason to dream, to get out of Marion, but you'd also grown up with another invincible vision in your mind: sometime, somewhere, you would meet your true love, know it instantly, and never waver. On August 2, 1938, Mom checked her coat with you (you had a work-study job as a coatroom attendant), and, killing time, struck up a conversation. You said the two of you fell in love as you talked over the coatroom counter. Mom started a journal that night. "I have met a man named Chad Walsh," she wrote. "I believe I am going to marry him."



Chad Walsh as a young scholar.

I try to imagine you at the University of Virginia—a gawky, awkward, white-trash boy from the hills, surrounded by fraternities and athlete-gods and old Virginia money, and I can't quite do it.

You and Mom brought out the best in each other. She was meant to be a General, ordering armies into battle, and you became the focus of all her energy and love. She organized your life and took care of all the bothersome details so that you could concentrate on writing. In return, you adored every little step she took and dedicated all your books of poetry to her with passionate love poems. Married to another man Mom might have become overbearing and demanding; you, married to another woman, might never have been a writer.

There must have been moments of private crisis and anguish, but I never knew about them. In fact, I can only remember the two of you arguing once, over a batch of kittens Mom wanted you to take to the SPCA. You refused to do it—it brought back too many memories of having to drown kittens when you were little. Instead, to Mom's great embarrassment and your children's great delight, you made a huge placard that read, "Free kittens to good homes." Armed with a basket of kittens in one hand, the placard in the other, and your four daughters trailing behind, you walked up and down the streets of Beloit until you'd accomplished your mission.

You did become a poet, and a literary critic, and a college professor, and, most surprising, an Episcopalian priest. You never got the wide public recognition you deserved and I think wanted, but you knew you were a good writer, and people whose opinion you valued knew you were a good writer. You were also a much loved man, particularly by your family. You made your daughters feel like we were the brightest, funniest people in the world. And no matter how often we broke your heart you always gave us absolution for our sins.

I have two particular memories that always summon you up, whole and complete. The first is the time you and your daughters were sitting around the dinner table at the summer cottage in Vermont. A lone Oreo cookie sat in the middle of the table and not one of your children was willing to give up her claim to it. You got a sharp knife and carefully cut the cookie into four absolutely equal parts, saying, with a sigh: "I cannot wait until you girls can live by grace rather than by law."

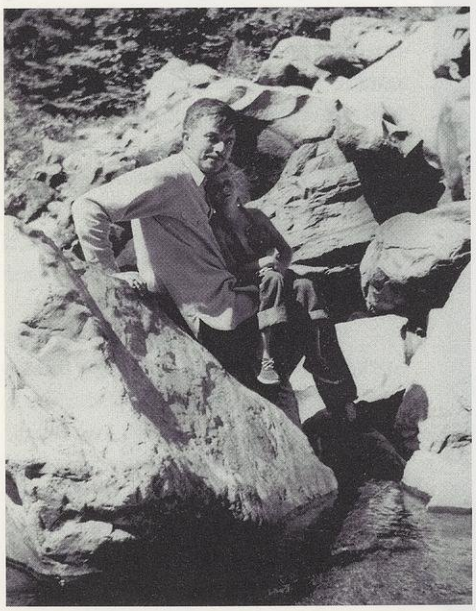
The second memory is of winter in Wisconsin, and you loping off to your office on the Beloit campus. You were shambling along, obviously having a perfectly wonderful daydream, when you slipped on a patch of ice and fell flat on your back. A big dog appeared out of nowhere and planted himself on your chest. You had to be extricated by passing students, beret askew but pipe still clenched firmly in your jaws. You were laughing so hard you fell again after being hauled upright. You never minded looking foolish. I think you were the least vain person I've known.

We should have noticed the warning signs of Alzheimer's earlier than we did, but you were always so unworldly and lost in your own thoughts that we ignored your increasing forgetfulness and clumsiness until the day you couldn't figure out how to button your sweater. It was hard for Mom to understand that you had no control over what was happening, but she was

The Final Restaurant

Let me go first. This final restaurant
Is strange to both of us, but I will go
And find the table. Sit out here and wait.
When you are very hungry, come. I'll show
You where they've seated me, and how to read
The menu with its funny alphabet.
Perhaps by then I'll know what food you need
And what is best to drink. For when they set
My table, I'll say "Two" and make a "V"
Of fingers if they have no English. I'll try
To watch what others take, so I can be
Half naturalized for you. For you were shy
And speechless east of England. Let me study
New words. You'll want my lips, and they'll be ready.

From The Unknowing Dance. *Abelard-Schuman, 1964.*



Alison Walsh as a child with her father at Bristol Gorge.

For Eva, My Wife

Look at this moment hard so you will know it
When you meet it again. It has no clear
Artistic corners to mark it off and name it;
Yet it is yours; you must be set to claim it
How many thousand thousand years from here
When God at last will lastingly bestow it.

There is the broken fence I helped you over;
This locust tree—notice the blackened crown,
And the long rift that lightning left—this field
With limestone bones half dressed, revealed
Where little gullies eat the flesh; and down
The hill the milky way of faint white clover.

Look farther down, the chestnut lot is there.
Change is permitted there. The bones of blight
Shall be delivered from the foreign death.
The spirit is another name for breath,
And it shall breathe rough leaves and waves of white
Blossoms to break in spray on the blue air.

Between us and the trees of transient black
Mark well the little farmhouse and the smoke
That rises in a slowly widening wreath;
We shall not go to see who lives beneath;
Nor shall the ropeswing from the hovering oak
Take you from me and bring you laughing back.

All these can wait, but now look well and see
Not what I am in dreams or memories,
But as I am, remember me and keep
The memory through any age of sleep
So when you waken with the chestnut trees
You will not stand, a stranger, here with me.

From The Unknowing Dance. *Abelard-Schuman, 1964.*

heroic in her efforts to care for you. One January day you floated away from all of us, so gently that Mom, who was holding your hand, didn't realize you were dead.

The last time I saw you, you didn't know who I was. You knew Mom—you wouldn't have dared not to—and you were happy to have me feed you and put my head on your shoulder, but when Mom asked you my name you looked panicked and said, "A nice girl?" You must have retained some dim memory of a daughter named Alison because you got upset when I was diagnosed with cancer shortly afterwards. Your nurse called to say you were convinced I was dead. We agreed I'd call you the next morning to reassure you about my health.

You were delighted to hear from me. "Alisonny, I couldn't believe it when Carol said you were going to call. You have a telephone then?"

"I'm okay, Daddy. I'm getting better every day. You don't need to worry."

"Isn't it amazing that you could call? I didn't think it was possible. Tell me, I've always wanted to know, what is it like up there?"

"The sun is out and I'm lying on the dock listening to the radio—"

"No, no," you interrupted, in the voice you used when I was slow in understanding a geometry problem. "I mean, what about the angels? Do they really have wings? I've always thought the idea of wings was silly, all that flapping and feathers, but maybe I'm wrong."

"Daddy, listen to me," I said firmly. "I'm alive. I'm going to be fine."

"Of course you're going to be fine," you replied. "Everybody is fine in Heaven."

You died three months later. I don't believe in an afterlife, but sometimes I imagine you arriving at the Pearly Gates. You're looking all over for me, wondering why I'm not there to greet you. I can hear you saying, "Where is that girl? She's always late but you'd think, just this once, she could manage to be on time." And then you'd drift off into the fleecy clouds, surrounded by seraphim welcoming you home.

Sonnets by Chad Walsh

Sonnet #5

Hitchhikers are justified by faith through grace.
They do not work their way but wait their way
To the heavenly city. And the race
Is not always to the thumbs at dawn of day.
Many a thumb, at eventide extended,
Outdistances the prudent morning thumb.
This, in strict justice, cannot be defended,
But drivers deal the law of Kingdom Come.

The camera, my bank account, *Who's Who*
List no merits to claim you for my bed.
Faith rendezvoused with grace and I with you,
And good works followed, just as Luther said.
Here at the table, count them one by one:
Damaris, Madeline, Sarah, Alison.

Sonnet #16

You dare not die before me. When you die
The stricken moon will plunge into the sea,
The anguished novas blaze the hurtling sky,
Scalded sea monsters writhe on quai and tree;
Blood will be sold in Coca-Cola bottles,
Babies offered to Moloch at High Mass,
Locomotives claim home rule for their throttles,
Sheep munch on flesh and panthers gorge on grass.

In you all things cohere, and their coherence
Is strong and frail as your sustaining heart.
Only you can veto Christ's new appearance
Set for That Day when the world falls apart.
I am unready. Spare the unready sky.
Lead me not into damnation. Do not die.

Sonnet #18

When I am dead, mummify me no more
Than undertakers' lobbies and their laws
Require. Rip up the planks of an old pine floor,
Nail me a box, loose joined, so that the thaws
And freezes of my after years may enter
Without deceit and marry me again,
This time a woman, the symbiotic center
To taproots straight and masculine with rain.

Then, slowly rising through the greening stems
Of a deciduous shrub, may I bear flowers,
Bright, gay, to be my dancing requiems,
Immortally brief as these four girls of ours.
Thus marking time on some well-landscaped hill,
I'll be the parent of young daughters still.

Sonnet #22

To the left, cliffs; the shore where cottages
End with the road; mountain ascents of berries
For the valiant; antlers between the trees;
Tracks of a bear or two (the story varies).
To the right, fields studded with placid cows;
Fences in love with trees like English hedges;
Apple orchards with downward arching boughs;
Farm children diving from the low, bright ledges.

And we possess all shores as our canoe
Glides the long oval of the constant lake;
World upon world that folds into our view,
And fades like shifting bubbles in our wake.
We've made our choice for two abiding things:
Love and a lake refreshed by hidden springs.

The Art of Paul Caster: Dreams with Grace Notes

by Bruce Renner

Paul Caster has been quietly tucked away for the past few years in his studio in Milwaukee's Third Ward working harder than ever before in a wider range of mediums. He is gradually putting together a remarkable new installation which combines many of the old Caster motifs in fresh and exciting new ways. If he has been thought of primarily as a figurative artist, and the figure is still paramount, the new work makes the old argument between figurative and abstract seem all the more arbitrary.

Caster has always had a fascination for boxes and has made a number of trips to Mexico recently for some of his subject matter, including the many "boxes" there containing religious artifacts. A portion of his new work includes video, a kind of box in itself. In one of his videos, there is a moving figure inside a rectangular space, a repeated and singular attempt by Caster to define the body and its environment, zeroing in on both the bliss and constraints of movement. I couldn't help but think, as well, what a wonderful tomb or enclosure it might make for some ardent deconstructionist.

I asked Caster once about his origins, about his family, and a little bit about where he came from. When he responded, many of the gaps in his answers seemed as insightful as the answers themselves. He grew up on the north side of Chicago. While he talks openly about his family, the details are sketchy. He was raised as a Catholic with an authoritarian father, and both of these facts seem to alternately trouble and feed his subjects. His mother appears to have been more of a shadow figure in his childhood, albeit a warm one. One brother is a doctor (Paul himself studied gross anatomy at Marquette University) and the other works for the FBI (Paul says he's gentle).

The one detail that stands out most is that Paul Caster spent an inordinate amount of time in his room as a boy, drawing. He still refers to that period of time as an almost sacred space. It is the period he says he still feels closest to, the one where something got started that has never stopped. I have heard other artists refer to private or secret spaces in just such terms. It is certainly true that it takes a great deal of time to grow that space.

Paul Caster spent an inordinate amount of time in his room as a boy, drawing. He still refers to that period of time as an almost sacred space.

Caster attended Milwaukee's Layton School of Art in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Vestiges still remain from those early years: the bird-mummy drawings, "figures" he saw in the Chicago Field Museum and wanted to do something with; a series of Rembrandt drawings; and several self-portraits, the staple of all young artists. These are, for the most part, well-wrought drawings, far superior in execution and insight than most student work, and they display an obvious talent. Caster also put together some early constructions based on an ambulance and a subway car—both early forerunners of his interest in sculpture and environments. During his first year out of college he lived in Platteville, where he did some remarkable skeletal drawings of birds, bats, and flowers.

In the mid–1970s, Caster followed his father's lead and took a job with the railroad. The first work he produced for which he became better known were the Walt Whitman drawings a few years later. They were shown at the Charles Allis Art Museum in Milwaukee in 1978, Caster's first one-man show. In many ways it's not surprising that Whitman should have been a catalyst for Caster: Whitman was one of the "roughs," as he himself put it, and Caster was a trainman then and, in some ways, still is. This is a side to Caster few seem to know.

I was reminded of this a couple of summers ago when at Paul's suggestion we set up a tire against the side of my barn and proceeded to play strikeout, hardball, overhand. Paul took turns hitting right-handed then left-handed. I did the same. And he smoked me. I didn't have a chance to even the score until the following fall. There is a lot of the little boy left in Paul, as well as the rough.

Whitman was the first in what would become for Caster a life-long fascination for artistic figures expressed through drawing, painting, and sculpture. Poetry, fiction, opera—these are but a few of a wide range of subjects which have served Caster and his talent well over the years. He has always been self-effacing about his range of interests, a trait I find refreshing.

Sometimes, in fact, it has been Paul who has brought me up to date on an author, though literature is my field. On one occasion, for example, I had stopped by a Madison bookstore and quite by chance, just as I was leaving, I ran into Paul. It turned out he was there to hear Larry Woiwode, the novelist, and Paul was kind enough to give me a tape of the reading afterwards. It contains the Prelude, the magnificent, richly-textured introduction to Woiwode's novel *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*. I was, and still am, grateful to Paul for introducing me to Woiwode's fiction. Paul's tast in literature has always been somewhat eclectic, ranging from the odd ellipses in John Berryman's poetry to the prosaic darkness found in Cormac McCarthy's work.

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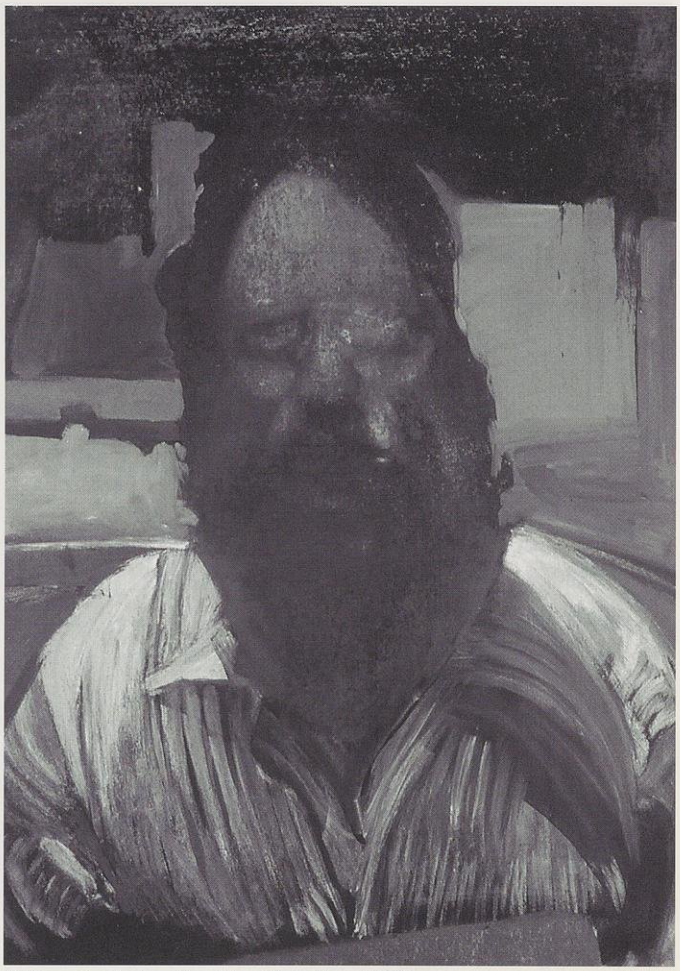
The Caster art show which he himself still feels the strongest about was "The Elevator Women" exhibit in 1980 held at Perimeter Gallery in Chicago [see cover]. He was happy, then, to be doing more with dual-figures, "more abstract, melded figures," as he put it. It seems to me his interest in multiple figures, however, began long before that. In fact, Caster has had numerous one-man shows throughout the country, and I found it odd at first that he would single out that one Chicago show. But Caster is scrupulously honest, and because of this he has offended not a few. I think this honesty lends integrity to his work. To hear him speak lovingly of a certain area, a certain figure or surface, is to understand, at least a little, the depth of some of his preferences.

Caster is perhaps best remembered for an earlier show, the "Don Juan" series, held in 1979 at the Performing Arts Center in Milwaukee. A full-color art book titled *Reunion in Hell: Paul Caster Drawings Suggested by Mozart & Shaw* was published shortly afterwards by Perimeter Press. These are lavish drawings, seemingly at odds with their circumstances, briefing us for a private descent into hell. But they seem a kind of heaven, too, once we sink into their rich textures—the phenomenological colors of fire itself. Dean Jensen comments in the introduction to the book:

> What gives this artist his distinction is his ability to reveal realities that none of us knew existed before seeing them in his work. Paul Caster is a rare artist, one who succeeds in overthrowing what Wordsworth called 'the rule of the eye . . . the most despotic of the senses.'

Caster was twenty-nine when this book was published.



Self portrait. Acrylic, 48 x 60 inches. 1985.

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It was during this same period that Paul Caster bought his first video camera. It has seemed to me for a long time now that Caster's interest in video is tied directly to his love for drawing. All of his videos are like moving and more rapid drawings. With video he gains the residual effects. It is form following function in the best sense, and sometimes the other way around. Looking at his work again and again, I am convinced that this is the fascination video holds for him.

His interest in painting also was growing during this time. Painting allowed him yet another extension of his interest in the figure. All the while, Caster continued to draw, as well. Drawing has remained central to his work, despite the paintings, sculpture, and video. The acrylic series of paintings titled "The Dreamers" in the early 1980s and the superb, colorful,

Paul Caster in his studio. The new work.

bulky, seven-foot paintings of the late 1980s were also strong shows. But once again he went back to drawing after this period because, he said, he was tired of acrylic and missed the tactile aspects of drawing. He once expressed his sentiments this way: "I still don't think of myself as a painter . . . Every time I look at a tub of oil paint, and I look at the color and think about whether I want to use that color or not, in a lot of ways it comes back to black and white." I think this is the reason he seems to have a pencil in his hand even when there isn't one there.

I first saw Paul Caster's more recent paintings by chance in Chicago at Perimeter Gallery in 1991. I found them exciting and not at all what I had expected from his previous work. They were, as Caster said himself, "much more painterly"—despite his own protest to the contrary about his use of the medium. Even then, however, he was working steadily in other areas as well, pointing (it now seems all along) toward putting together his current mixed-media installation. Referring to that 1991 show, however, Caster said, "I intentionally jump back and forth from video to canvas. I feel very strongly that if I knew too much about what I was doing when I did it, I would probably stop."

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These days Caster seems more confident than ever of himself and his work, despite his usual self-deprecation. As far as the new video installation goes, I recently have stood in the middle of it in his studio. It is enormously ambitious, both literally and figuratively. Caster says, "I'm making these masks for the models to wear. I find myself wanting to sculpt more, sculpt the image. I can do that through drawing. I can create the illusion of a volume, but the fluidity of a wet medium is very appealing to me. I think that's what led to the paintings, also."

Caster's installation, still in progress, combines many different forms in unusual ways. It is a work on the grand scale, at once serious and bawdy, funny and deeply moving at the same time.

As to why he has been drawn more and more to three-dimensional figures, Caster has this to say: "What do I really want to do with these figures? Sometimes I want them to be flat, sometimes I want them to be surface configurations, and not anatomical. What I really want to achieve, and this is going to sound corny, is a combination of the spirit and the flesh."

As part of his new installation, Caster has written the following description:

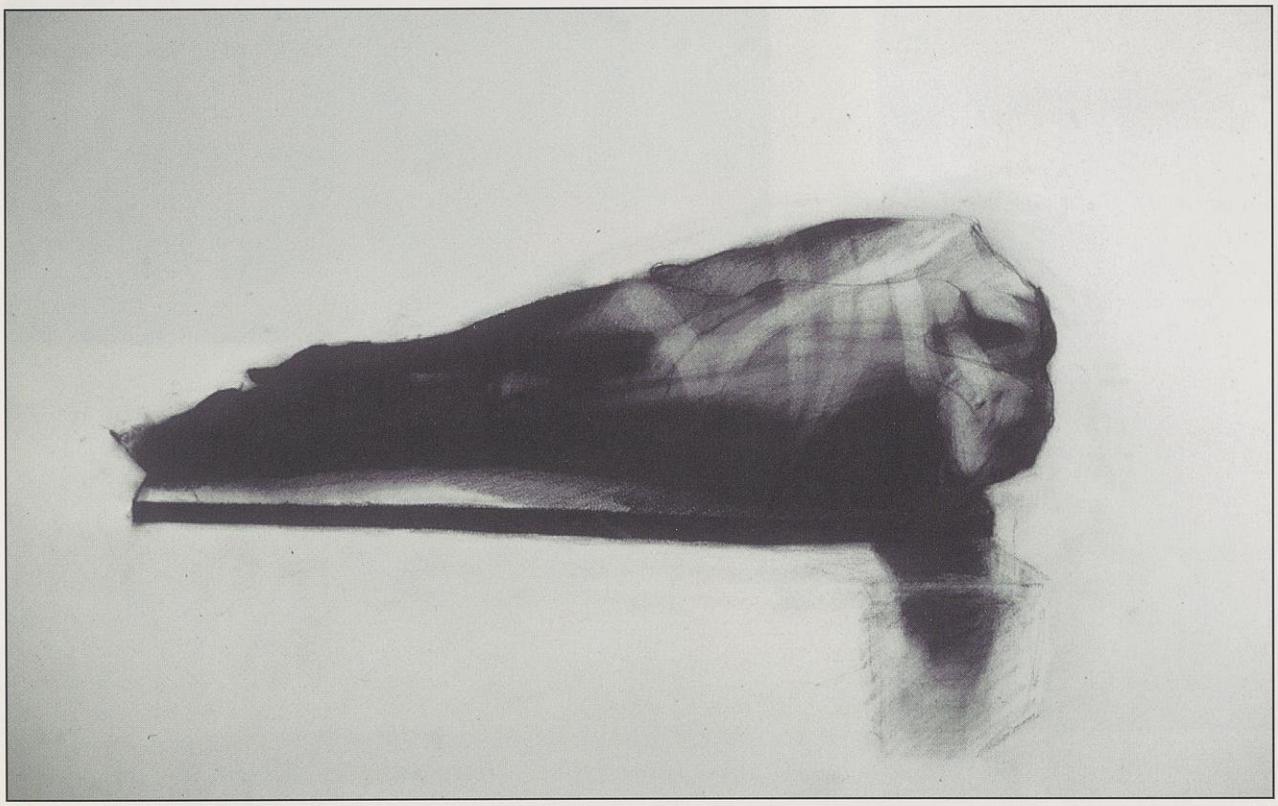
> All parts of this installation serve a purpose. The video represents the movement and layering which occurs in actual time. The sculpture gives a sense of permanence within the physical space. The machine with its two figures are the holders of the monitors that display the video. It is the environment in which much of the action takes place. The paintings and drawings evolve from but are not illustrations of the video and written stories. The written stories are based on my experiences as a trainman for the C&NW railroad between 1974 and 1979. There is not a prepared script for this adventure. The essence is self-discovery . . . I am trying to bring abstract thoughts and emotions into the physical world.

Caster's installation, still in progress, combines many different forms in unusual ways. It is a work on the grand scale, at once serious and bawdy, funny and deeply moving at the same time. Many of the paintings are particularly beautiful. The art world itself has always been a risky place in which to work; things are never as they seem.

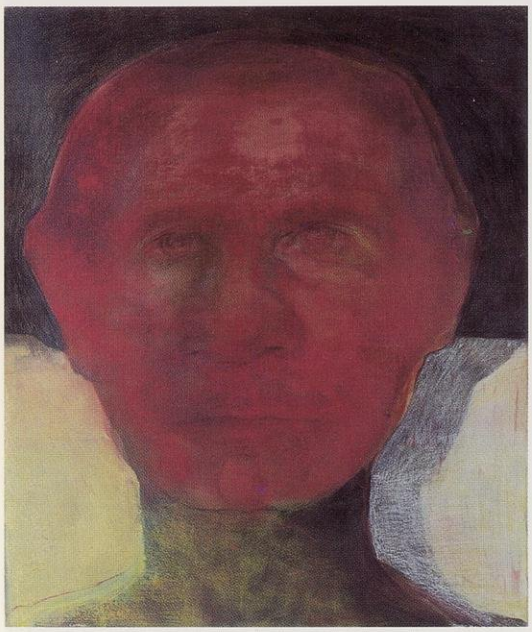
Years ago, time-lapse photography yawned, experimentally, and promptly fell asleep. In its wake a paper boat, freshly drawn, sails off forever from the hand of its creator. Around the next swell, just for a moment, video takes a bite out of the same hand that drew it. Noticeably, painting and sculpture are off together elsewhere, museum-hopping. Gravity falls like a rainbow over the whole picture, which we never had properly in focus in the first place, but we are grateful for its weight and measure. In twentieth-century physics there is room for everything at once, even disappearance and virtual reality, the past and the future.

I think Paul Caster's current work wrestles with all of these things. The idea of an installation is not new, but Caster's conception of it is. In his example it is almost always tactile, highly personal, and inventive. There is a quiet ardor here, as well, a twentieth-century kind of humming, with all of the octaves just out of place, arias of fallen dreams arising in new snow. These pieces, so surreptitious and exact, belong together. They are grace notes of flesh and spirit.

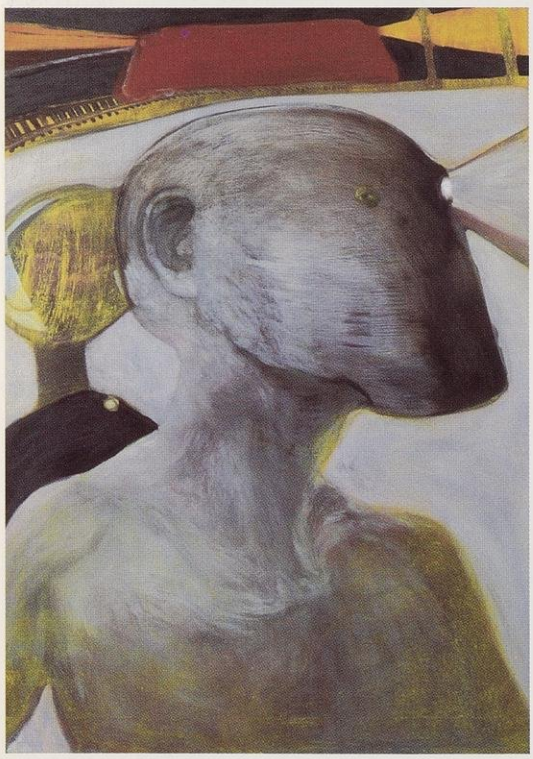
Photos by Robert Smith.



Bird mummy. Drawing, 40 x 26 inches. 1973.



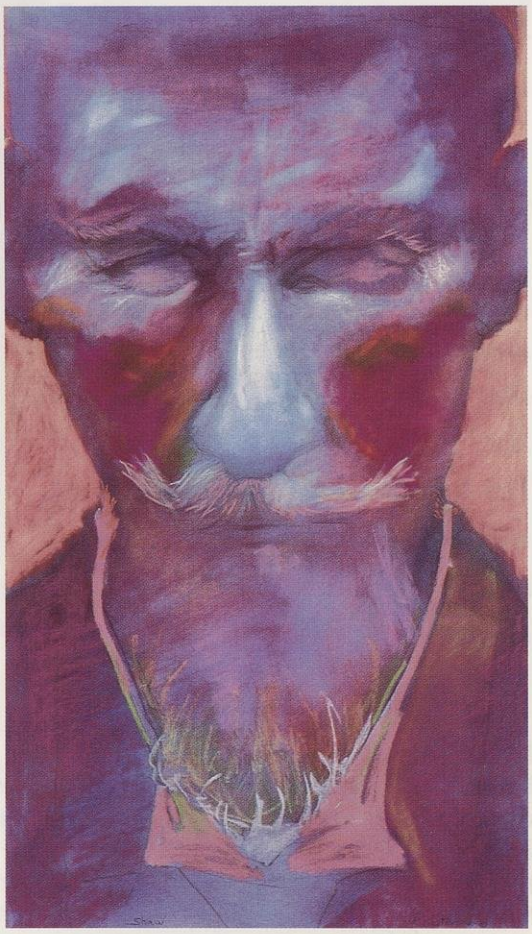
Cormac McCarthy. *Pastel, 51½ x 44 inches. 1986.*



Diesel Head. *Oil, 60 x 48 inches. 1992.* Mile Post 7. *Oil, 72 x 48 inches. 1992.*

Mile Post 7. *Oil, 72 x 48 inches. 1992.*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756–1791. *Drawing, 42 x 54 inches. 1979.*



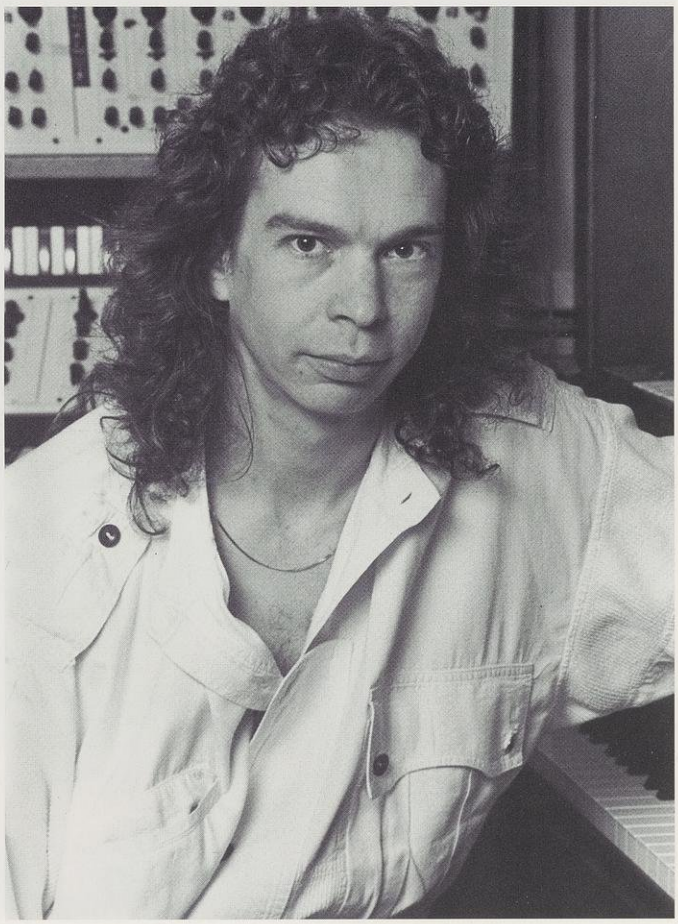
George Bernard Shaw 1856–1950. *Drawing, 28 x 42 inches. 1979.*

This special color section of Paul Caster's work was made possible through the generosity of Tom Bliffert.

An Interview with Lyle Mays: Music in a Postmodern World

by Richard Terrill

Keyboard player Lyle Mays is well known to the public as a performer. He's rated highly in Downbeat *magazine readers' and critics' polls as a pianist, and he is at the top of those polls for his performance on the synthesizer. He's best known for his appearances with guitarist Pat Metheny in the Pat Metheny Group—a collaboration which has resulted in world tours, critical and popular success, and Grammy Award-winning albums.*



Lyle Mays, musician.

More important to Mays, though less recognized popularly, is his work as a composer. He has co-written with Metheny most of the music on the group's albums as well as the film score for John Schlesinger's 1985 film *The Falcon and the Snowman* (a project which also led to the Metheny Group recording a single with rock star David Bowie). Mays has recorded his own compositions on his three solo albums, *Lyle Mays, Street Dreams*, and *Fictionary*, and his music has been recorded by other jazz artists as well as groups as different as Marimolin (a classical marimba/violin duo) and Earth, Wind and Fire.

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Lyle Mays is now back in Wisconsin after living in Texas, New York, and Boston for nearly twenty years. He was born and raised near Wausaukee in northern Wisconsin and studied in the music department at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire from 1971 to 1973, a period he now refers to as "time to grow up" after having been a high school student in the north woods.

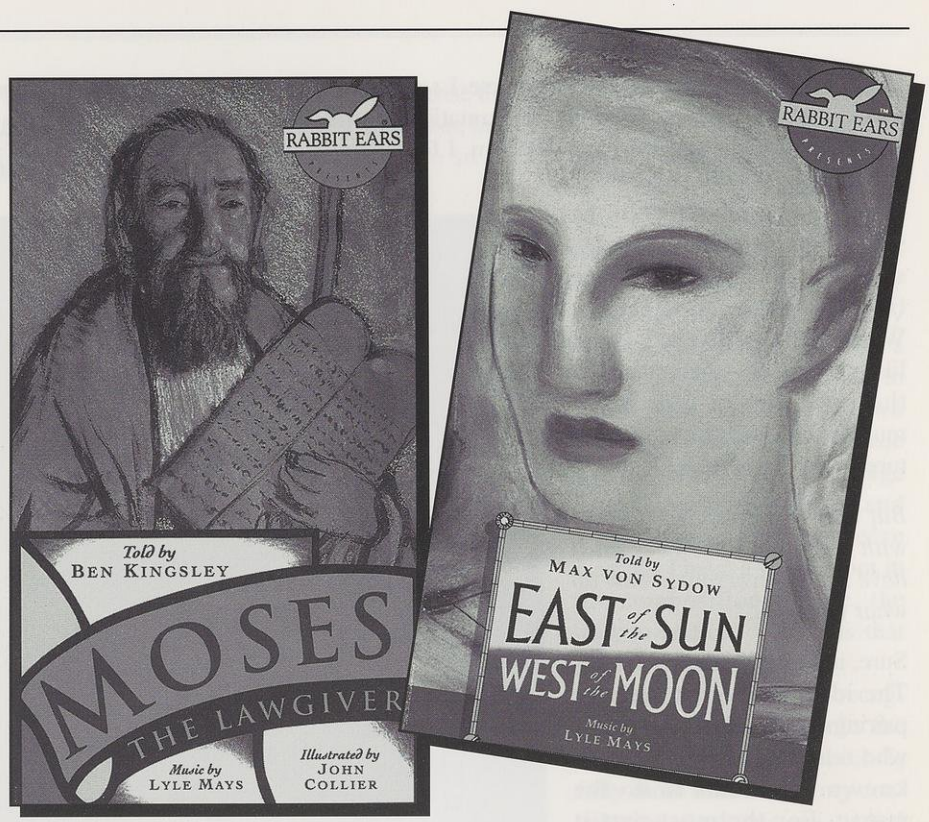
Lyle and I have known each other since high school summer music camps and have been close friends since our college days when we shared a house on Niagara Street in Eau Claire with the other two students who formed our jazz quartet. This then, for either of us, was not a typical interview.

Through the years, when our paths have crossed, we've never let our close friendship get in the way of a spirited talk on the topic of the day. I can remember shooting baskets in my driveway in Eau Claire in 1979 while we argued about space stations and presidential politics; and more recently shooting pool in an after-hours bar in Andorra la Vella while we drank Jack Daniels and surveyed the contemporary music scene and the vagaries of European travel. I also remember catching the Metheny Group in Minneapolis in 1986 and having to pass with Lyle through a gauntlet of well-wishers and autograph-seekers after the concert. My old friend was doing very well for himself and for his music.

Not long ago I was a guest at Lyle's new country home near Madison. This time around, the topic of our discussion was to be music composition. We started talking in front of the stereo system in Lyle's living room, which was serving as his studio until an out building was remodeled. Lyle played for me excerpts of the scores he had composed for a children's video of

the stories "Peter Rabbit" and "Jeremy Fisher" for MCA records. The stories had been read by Meryl Streep and the video had appeared on Showtime. Lyle had just finished a similar project with Max von Sydow reading "East of the Sun, West of the Moon."

As has been the case since I've known him, Lyle was most excited playing for me the work he had just completed—in this case the score for von Sydow. The excitement was apparent in his voice, and the animation of our discussion grew as we later left his home for a walk through a surrounding woods and cornfield on an afternoon perfect as September.



Terrill: *Tell me about the scores you did for the children's stories.*

Mays: The thing that I found interesting about them is that on the surface there was all this freedom. Five or six years ago when I did the stories with Meryl Streep, both of them were light, cute stories and her reading was very straightforward. I'm a big fan of hers, but this was straight-ahead Peter Rabbit: "Peter's very naughty." That's the tone of it.

So I started thinking about all that freedom, given that I could write whatever I wanted to . . . there's almost a dilemma of *what* music to write. In this case I just let the tone of the stories guide me.

By "what music to write" you mean is this going to sound more like the music on your albums or like other music for children or like . . . Stravinsky?

Exactly. In the case of "Jeremy Fisher," the character is kind of a buttoned-up, proper gentleman—this frog who's got a very formal life. So I decided to write a neoclassical score. It's a little chamber ensemble: bassoon, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and bass. I didn't have the budget to get all those musicians, so I used the synthesizers to do all those parts.

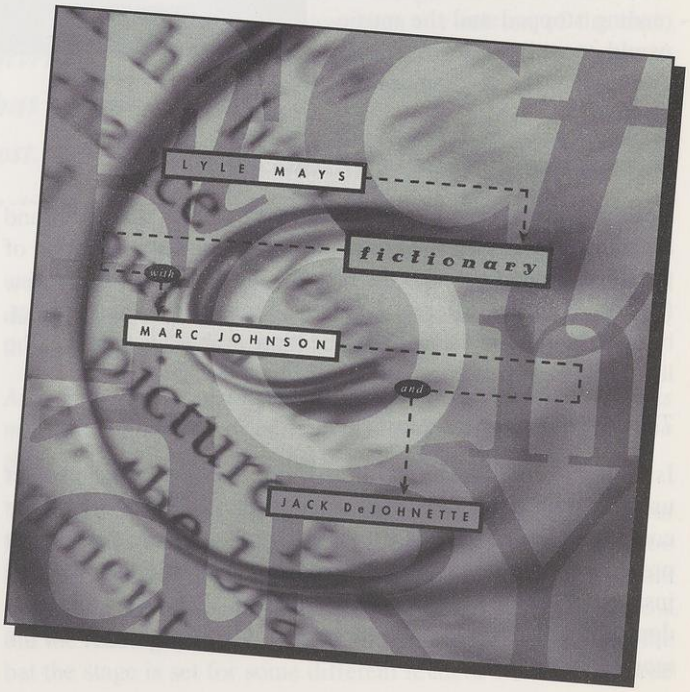
It was the kind of budget that if I just sat down at the piano and played music, I could have made some money. But it's just not that simple for me; I hear larger forces. I'm not just a piano player, I'm not a jazz piano player. That's what most people know about me, and even then they know me in the context of the Pat Metheny Group, which is not just a simple jazz band. We have this array of synths . . .

And the other story, "Peter Rabbit"?

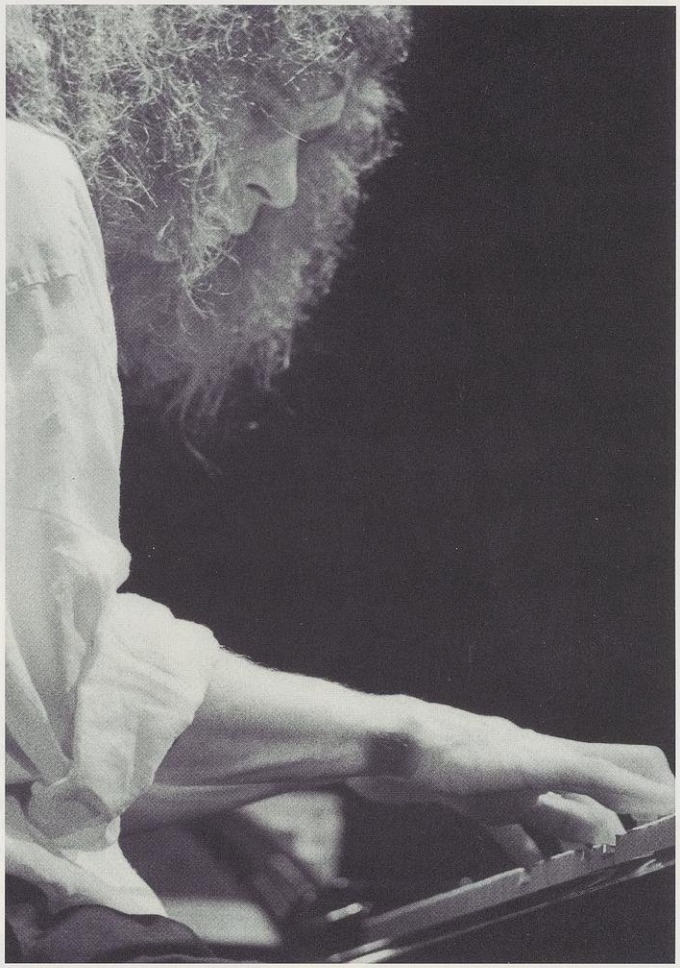
The score for that was kind of later-sixties jazz, Blue Note, because in that context jazz sounded naughty, it sounded sassy.

So does this project say something about the validity of program music . . . or I guess this is just film work?

My old friend was doing very well for himself and for his music.



I *made* it into film work! In my naivete I set about writing a score for these stories: hitting all the dramatic elements, getting themes that recurred, working with them. I found out later that other people who had been hired to do other films in the series generally just recorded some songs. For instance in the first one in the series, George Winston kind of doodled. It was like wall paper—the music was there, though it didn't say much. It had no particular structure, form, or melody.



But that must have been okay with the producers. They must have said to everyone, "Just do what you want."

Sure, it was brilliant marketing. The idea was to get creative pairings between famous actors who read the stories and well-known musicians to do the music. For the most part it worked great. Bobby McFerrin worked with Jack Nicholson on "The Elephant's Child" for instance. But I found out, after the fact, that the other musicians just recorded some tunes that sort of went along with the story. Basically the music level would be boosted when the reading stopped and the music would come back down and go away when the reading started again.

So it was really like background music!

Yeah, it wasn't score-like in the sense of themes that recur and are transformed. I decided to write an elaborate orchestration of the story. I found out after the fact that the director of the stories felt forced into a different level of editing of the final project, because he felt the visual had to be more ambitious to match the level of the music.

They did the visual part last?

Isn't that wild? That's another thing that made the project unique. With most film work everything is filmed before the composers are brought in. But this situation—there's not much precedent for it. It wasn't conceived to be an elaborate project, I just couldn't help myself! I said to myself, I've got all this freedom, I'm not going to do the *least* possible, I'm going to do the *most* possible.

The video was animated, right?

Not exactly. They got a well-known illustrator to do water colors and then filmed these water colors, moving the camera around, panning in or panning out. It's a series of drawings or paintings. Not like cartoon animation, but like a picture book.

It's sort of like a puzzle, isn't it, this kind of writing? Maybe less than with "Falcon and the Snowman" because you don't have the pictures first. But there's an element of game or play in it.

A huge element. It's ultimately for kids, which freed me up from some imagined *uber*critic somewhere saying, "Well this just doesn't measure up." The whole point was to illuminate the story, to delight but not talk down to kids. Like the last little bit I played for you [on the stereo]. Those were good notes. A jazz band could play on that. It's not compromised.

The "Jeremy Fisher" part I played for you was different, more like Stravinsky's "The Soldier's Tale," a traditional classical chamber ensemble, very asymmetrical . . .

Angular . . .

. . . tonal, with a bit of Satie, or something. So I'm throwing kind of a lot at these kids. They don't know, you know, "Soldier's Tale." They don't know French Impressionism, but I felt like . . . well "Jeremy Fisher" is a strange story because nothing happens in it.

How postmodern!

Really, it is! Mr. Jeremy Fisher, this frog, goes fishing 'cause his friends are coming for dinner. He sits out in the boat, nothing happens. Then a big trout comes up and swallows him. The trout spits him out because of his hat or something. He comes up, goes back home, his friends come over for dinner. It's delightful.

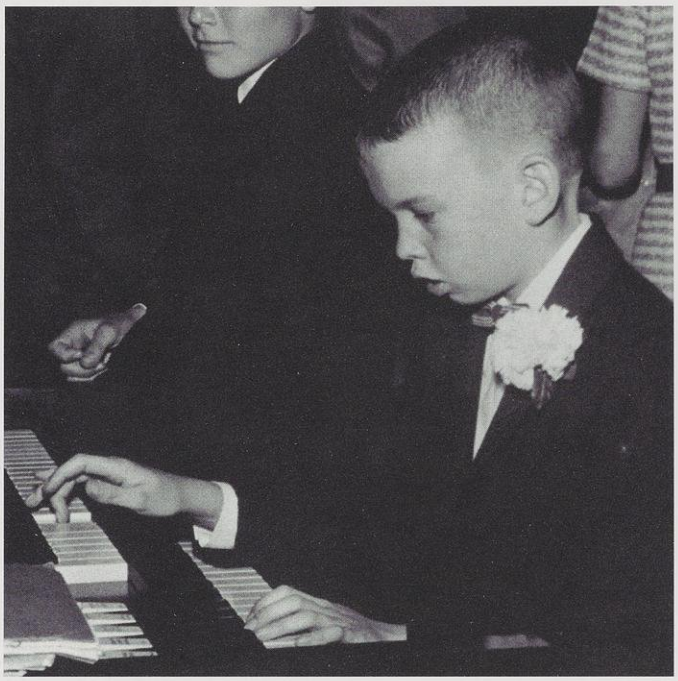
Do you think there's some element of craft in this that delights you, too?

Certainly the music is freed from providing the narrative motion. This enables me to explore tone color, orchestration,

reworking of the themes. I was able to get into almost academic areas with the material and trust that I wasn't losing the thread because the thread is *there*. It's being *read*. So I could just sort of hang out on the edges and throw in contributions.

Do you think there's any parallel between your being in that role and your playing with Pat Metheny all these years?

Wow, I'd have to think about that. There are parallels I guess. Beyond the obvious ones—that I tend to choose the same notes and I've had a lot to do with the compositions and arrangements in the band—there's that idea of putting a lot of musical information into a piece of music without standing up and screaming, "This is art!" Most people don't think of the Pat Metheny Group as some great artistic ensemble. Yet we're trying to pack as much musical information into what we do as possible. You can even analyze some of what we've done with conventional Shinkarian analysis.



Young Lyle Mays at the keyboard .

What-erian?

Shinkar, some musicologist—classic stuff people study in college that I didn't study because I was too busy being a jazz musician! But you can break down and analyze the music. It has a lot of compositional rigor in it. And so does the music in these stories, but I'm not sure those are the parallels you were thinking of.

I was thinking of you being in a role in which you're relieved of the necessity to supply the forward motion of the music, compared to Pat Metheny being the center of the group and you being the principal sideman, in an associative role.

I am skeptical of the cult of personality, if that's what you mean. There is an element in live performance when the audience can get swept up in the whole feeling of live music and they're not really listening.

I'm thinking more of this: Someone hands you a story and says, "Work around this." And with Pat, as you've told me, it's basically his band, his concept of the music. That's the given. As opposed to, say, leading your own group. Maybe you wouldn't enjoy that as much.

I wouldn't in the sense that I'm a musician, I happen to play the piano and synthesizer, but I'm not that much of a performer. I'm not good enough to sit out there and play the instruments and say, "Listen to this." I think the compositional or orchestration aspect has a lot to do with what I get off on, what I think are my strengths. In the Pat Metheny Group, I don't have to be a flashy player for the music to sound right. My role is in two parts: what goes into the music before we ever reach the stage or the recording studio, and what happens when we're playing. I have a lot of input in the compositional stage, the million-and-one decisions that go into a piece of music.

I don't hope to get recognition for what goes into the music beforehand, which is fully more than half of my contribution. And on stage, well, I don't *want* to solo all the time. As a matter of fact there are times in the arrangements when in the traditional jazz band it would be like "Pat's solo" then "my solo." And I'll have the idea to say, "Let's not do a piano solo here; let's change the arrangement and make the music go somewhere else." It could have been my section of the tune, but instead I'm pushing for the music to change *compositionally.*

That classical style of pulling out more and more ideas from a central kernel is something that's almost been lost.

I know what you mean about the music in the Metheny Group going in a different direction. It's that sense of surprise.

And drama. And it instills that sense of wonder in the audience. They cannot predict this music. It's delighting them, they can't quite get their minds around it, and they'd like to hear it again.

And they do! But getting back to the children's videos. It's this more recent one, "East of the Sun, West of the Moon," that you think is some of your best work?

Yeah, the first two, with Meryl Streep, came out cool and I'm happy; this last one I invested more of myself in. Maybe because the story was more dramatic, it was longer—the whole thing is twenty-seven or twenty-eight minutes. Max von Sydow did the reading—a very, very dramatic reading. So right off the bat the stage is set for some different level of emotion. It's one

thing that Peter Rabbit is cute and naughty and Mr. Jeremy Fisher goes fishing, but it's another thing to have this story of epic proportions read by this imposing figure.

Yeah, a man who played chess with death.

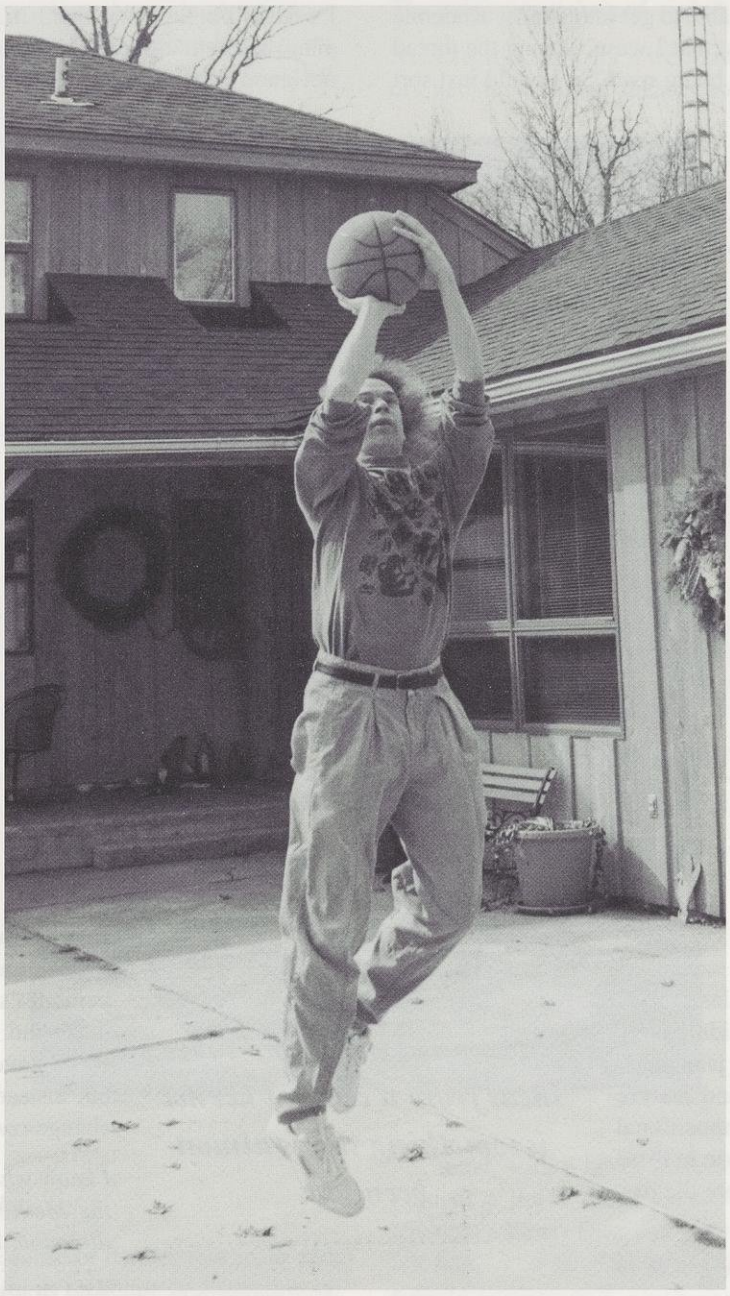
Exactly! It demanded a different level of emotional depth. I thought the last thing I wanted was the intimate, personal solo piano thing. To me, solo piano doesn't adequately convey the sense of large forces at work.

It conveys Charlie Brown.

Exactly. This had to be the opposite of the cute Peter Rabbit jazz combo. The orchestra is the best at invoking the theme of large forces because there are so many players and each individual gets swallowed up in this massive sound. Traditionally composers have turned to the orchestra to make grander statements. It can accommodate all the drama you want to put in it.

Unfortunately the budget was not such that I could hire an orchestra! I trusted my stylistic and orchestration decisions, so I decided to simulate that as best I could with the means at my disposal, which was to use the synths. So unfortunately this doesn't sound like what it should. It's completely flawed because synths don't sound like orchestras and never will. The sound's not right, not what I heard in my head.

But compositionally, I wrote it out as if it were a score for orchestra.



Mays relaxing at his home in south central Wisconsin.

Lyle plays the recording. It begins as a series of sustained notes on piano which seem not so much an idea as the beginning of an idea. The notes of the descending line blend to a kind of watery ethereal chord. Then the line ascends again and swells to a statement of the first theme supported by strings. The theme moves and changes, there's a harmony that surprises me, then a flute, then von Sydow: *"Hidden deep In the blue forest of Norway in a tiny hut there lived a peasant farmer and his family. His children were pretty to the last but none prettier than his youngest daughter. Her long golden hair and radiant smile brought life to the darkest of days . . ."*

The story—and the music—continue. The daughter is sent off to live with a bear who, unbeknownst to her, is really a handsome prince under a spell. She breaks her promise to him by lighting a candle to see "the mysterious stranger"—the prince—who lies beside her each night. His plan to break the spell ruined, the prince is frozen in ice by a troll queen. But the girl finds him and her tears melt the wax she'd let fall on his shirt that fateful night. Magically, he is set free . . .

Mays: The thing I included that's certainly not necessary in a project like this is the very classical notion of all the material being derived from a central kernel. Again, you could go through an analysis and find how all the themes are derived from the opening notes. It's not superfluous; I didn't throw in a bunch of sounds or notes whenever I felt like it. It has structure, compositional rigor. That classical style of pulling out more and more ideas from a central kernel is something that's almost been lost. It's considered out of date, or it's gotten so convoluted in academic music you can't hear it any more. And you can't separate the aural tradition from music. It exists as sound; it doesn't exist as lumber.

How would you say this compositional rigor manifests itself in the process? Does it mean that there must be more revision?

It means that there is an eloquent solution to the problems, that there's a reason for the notes. You could just sit down and write some dramatic passionate love theme, or some music that sounds like travel, or this kind of music or that kind. But what I did was to derive every note in the whole score from the opening theme. Well, there are basically two themes. There's this straightforward one [he plays it on the piano] that announces the story. It's kind of dispassionate. It just sits there and says, "Story, theme."

I noticed that too. That would be under the credits, right? It's almost an old fashioned kind of . . .

It's very old fashioned.

I was trying to think of what movie I'd seen, some fifties melodrama with Ingrid Bergman.

But those old guys had that kind of craft! That music isn't saying, "Hey, we're hip!" or "This is the newest, baddest thing," or "Like me." It's saying, "I'm a theme." I had the confidence to present my theme in a very straightforward setting because it fits with everything else. Or before that in the introduction, for instance, you hear bits of the theme before you ever hear the whole theme together. The notes open up, unfold, and all of a sudden it's an open book.

And that melodic line is unabashedly . . . dramatic.

Yeah, I was trying to go with the emotional tone of the story. It's a classic, dramatic story. A lot happens. Large forces are at work. It covers a lot of time. It involves love, salvation, guilt, redemption, heroics, fear—it's an epic story! I wanted to set that stage by saying, "OK, we're going to be serious here. We're not going to be cute, we're not going to be off in some corner or on some tangent."

In a way it's my reaction to the hipper-than-thou attitude that can creep into music these days. It asks, "What can we do to set ourselves apart from everybody else?" Often that just leads to bad decisions. The fashion these days often is to be quirky, unusual. And somehow then you can say you're modern. In fact, I don't think there's such a thing as modernity any more. It's gone. We're in a postmodern world. It seems to me there's no new style, no new hip thing to be. I think those people who are still laboring under the notion that they have to be "modern" are missing the boat.

We don't have a consensus of what the direction of music is. Since there doesn't seem to be a modern movement or style, the only thing that's *left* is quirkiness. You can get quirkier and quirkier until you get to the point where, yes, that is unique, but it also could be worthless because it doesn't say anything. It has no content, meaning, or purpose if it's simply quirky.

Do you think that's true in so-called serious music?

Serious music, especially. The academic side of composition seems to have run out of styles. I don't think there has been a new style for forty years. That old nineteenth-century notion that there was an inevitable *progress* . . . well, there *was* in that there were new notes discovered, new chords, new things to do with tonality. In a way that baton was passed to the jazz musicians, because they were discovering new things to do with tonality even up to the 1960s. And then that stopped too. I'm not aware of there having been anything new in tonal music or jazz since 1971 or 1972. Jazz lasted longer, but then it ran up against the same wall.

It's clear to me that we're in a postmodern world.

So then the alternative is to go back and pick out what you like in the last five hundred years or so of Western music?

I don't believe craft should be sacrificed to the pursuit of an identifiable style. I don't think style is more important than craft. If I apply myself and do a good job of writing music, who the hell cares what style it is? ❧

I don't think there's such a thing as modernity any more. It's gone. We're in a postmodern world.

Related reading

Ben Sidran. *Talking Jazz: An Illustrated Oral History.* Pomegranate Artbooks (Box 808022, Petaluma, CA 94975), 1992.

Contains edited versions of interviews with forty musicians done on National Public Radio between the summer of 1984 and the spring of 1990. Includes talks with Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Betty Carter, Phil Woods, Keith Jarrett, Branford and Wynton Marsalis, and Bob James, among others. Ben Sidran lives and often performs in Madison.

Firefly Time

Deep in a June night
the yard becomes a kind of sky
where firefly stars blink
constellations that change before
I can name them.

By shutting my eyes I can try
to make some kind of
afterimage map,
but the light is so faint
what I see are inky swirls
my little observatory can't reach.

Opening my eyes I see time is flying.
Maybe fireflies have speeded
things up because they've
studied us long enough
and want to get the race over with.

If a night this long is all of space
it could be they don't know
they're rushing toward the Big Dawn
that washes out everything.

It's terrible to slip back
into bed to watch
what closed eyes have to offer,
except I can hear
bullfrogs telling each other, "It's OK,
let them glow, go slow, go slow."

R. Virgil (Ron) Ellis

what my customers don't see

by day, i banter and tease
refill rabbit mugs with peaberry coffee
cross my eyes while nuking
cranberry muffins, gathering packets
of equal for tables seven and nine
but at home, in the morning, eyelids
pressed together like parched lips,
i touch my fingers to keys and stave off
anguish, fighting tears as a child would,
feet deep in mud, arms wide

j. bronner

Gerda Lerner's Cat

Gerda Lerner's cat
Sleeps in the bathroom sink.
Packed in porcelain.
She is startled as I enter.
Black orbs piercing
Through the liquid green.
White foiling black and brown,
Softness felt without touching.

Harry Harder

Stealing Lilacs

Long before the arboretum opens,
I wake with that scent
already on my breath,

steal off
with my kitchen shears
already drunk on the promise

of green bushes bent
with the deep grape weight of them;
hungover with ivory pink

clusters hanging like moonlight;
globes of split flutes
peeling out in their namesake hue,

that creamy blue edible violet
spread across branches; understand,
I'm here to take your lilacs.

Last night I sang
to the firecracker planet Mars,
to Jupiter rising above the garage,

danced in my nightgown
out in the driveway
just before midnight,

barefoot, whirling,
breathing in late May visions
of creamy blue deep grape ivory pink

bunches of lilacs cut loose
and fresh, and quenching themselves
in every available vase

on every ledge, shelf, sill, and mantel;
lilacs sent up and down stairs
in bottles and bowls;

set gaily afloat in shoes
and sinks, in tubs and tanks;
strewn upon pillows,

tucked between sheets, between teeth,
between legs, behind ears,
under noses and arms;

and yes I know
you have to lock me up,
but bring me lilacs.

Pamela Gemin

Epilogue

for Selina

Were it not for this thing
this closing of the eyes
this stopping of the breath
this stiffening of the limbs
this cessation of speech
this departure of the body heat

We would have been playing our favourite game
chasing the butterflies of our dreams
lolling in the enveloping warmth
of the world we moulded with our own hands
which is the real world
which is always around us
which is invulnerable and strong in its frailty

But this thing
this closing of the eyes
this stopping of the breath
this stiffening of the limbs
this cessation of speech
this departure of the body heat

it came upon us
it came between us
it came to spite us

Yet we shall dream on
beyond speech and breath and eyes that don't see
eyes that for their blindness see more
take in new landscapes beyond the limiting horizons
as we leap with nimbler limbs
unfettered by tendons and ligaments and veins and vessels
that defy our orders
and our heat shall rise
and we shall talk and we shall laugh

beyond the prison of mortality

Daniel P. Kunene

A Pictograph

On the bluffs
above the Colorado

The white goddess,
spreadeagled, against
the dark gray, alluvial soil,
left there for aeons—
I will not profane her name.
Not even Air Force
intelligence can ascertain it.

Goddess,
what is your name?
that I might not profane it?
On the ridges surrounding you,
I would speak of the black,
beauty-spotting craters formed by tears.

A big tear has fallen
on your right foot,
and left its impression,
a crucifying spike.

Your arms are a bow,
one thread,
a cusp'd yoke, a silken lune,
across your shoulders.

Brent Dozier

Meadow at Peninsula

It was a world made entirely of scent:
a wide lip of clover and black-eyed susan
unnoted on the map,
paintbrush and Anne's lace and small
purpled flowers steamed in the summer heat
to an evening place, a well of scent
that swallowed tongue and breath and nails.
Drunk on the audacity—! I stood
an hour, a second, or maybe past death—
perhaps I am now dream
telling you your dreams.

But my skin leaps
at the telling, my eyes
burn in the words
and I tell you
if we met in that meadow
I would take down your clothes
and lay you in that sweet water,
to wash you in the conjure
of earthlight and poetry,
to make you once animal and flower and man,
to lay you in creation's first breath
and kiss you there,
and there, and there.

Wendy Wirth-Brock

The Navigator

After surgery, she becomes a cartographer,
recharts the map of Body.
Where Cervix, Uterus, Ovaries, once floated,
she pencils in Cancer.

She surveys this new emptiness . . .
the black hole that sucks energy,
holds fast light.
This map of internal desert,
she finally folds away.

Explores then fresh territories . . .
the complexity of a sunflower,
the intricacies of Queen Anne's Lace
white florets protecting
the single blood ruby at heart's core.

The lenticelled mouths
of the smooth-barked aspen are silent
but their silver leaves whisper
compass points to a new geography.

Loretta Strehlow

Spending An Evening With Lorine Niedecker

Your river poems
slip
across the page
silver as fishes

You bait lines
with simple words
bright jigs
and plugs
that catch light

Bird song
frog note
alluvial mud—

your water music

You teach me to cast off
mark my own
deep currents

Loretta Strehlow

There Is A Certain Light

that invokes memory. In spring it climbs, limber and green, above the housetops to awaken sleeping doves. An old woman, young again, floats in her narrow iron bed above the Ile de la Cite where vendors of the bird market whisper of her great beauty. A young man looses his bamboo cages. A singing shower of finches rises to greet her where she rides the pale ribbon of Parisian air.

In summer, this certain light lies heavy as a cat. It purrs in crimson flower beds, stalks the darkest corners, licks winter's chill from old bones. It sings of bees. The sand of beaches drifts into the old woman's dreams where even moons are bright as suns.

Office girls are poured out of buildings into autumn's liquid. Swimming through this strange, clear light, they shake down their long hair before vanishing like mermaids into the blaze of city parks. The smell of remembered smoke brings tears to the eyes of the old.

Janus is the god of winter light which pools like scalded milk across furrowed fields or, on certain days, glitters knife-sharp so that eyes must be closed against its cutting. This second, cold-breathed light illuminates what is to be. The old woman pulls it like a clean, white coverlet to her chin and waits.

Loretta Strehlow

MONTANA 1948 by Larry Watson. Milkweed Editions, 1993. $10.00 soft cover. 175 pages. Also available hard cover. Washington Square Press, 1995, $17.95.

JUSTICE by Larry Watson. Milkweed Editions, 1995. $17.95.

by Allen J. Post

As a professor in the English department at the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, Larry Watson stresses the importance of writing regularly; "Get it down, get something on paper," he instructs. Watson believes anyone can learn the art of writing in some degree, and "self-discipline, will, perseverance" matter as much as or more than talent.

Since his 1980 debut novel, *In A Dark Time*, and a 1983 poetry chapbook, *Leaving Dakota*, Watson has persevered. *The Gettysburg Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, and *High Plains Literary Review* are some of the literary periodicals that have published his poetry, stories, and essays.

Watson's perseverance has paid off. His award-winning novel, *Montana 1948*, was published in late 1993 by Milkweed Editions of Minneapolis. The initial print run of 7,500 copies has been multiplied to well over 30,000 copies. Pocket Books recently issued a paperback edition of *Montana 1948* which has been promoted by a ten-city author tour, and Paramount is currently seeking a producer for the completed script of Watson's novel. *Justice*, a "pre-quel" to *Montana 1948*, was released by Milkweed in February with an initial print run of 25,000 copies—the largest ever first printing for the non-profit publisher.

Montana 1948 is a tale of brotherly confrontation set in the small Montana town of Bentrock. The story is told by the adolescent narrator, David, whose father is sheriff to the community and whose uncle is the area doctor. The conflict of the novel centers around allegations of Dr. Frank Hayden's sexual misconduct with various of his female Native American clients and Sheriff Wesley Hayden's lawful treatment of those allegations. Adding to the tension of the legal/familial push and pull is an overbearing grandfather and a victimized housekeeper. Balancing the preservation of the good Hayden name with legal conscience leads to colorful drama.

The story develops in crisp, unadorned prose and dialogue that befits the time and locale. Plot supersedes in-depth characterization with no loss to the novel's appeal.

In *Justice*, Watson returns to Bentrock, Montana, and the Hayden family. The book explores Julian Hayden's patriarchal homesteading and the growth of the Hayden family. While vivid scenes are sketched, plot takes a passenger's seat to character development; although the family name is again an important issue, there is not the pivotal conflict and resolution present in *Montana 1948*. Instead, Watson now fills in the shadowy areas of his previously introduced characters and grants them greater depth.

Where do the fictional Haydens come from? Watson admits that his paternal lineage included two sheriffs in native North Dakota. Beyond "a couple of little facts," however, he relies on fictional creativity for his characters.

Other writers have been influential "at different stages" of Watson's writing career. He cites Hemingway as "the first good writer I read that made me want to write." Additionally, "Peter Taylor showed me some things that I didn't think were possible" in fiction. Watson includes Updike in his list of respected authors, as well as fellow North Dakotans Larry Woiwode and Louise Erdrich.

Larry Watson is as subtle and unpretentious as the characters and social climate he depicts. With no hint of inflated ego, he confesses that he doesn't do a lot of rewriting with his fiction; "I write slowly and tidy up as I go along," he says. He writes in longhand initially, with a computer-generated final draft following. Poetry and essays, he admits, do require revising. As for poems, Watson says, "I have to wait for them to come."

Fiction is Watson's preferred genre and a daily exercise. His wife, Susan, to whom he dedicates both *Montana 1948* and *Justice*, is his "first reader." Watson readily acknowledges that he values and respects her opinion and judgment.

Watson, the professor, is not about to hang up teaching in the wake of his writing success. "I like to teach," he muses, adding candidly, "the less I teach the more I like it, to have a little more time for writing." Currently instructing half-time, Watson exudes a calm excitement in balancing pedagogy and current literary projects. More of the Hayden clan, however, is not in the immediate works—Watson feels he has found closure in his book *Justice*. Always maintaining multiple works in progress, he is adding some final touches to, and seeking a publisher for, a second compilation of his poetry. He is also dusting off a fiction manuscript that has resided "in a desk drawer for a couple of years."

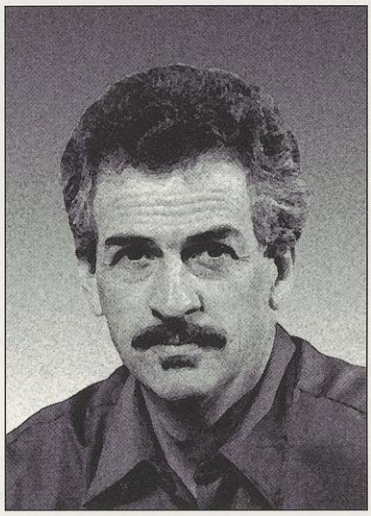
For the collector of modern literature, first editions of *Montana 1948*, rare in retail book shops, are popping up in collector catalogs in the $50 to $60 range. The recent and significantly numbered release of *Justice* make it readily available at your local bookstore. Both are similarly and handsomely designed works with Russell Chatham's art gracing the earth-toned dust jackets. The Pocket Books paperback edition of *Montana 1948* is also attractive, though Watson detects that "the trees are wrong" in this cover illustration taken from an Illinois archive.

In A Dark Time and *Leaving Dakota* remain scarce; Watson himself admits he has only one copy, which he gleaned from his in-laws. Both titles regularly appear in collectors' "wants" lists, seldom under books for sale. So, if you run across a copy of either, grab it. And if you run across two, call me.

Allen J. Post, who interviewed Larry Watson for this critique, is a devotee of literature who lives in Wausau.

FLYING HOME by Bill Camplin. Compact disk, Baby Boom Music, Inc., (P.O. Box 646, Wilton, CT 06897–0646), 1993. Also available on audio cassette. For information, call the Café Carpe in Fort Atkinson, 414/563–9391.

by Faith B. Miracle



Greg Puza

I first heard Bill Camplin perform during the 1970s in Milwaukee. I was impressed by the quality of his voice, his intelligent and sometimes passionate interpretation of lyrics, and in general by his musicianship. In those days, it was possible to hear Bill fairly frequently at such venues as Kenwood Inn on the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee campus and the now defunct Blue River Café, which was located at the corner of Michigan and Water. There, in a usually quiet atmosphere with a good sound system, Bill would play his guitar and sing out his musical poems in praise of justice. He would sing Hank Williams songs better than Hank himself; he would out-Dylan Bob Dylan.

Those were good days. And when Bill was having an especially good night, we would all agree: It just doesn't get much better than Bill on a good night.

If you're reading this review, you know where I am and what I'm doing now, twenty years later. As for Bill Camplin, he and the incomparable Kitty Welch are operating the Café Carpe in Fort Atkinson where they live with their children, Satchel and Savannah, and serve up good food, fine music, and warm hospitality. They are valued and contributing members of the Fort Atkinson community.

Bill is still writing, singing, and playing his guitar. The voice seems to get better, the musicianship stronger. His CD, *Flying Home*, is a collection of songs that reflect childhood interests and experiences, though the music reaches out to audiences of all ages. *Flying Home* was inspired by his young family and by his own "wonderful secure childhood where whole summers could be spent absorbing and dreaming." That would have been in Pewaukee, where Bill grew up and where, as a high-school student, he was fortunate to have the former director of the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus, the late Margaret Hawkins, as his music teacher. Her influence is apparent.

Like all of Bill's performances, this disk includes a variety of musical styles, and there are both humor and pathos in the lyrics. For example, "Crossing That Room" expresses the frustration of a daddy trying to safely traverse a toy-cluttered floor in the dark: "I have to move with greatest care / Somewhere a skateboard waits unseen / Ouch! That ankle biting trampoline." The voice sounds great. The next song on the disk, "(Everything Is) Turning Into Spring," is a wonderful feel-good song with a gentle swing tempo and fine instrumental work. "Unruly Children" puts its musical finger on some of the cultural temptations which families have to contend with these days:

> And they took their message from a TV
> That always said buy new buy more
> I never saw so many rich children
> Believe that they were poor

And Bill, who had many questions in the 1970s, has some answers in the 1990s. As the now-father of two, he offers this admonition in the last stanza:

> Let a firm hand take the rudder
> Let a firm hand guide the plow
> Let a gentle hand teach the children
> To be thankful anyhow.

"Off On A Vacation" has great piano and guitar work. This is funky, driving, traveling music, followed by "Are We There Yet?" with music by George Frederic Handel, lyrics by William Michael Camplin, and symphony orchestra accompaniment. Think about it. Start humming the "Hallelujah Chorus" and feed in the words, "Are we there yet." It's about traveling with kids, and it works. Remember what we might call the bridge? "And take you home forever and ever / Leave you home forever and ever . . ." You get the silly picture.

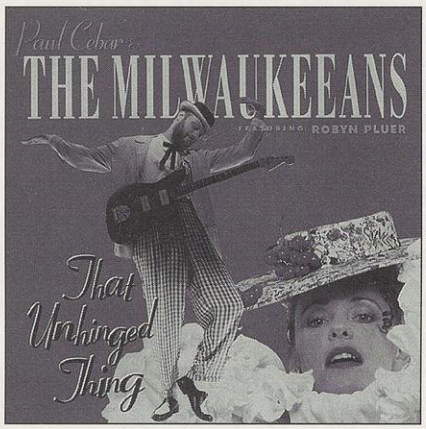
My least favorites on the disk are a song from his *Woodbine/Roots* album of the early 1970s, "Save The Life Of A Simple Child," though it expresses compassion, and "Hear Young Children Sing," though it conveys beautiful thoughts. But then there is the wonderful sing-along, "Share The Wealth With Me"; the folksy repeat song, "Numbers 12359," with strong Camplin vocals and harmony help from some friends; the upbeat, pleasing version of the old favorite, "Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah"; and the hymn-like lullaby, "Another Day." And more.

"I love to sing," he writes, "rising to the occasion, letting go into the dream of the now and adding my prayer to fire." There are eighteen songs here, most of them written by Camplin himself—enough music to delight any ear as Bill Camplin continues to explore the eclectic style, as he reaches out musically and connects, and as he indeed rises to the occasion.

Faith B. Miracle is editorial director for the Wisconsin Academy and editor of the Wisconsin Academy Review.

THAT UNHINGED THING. Paul Cebar and the Milwaukeeans, featuring Robyn Pluer. Shanachie CD 5701. 1993.

by Eileen Fitzgerald



It's difficult to distill the energy of a band as incendiary as Paul Cebar and the Milwaukeeans in a studio recording. *That Unhinged Thing*, though a fine first release, does not faithfully convey the excitement of this dynamic group in live performance. The synergy between the Milwaukeeans and the audience is missing (this music is meant to make you move), as well as the raw spontaneity of the band in response. Nonetheless, *That Unhinged Thing* is a wonderful introduction to the truly original Paul Cebar and to the solid and inventive musicianship of the Milwaukeeans.

While Cebar and the Milwaukeeans are mainstays on the midwestern club circuit, it's no surprise that they are also jazzfest favorites at New Orleans clubs. The band was named "best of the fest" by *Beat* magazine after opening for the ReBirth Brass Band at the Maple Leaf in 1991. In subsequent years the band has drawn large crowds at Mid-City Bowling Lanes and Howling Wolf. The New Orleans Jazz Fest is the perfect venue, and a perfect paradigm for Paul Cebar and the Milwaukeeans—the meeting place of gospel, blues, world music, and jazz.

That Unhinged Thing is a rich New Orleans-inspired gumbo of rhythm and blues, African beats, Southern soul, and Cuban rhythms. All songs are written by Paul Cebar with the exception of "My Heart Makes Up My Mind" by bass player Alan Anderson. Cebar's mastery of the R&B idiom and range as a practicing musicologist is apparent in the echoes of Dr. John (even in his vocals at times), Smiley Lewis, James Brown (the recurring hook in "I Love Soul"), and lovers' rock (the sweet duet between Paul Cebar and Robin Pluer on "I Will Keep"). There is some wild Cajun spice ("Twice Little Sixteen"), some irresistible ska ("Slither Awhile"), and a touch of Babalu (the hypnotic conga line of "You Make Me Feel So").

Calling on a vast compendium of musical influences, Paul Cebar's original material fills all the gaps between soul, R&B, Caribbean, rap, and jazz. Cebar brings the classic R&B idiom into the present without diluting it. It is music everyone hasn't heard before—a revitalized genre of R&B, forced out of the museum with liberal infusions of music from everywhere. It is obvious after hearing only one or two cuts from *That Unhinged Thing* that Paul Cebar has listened to just about everything and remembers most of it.

His lyrics describe the vagaries of club life and disaffected romance with panache and an occasional touch of the poet. The reference to *a heaventree of stars* in "I Will Keep" brought me a vague recollection of a favorite passage from *Ulysses*. I found it in the Ithaca section: "The heaventree of stars hung with humid nightblue fruit."

The postmodern heroine of "Twice Little Sixteen" embodies panache; she may be a little tired, but she is always game:

> Up a tree she figures she can nap a little while
> Up a creek she paddles
> and then she treats it like the Nile
>
> Twice Little Sixteen
> Twice Little Sixteen
> Back from the store at midnight
> with her moisturizing cream
> Twice Sweet, Twice Petite
> Twice Little Sixteen

Romantic (and social) confusion is the theme of "You Make Me Feel So":

> You make me feel so I don't know what to do
> You make me feel so I don't know just where to go
> Bowling or crazy
> Hell or Ohio

Great dance music doesn't require sophisticated lyrics, and jaded hipster sentiments, though witty, don't carry much heartfelt emotion. The real soul and substance of *That Unhinged Thing* lies in artfully woven musical textures and superb instrumental work.

Lead vocals are by Cebar and Robyn Pluer. Having shared the stage for more than six years at the time of this recording, their duets have a pleasing, telepathic quality for the most part. The exceptions are the shrill vocal rave-up, "Ain't Gonna Get You" and a somewhat weak vocal on the hard-sell "Build It On Up". These exceptions are minor, indeed; the overall strength and originality of the album more than compensates.

Band personnel includes Juli Wood, alto sax; Paul Scher, tenor sax; Rob Gjersoe, guitar and slide guitar; Alan Anderson, bass; and Randy Baugher, drums, with help from other musicians.

Eileen Fitzgerald is a senior editor with University Publications in Madison.

Book Notes

Someone once described Wisconsin as the "writingest" state in the nation. That may or may not be true. It is true, unfortunately, that we cannot provide full reviews for all of the publications sent to us for consideration. Instead, we offer these "book notes." In some instances, postage charges and sales tax must be added to the prices listed. Editor.

POETRY

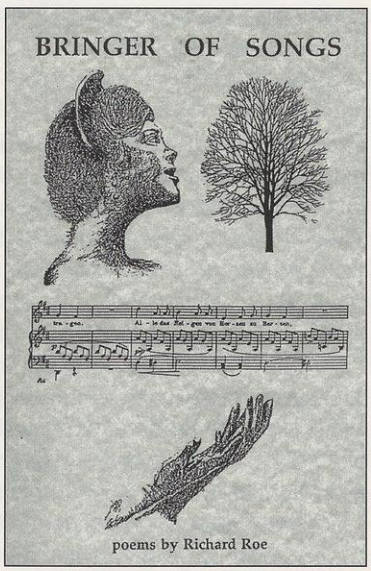
THE LOOK OF THINGS by Henri Cole. Alfred A. Knopf, 1995. $20.00 hardcover. 71 pages. O–679–43352–X.

Cole, who was born in Japan, attended school in Wisconsin and is at present a Briggs-Copeland Lecturer in Poetry at Harvard.

A MAN IN PIECES by Karl Elder. Prickly Pear Press (1402 Mimosa Pass, Cedar Park, TX 78613), 1994. $10.00 soft cover. 67 pages. 0–98834–024–6.

Elder is professor of creative writing at Lakeland College in Sheboygan and lives in Howards Grove. He has published several collections of poems and also writes fiction. He received the Lucien Stryk Award for Poetry.

BRINGER OF SONGS by Richard Roe. Fireweed Press (order from the author, 1703 N. High Point Rd., Middleton, WI 53562), 1994. $6.00 soft cover. 54 pages. 1–878660–13–6.



Roe, who has lived in Wisconsin since 1966, is a research analyst for the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau. This is his second published collection of poems.

RT. 4 BARABOO by Mike O'Connell. Hugger Mugger Publishing (E10469 Sunset Road, Baraboo, WI 53913; 608/356–5431), 1994. $10.00 soft cover. 62 pages, illustrated with old maps. 0–9640408–0–8.

Former school teacher O'Connell is a farmer, essayist, and poet who is a "tireless champion of the family farm and sustainable agriculture." His poems reflect his love of life in the heartland.

PLASTERING THE CRACKS by Arthur Madson. Midwest Poetry Review (P.O. Box 4776, Rock Island, IL 61201), 1993. $5.00 soft cover. 30 pages.

BLUE-EYED BOY by Arthur Madson. Lake Shore Publishing (373 Ramsay Road, Deerfield, IL 60015), 1993. $7.95 soft cover. 60 pages. 0–941363–13–9.

Madson taught English and has lived in Whitewater for thirty-six years. He is a frequent contributor to the *Wisconsin Academy Review*, and his work has appeared in numerous journals. A previous collection of poems, *Coming Up Sequined*, was published by Fireweed Press.

THE ALCOTT FAMILY ARRIVES by Ann Struthers. The Coe Review Press (Dept. of English, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402), 1993. $10.00 soft cover. 79 pages. 0–9636959–0–8.

In fifty-four poems, Academy member Struthers writes about those nineteenth-century "literary and political revolutionaries" who gathered around Ralph Waldo Emerson. Subjects includes such familiar New England characters as Hawthorne, Longfellow, Fuller (Ossoli), Stowe, Dickinson, Whittier, Jewett, Melville, and Thoreau.

FICTION

THE MEMBER-GUEST by Clint McCown. Doubleday, 1995. $20.

McCown, who is chair of the creative writing program at Beloit College, has assembled a number of related but independent stories for this collection. All involve people somehow connected with a small-town golf tournament and include such characters as the pro, a singer from a local bar, various husbands, wives, businessmen, and other townspeople. Most of these stories have appeared previously in literary journals. In 1976 McCown received the Germaine Bree Book Award for his first book of poetry, and he received the prestigious American Fiction Prize twice, in 1991 and 1993. In addition to teaching and writing, McCown edits the *Beloit Fiction Journal*.

LIVES OF WISCONSIN WOMEN

ON WISCONSIN WOMEN: WORKING FOR THEIR RIGHTS FROM SETTLEMENT TO SUFFRAGE by Genevieve G. McBride with foreword by Paul S. Boyer. The University of Wisconsin Press (114 N. Murray St., Madison, WI 53715–1199; 608/262–6438), 1994. $19.95 soft cover. 352 pages, illustrated. 0–299–14004–0. Also available in hard cover, $43.00.

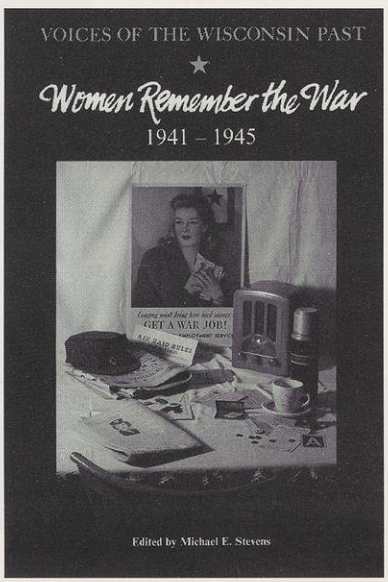
McBride, an assistant professor of mass communication at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, has traced the role early Wisconsin women played in reform movements. She writes about women in Wisconsin politics, with special attention given to outstanding women journalists who helped achieve victory in the battle for suffrage.

WOMEN IN POLICING by Jocelyn Riley. Her Own Words (P.O. Box 5264, Madison, WI 53705; 608/271–7083), 1994. Video, $95.00 including public performance rights. 15 minutes.

This is the fifteenth video in Riley's series on women and the second in the series on women in nontraditional careers. This latest video features discussion by six women police officers who specialize in different areas. The first video in this series, "Women in Construction," was one of sixteen titles placed on the American Library Association's 1995 list of Selected Films and Videos for Young Adults.

WOMEN REMEMBER THE WAR 1941–1945. Michael E. Stevens, editor. State Historical Society of Wisconsin (816 State St., Madison, WI 53706–1499; 608/264–6400), 1993. $7.95 soft cover. 157 pages, illustrated. 0–87020–272–3.

This book, which is part of the "Voices of the Wisconsin Past" series, offers episodes from the daily lives of Wisconsin women during World War II using material taken from letters, diaries, newspapers, and interviews. Thirty women from both urban and rural settings reveal their conflicts and perspectives.



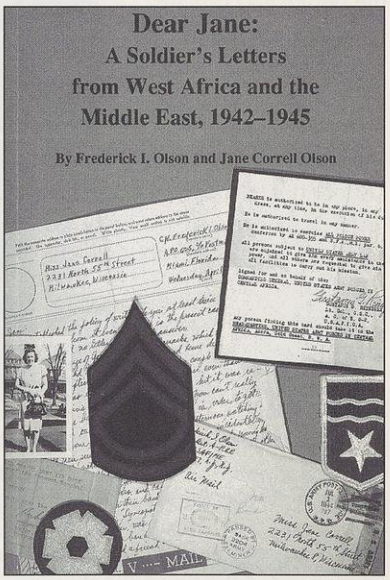
HISTORY/SOCIOLOGY

CITIZEN JEFFERSON: THE WIT AND WISDOM OF AN AMERICAN SAGE by John P. Kaminski. Madison House Publishers (P.O. Box 3100, Madison, WI 53704; 608/244–6210), 1994. $14.95 hard cover. 144 pages. 0–945612–35–4.

This book is a collection of quotations from Jefferson's personal correspondence and private papers and provides a fine glimpse into the character of this brilliant statesman. Kaminski is director for The Center for the Study of the American Constitution at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and is editor of the multi-volume *Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*.

DEAR JANE: A SOLDIER'S LETTERS FROM WEST AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, 1942–1945 by Frederick I. Olson and Jane Correll Olson. Milwaukee County Historical Society (910 N. Old World 3rd St., Milwaukee, WI 53203; 414/273–8288), 1994. $11.95 soft cover. 189 pages, illustrated. 0–938076–13–2.

This collection is based on more than 350 letters written by Fred Olson to his future wife, Jane Correll, during the forty months he served in World War II. In addition to accounts of day–to–day happenings, Olson also provided thumb-nail criticisms of the many movies he saw. A historian, Olson has long been a contributing member of the Milwaukee community and served twice as the president of the Milwaukee County Historical Society.

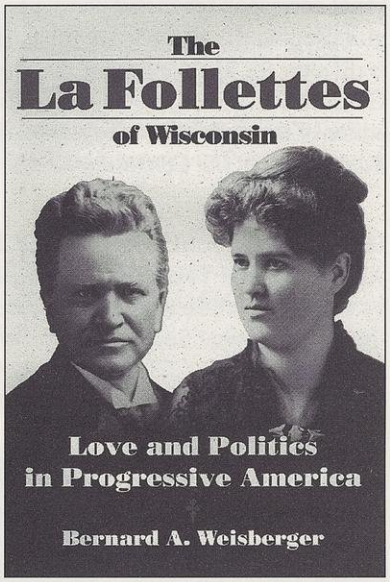


THOMAS JEFFERSON by Norman K. Risjord. Madison House Publishers (P.O. Box 3100, Madison, WI 53704; 608/244–6210), 1994. $27.95 hard cover. 0–945612–38–9. $11.95 soft cover. 0–945612–39–7. 224 pages, illustrated.

This book is the first in Madison House's new "American Profiles" series. The author, who is general editor of the series, is emeritus professor of history at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He has written other books relating to early America as well as college and high school textbooks. In

this sketch, Risjord addresses many of the questions surrounding Jefferson's life, ideology, and rhetoric.

THE LA FOLLETTES OF WISCONSIN by Bernard A. Weisberger. The University of Wisconsin Press (114 N. Murray St., Madison, WI 53715; 608/262–6438), 1994. $29.95 hard cover. 384 Pages, illustrated. 0–299–14130–6.



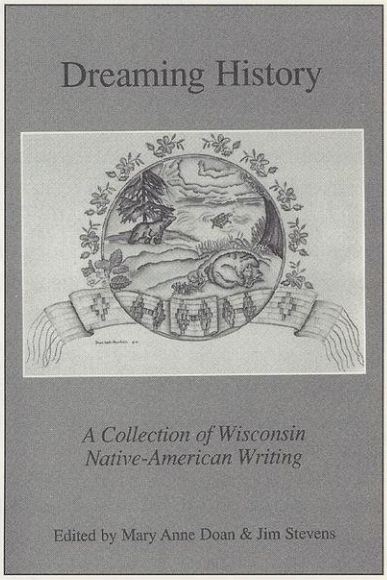
Weisberger has written many books about history and is the author of textbooks, reviews, journal, and encyclopedia articles. He writes a column for *American Heritage* magazine and has served as historical adviser and scriptwriter for films (Ken Burns) and television (Bill Moyers). In this most recent book he explores the public and private lives of Robert and Belle La Follette and their children and provides a portrait of the Progressive movement. During the research process, the author used La Follette family letters as his "main quarry of material" and the story is told, he says, "primarily out of their own pens."

NATIVE AMERICAN

SUSTAINING THE FOREST, THE PEOPLE, AND THE SPIRIT edited by Denise Sweet and J.D. Whitney. College of the Menominee Nation Press (P.O. Box 1179, Keshena, WI 54135; 715/799–4921), 1995. 38 pages soft cover.

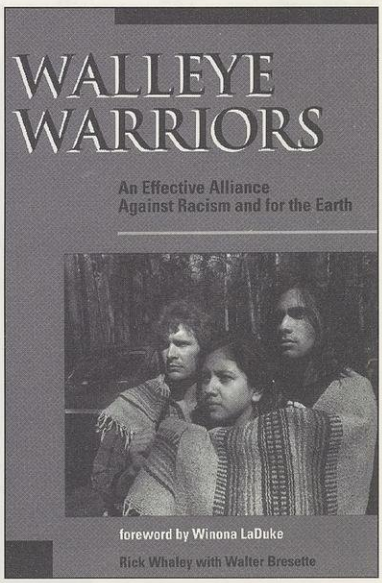
This is an anthology of poems and poetic prose by ten writers who attended the first annual writers' conference sponsored by the Menominee Nation and its college. During the intellectual exchange, it became apparent that *community* was an essential source of inspiration for writers; also that the great 350-year-old "grandfather hemlocks and grandmother cedars" which stand in the Menominee forests are a vital part of that community. The pieces in this collection reflect the inspiration of those writers who came into that circle during the summer of 1994.

DREAMING HISTORY: A COLLECTION OF WISCONSIN NATIVE-AMERICAN WRITING edited by Mary Anne Doan and Jim Stevens. Prairie Oak Press (821 Prospect Place, Madison, WI 53703), 1995. $10.95 soft cover. 120 pages. 1–879483–26–2.



Writers representing a wide range of Native Americans living in Wisconsin, including Anishinabe, Oneida, Cree, and Oglala Lakota, contributed to this collection of stories, poems, and memoirs. Familiar names, such as Kimberly Blaeser, Ellen Kort, and Jim Stevens, appear as well as the names of emerging writers who still "hold on to the magic of their ancestors."

WALLEYE WARRIORS: AN EFFECTIVE ALLIANCE AGAINST RACISM AND FOR THE EARTH by Rick Whaley with Walter Bresette; foreword by Winona LaDuke. New Society Publishers (4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143; 215/382–6543), 1994. $17.95 soft cover. 272 pages, illustrated. 0–86571–257–3.



The authors, who live on the Red Cliff Chippewa reservation in Bayfield County, are co-founders of the Witness for Nonviolence and the Midwest Treaty Network. *Walleye Warriors* documents the experiences and accomplishments of the multiracial alliance formed to protect the traditional Native American culture of northern Wisconsin. Included is a brief history of the Anishinabe (Chippewa) tribe, a comparison of racism as experienced by Native Americans and African Americans, an analysis of the modern anti-Indian movement in the United States, a bibliography, an

organization contact list, and much more. In the words of Walter Bresette, "It is a tale that speaks to other violence, other struggles, other similar forces, where people and earth are victimized . . . it is also a tale of ancient voices resonating from the past through the rootedness of today's Native people."

ENVIRONMENT/CONSERVATION

THE HEART OF JOHN MUIR'S WORLD: WISCONSIN, FAMILY, AND WILDERNESS DISCOVERY by Millie Stanley. Prairie Oak Press (821 Prospect Place, Madison, WI 53703; 608/255–2288), 1995. $16.95 soft cover. 320 pages, illustrated. 1–879483–22–X.

The author, who lives not far from Muir's Marquette County homesite, Fountain Lake Farm (now a National Historic Landmark), examines Muir's life within the context of his personal relationships based on correspondence with family and friends. Muir was keenly appreciative of the Wisconsin mid-nineteenth-century wilderness and carried that early influence with him throughout his productive life.

THE TIMBERWOLF IN WISCONSIN: THE DEATH AND LIFE OF A MAJESTIC PREDATOR by Richard P. Thiel with foreword by L. David Mech. The University of Wisconsin Press (114 N. Murray St., Madison, WI 53715; 608/262–6438), 1994. $17.95 soft cover. 253 pages, illustrated. 0–299–13944–1. Also available in hard cover, $45.00.

The author, an educator for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, became interested in the timberwolf after learning as a teenager that the last known wolf in Wisconsin had been killed in 1958. He began a study of the animal's history and biology as well as the conservation politics which played a part in both its disappearance and, eventually, its reappearance. Thiel, who lives in Tomah, is chair of the DNR wolf recovery plan and is coordinator of the DNR's Sandhill Outdoor Skills Center in Babcock. Mech, Minnesota wolf biologist who wrote the foreword, is the author of *The Wolves of Isle Royale*.

HUNTING/FISHING

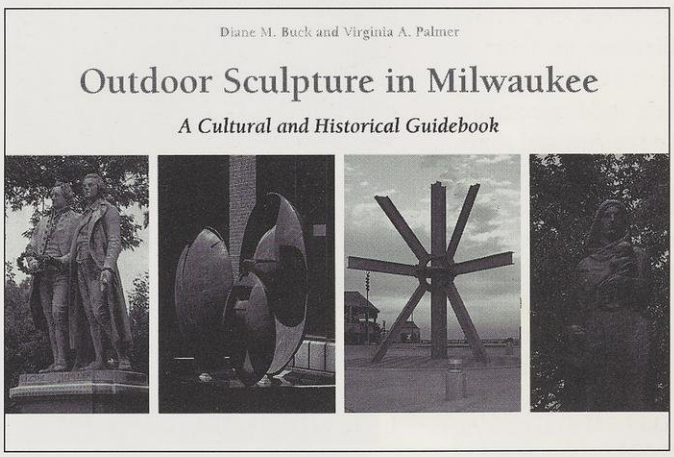
KING OF THE MOUNTAIN: SPORTING STORIES by Pete Fromm. Stackpole Books (5067 Ritter Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055), 1994. $19.95 hard cover. 212 pages. 0–8117–0937–X.

Themes of fishing and hunting—the sporting life—and themes of human relationships run through these eighteen stories by award-winning author Fromm, whose short fiction has appeared in the *Wisconsin Academy Review*. His 1993 book, *Indian Creek Chronicles: A Winter in the Bitterroot Wilderness*, was chosen by the Wisconsin Library Association for an Outstanding Achievement honor. From, who grew up in Milwaukee, now lives in Montana.

HARVEST HOME: A WISCONSIN OUTDOOR ANTHOLOGY edited by Ted Rulseh. Lost River Press (P.O. Box 1381, Woodruff, WI 54568), 1993. 221 pages, illustrated, hard cover. 1–883755–00–X.

This anthology includes the stories and essays of twenty-six writers, many of them familiar names (Hamerstrom, Vukelich, Isherwood) and others just entering the world of publishing. Some are no longer with us (Leopold, Ellis, Derleth, MacQuarrie). While male contributors prevail, women are represented both through their writing and art. Numerous illustrations by various Wisconsin artists complement the text.

GUIDE BOOKS



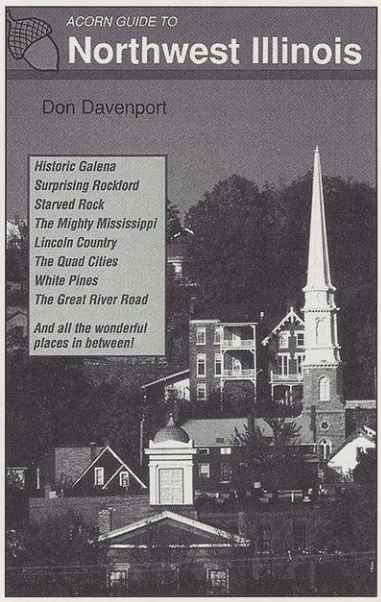
OUTDOOR SCULPTURE IN MILWAUKEE: A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL GUIDEBOOK by Diane M. Buck and Virginia A. Palmer with foreword by Frederick I. Olson. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin (816 State St., Madison, WI 53706; 608/264–6400), 1995. 210 pages, illustrated. 0–87020–276–6.

Divided into four areas (Downtown, South Side, North Side, and the Bradley Sculpture Garden), the book covers Milwaukee sculpture large and small, abstract and representational—a total of ninety-seven outdoor works created over the span of more than a century.

ACORN GUIDE TO DOOR COUNTY by Kristin Visser. Prairie Oak Press (821 Prospect Place, Madison, WI 53703 608/255–2288), 1994. $9.95 soft cover. 110 pages. 1–879483–17–3.

This is a practical guide to Door County with informative mini-essays on local history. Selected lodging, eateries, and entertainment sites are listed; a helpful "For More Information" paragraph concludes each section. Visser also wrote *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School in Wisconsin* and was co-author of *Wisconsin With Kids*, both published by Prairie Oak Press.

ACORN GUIDE TO NORTHWEST ILLINOIS by Don Davenport. Same publishing information as above, except 148 pages. 1–879483–14–9.

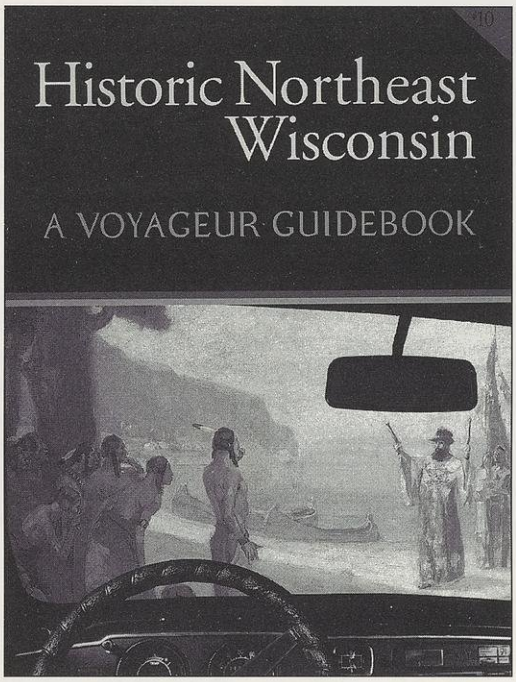


Veteran travel writer Davenport has written four previous books, including *In Lincoln's Footsteps*, also published by Prairie Oak Press. In his guide to Northwest Illinois, he describes "off-the-beaten-path restaurants and stores, dusty antique shops, romantic inns and B&Bs, small-town festivals" from Galena to Peoria and "wonderful places in between!" Davenport received the 1989 Mark Twain Award of the Midwest Travel Writers Association for the year's best travel book.

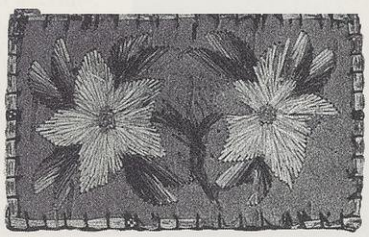
WASHINGTON ISLAND GUIDEBOOK by William H. and Charles J. Olson. Jackson Harbor Press (Route 1, Box 107AA, Washington Island, WI 54246; 414/847–2463), 1994. $4.98 soft cover. 56 pages, illustrated. 0–9640210–0–5.

History, fishing, hiking, and biking attract visitors each summer to this Door County island, which expands to many times its "off-season" population of approximately 650 residents. While farms dot the island, tourism has become the major industry of this special place located "north of the tension line." The authors, father and son who live on the island, have provided helpful maps for care-free exploration.

HISTORIC NORTHEAST WISCONSIN: A VOYAGEUR GUIDEBOOK. Dean W. O'Brien, editor. Tenth anniversary issue of *Voyageur* magazine. Brown County Historical Society (P.O. Box 8085, Green Bay, WI 54308, 414/465–2446), 1994. $10.00, large soft cover. 160 pages, illustrated. 0–9641499–0–7.



The guide covers more than 650 sites in the seventeen counties located in the northeastern corner of the state. Generously illustrated with photos, drawings, and maps, the book provides practical information, essays, local history, and quotes from long-ago travelers. The quality and treatment of photos is especially pleasing, making this guide as appealing to armchair travelers as those on wheels or on foot. Our best wishes to a fellow journal now in its eleventh year of outstanding quality publishing!



The Making of *Get Real! Get Scientific!*

by Heidi Espenscheid-Nibbelink

For the past decade the Wisconsin Academy has developed and promoted programs that encourage crossing boundaries in science. Examples of such programs are Project FIRST (Field Involvement: Research by Science Teachers), which get teachers out of the classroom and into the field as working scientists, and Kaleidoscope, *which uses children's literature to help integrate science into elementary school curricula. These kinds of programs take the study of science out of the lab and textbook and into the real world.*

The partnership created by the Wisconsin Academy and Wisconsin Public Television through the children's television show *Get Real!* takes another step across those artificial boundaries. *Get Real!* is a fast-paced, appealing show aimed at children ages ten through twelve. It is a Wisconsin show, hosted by a pair of young teenagers, who visit different locations in the state, and adolescent reporters, who interview Wisconsin youth succeeding at everything from playing the cello to white-water kayaking. *Get Real!*'s primary purpose is to inspire young people by letting them see their peers trying, thinking, enjoying, and succeeding in many areas of life.

Get Real! is the creation of James Steinbach, director of programming and production for Wisconsin Public Television and executive producer of *Get Real!*. Steinbach also created and produced the highly acclaimed PBS family science show *Newton's Apple*. Together with co-executive producer Kathy Bissen, Steinbach set out to create a high-quality show for children who have grown beyond the age of watching *Sesame Street* and provide them with a balance of content, entertainment, and messages that encourage them to explore their world at an age when they have a wealth of natural curiosity.

Enter the Wisconsin Academy. Over two years ago, seeking ways to understand and live up to its mission of disseminating information on the sciences, arts, and letters in the electronic age, Richard Daniels, as associate director of the Academy, approached Wisconsin Public Television as a logical place to begin reaching a wider audience. What began as a proposal from the Academy to sponsor a children's "Poetry Minute" evolved into Wisconsin Public Television's turning to the Academy for assistance with a new show it was developing for children. Steinbach was looking to add science content to the show because he saw it as a natural complement to the show's general-interest material.

Shannon Lowe, Georgia O'Keeffe Middle School, Madison; and Asa Derks, Dodgeville Middle School, are co-hosts for the science segments of Get Real!

The result is *Get Real!*, a role-modeling show that attempts to reinforce the value of children's ideas, questions, skills, and abilities. It is exactly this type of modeling and reinforcement that is needed to keep school children engaged in science. Research shows that by middle-school age, girls in particular already see science and math as areas where they cannot succeed. And, in an era of increasing population growth and economic and environmental pressures, children need sound science education so they can grow up to become informed, scientifically literate citizens capable of dealing wisely with future challenges.

Steinbach knew he wanted to convince children that science does not have to be intimidating, or too difficult, or something that only white-coated people in labs can do. He wanted to help students understand that science is around them in their everyday lives. Again, *Get Real!* seemed a natural vehicle for generating enthusiasm about science; because of the show's Wisconsin focus, children see science happening in places they recognize, done by people with whom they share a connection.

The type of advice Wisconsin Public Television sought was advice the Academy was well-positioned to give, thanks to LeRoy Lee's determined statewide efforts toward teacher-enhancement projects during his tenure as executive director. Lee agreed that there should be a "science strand" within *Get Real!* which would draw children's attention to the science concepts in their everyday activities, help children articulate and examine their own beliefs, affirm the value and necessity of asking questions, and direct children toward resources beyond their science textbooks— teachers, science centers, libraries.

Steinbach and Bissen asked for scientific content advice from Sister M. Gertrude Hennesey and Kathryn Lee, two past-presidents of the Wisconsin Elementary and Middle Level Science Teachers' organization; Gerry Wheeler of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; and a panel of others, including Peter Hewson, Al Hovey, Jr., Richard Hudson, LeRoy Lee, and Robert Lovely. Based on the experts' advice on content and Wisconsin Public Television's knowledge of the possibilities and limitation of communicating through the medium of television, the science strand developed as three major components involving feature stories, "pop-out" segments, and integrated science content.

Feature stories lasting three to five minutes focus on an entirely science-related topic—for example, the story of two girls who attended NASA's space camp, revealing what they experienced there and how it affected their goals. Science pop-out segments follow a general story; a break in the action occurs while the host explains the science concepts involved aided by graphic representations. For example, a science pop-out on the concept of collision time comes within a story on ski jumping. Science is integrated throughout the show by including science-related books in the regular book review feature, or including science and technology questions in a "Where in Wisconsin?" quiz.

An important component of the proposal funded by the National Science Foundation called for adapting the science-related video segments for classroom use and the production of a teacher's guide. The author of the guide, Gary G. Lake, a science project director for the Wisconsin Academy, has had extensive experience working with teachers as a workshop-presenter, program director, lecturer, and author of educational materials.

The first task in creating the teacher's guide was to determine which portions of the thirteen shows were suitable for use in the special video to accompany the guide. Most story segments in each half-hour episode are less than five minutes long, so it was necessary to identify a unified theme and determine which segments fit the theme and at the same time fit it all together in a visually coherent way. Once themes were identified and video footage was selected and compiled on three hours' worth of tape, Lake designed hands-on classroom activities to expand and extend the science concepts in the video material and proceeded to write the accompanying text.

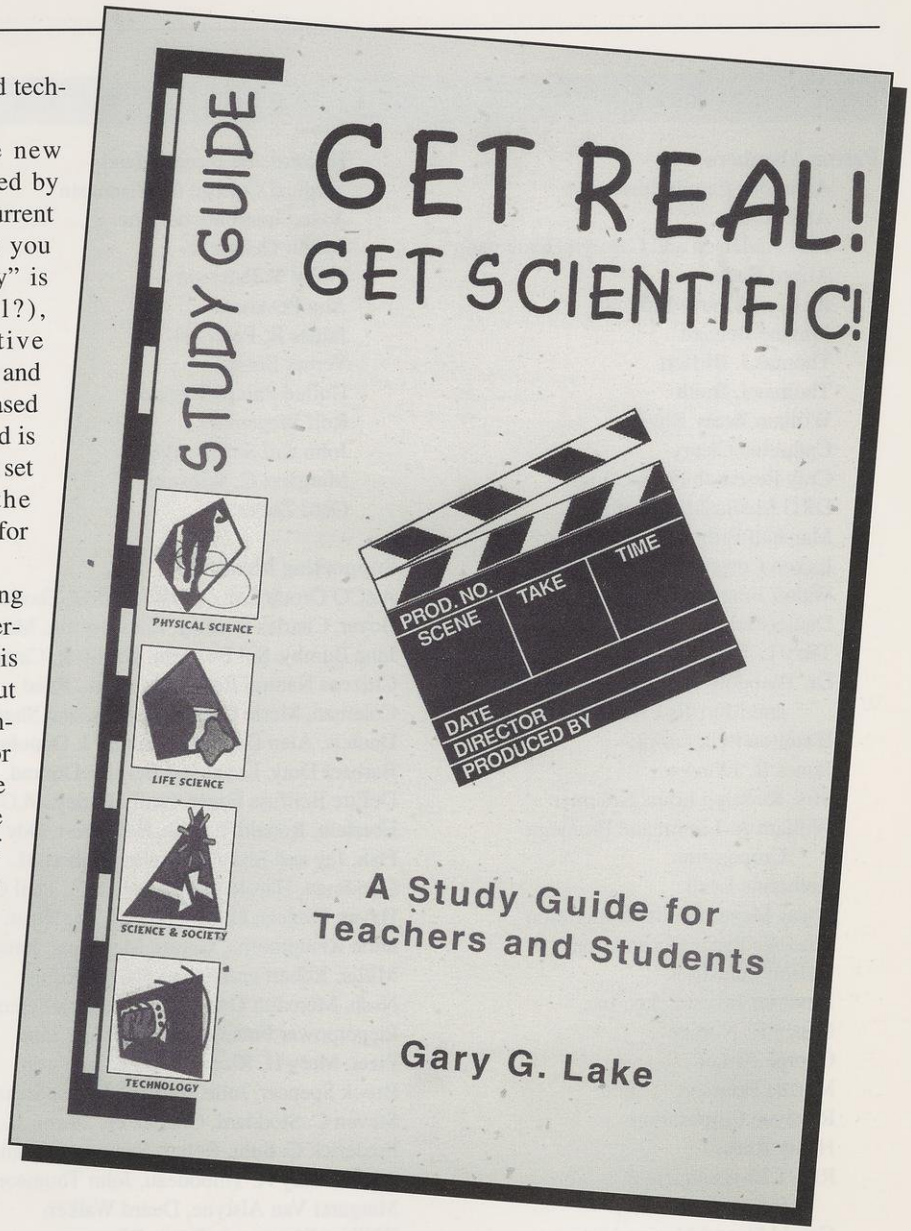
The goal of the *Get Real!* teacher's guide was to produce a high-quality piece that paid tribute to the professionalism of teachers while at the same time appealing to children (the activity pages are designed to be photocopied and distributed to classes). Wisconsin Academy graphics designer Marty Lindsey accomplished this using the Academy's desktop publishing capabilities.

The result of these efforts is *Get Real! Get Scientific!*, a forty-two-page book divided into sections on physical science,

life science, science and society, and science and technology.

The subject divisions correlate to the new National Science Education Standards produced by the National Research Council. The topics are current and appealing: "The Physics of Sports" (can you explain why the concept of "center of gravity" is important to the sport of football?), "Thermoregulation and Nutrition," "Active Recycling and Renewable Energy," and "Radio and Television." Lake's approach is lively, firmly based on current research on teaching and learning, and is in keeping with the goals for science education set forth by the American Association for the Advancement of Science Goals 2000 program for science literacy.

Activities for students range from wrapping ice cubes in different substances in order to determine the most efficient insulating material (this accompanies a video segment about a Boy Scout troop on an ice-fishing trip) to simulating a thunderstorm in the classroom as a springboard for discussion about sound and light waves. In the "Active Recycling" section, students are instructed to chart the decomposition rates of slices of bread (garbage) under various conditions: left on the windowsill, inside a sealed plastic bag with a little moisture, inside a plastic bag placed in the refrigerator, and on the moist soil of classroom potplants. An exercise such as this allows students to see for themselves the challenges faced by communities with overcrowded landfills where conditions prevent the natural decomposition of garbage.



In his introduction to the *Get Real!* teacher's guide, author Lake comments:

> I have tried to avoid making the guide a series of worksheets the answers to which can be gleaned from the television program. Rather, the goal has been to create a buddy system where the information and activities of this guide and the visual and informational enrichment provided by the video are partners, synergistically enhancing and clarifying the subject matter and processes, thereby making teaching and learning in these subject matter areas vastly more pleasant and more powerful than either the guide or the video could do separately. Just as *Get Real!* has been a partnership of commercial and public broadcasters, this guide with the video specifically edited to accompany it also represents a partnership.

Copies of *Get Real! Get Scientific!*
can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, 9" x 12" envelope with $1.70 in postage to
Get Real! Get Scientific!,
Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters,
1922 University Avenue,
Madison, WI 53705.

Heidi Espenscheid Nibbelink is a project coordinator and an administrative assistant at the Wisconsin Academy and editor of WESTword, *the newsletter for the Wisconsin Elementary and Middle Level Science Teachers.*

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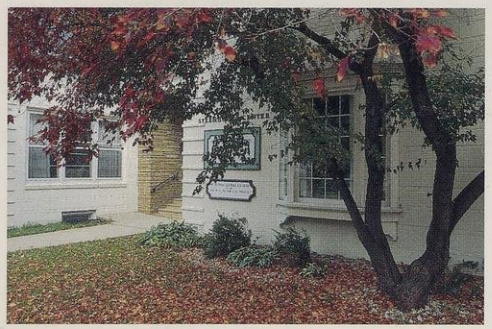

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