

Summer 1988

Ballast Quarterly Review, v03n4, Summer 1988

The Art Academy of Cincinnati

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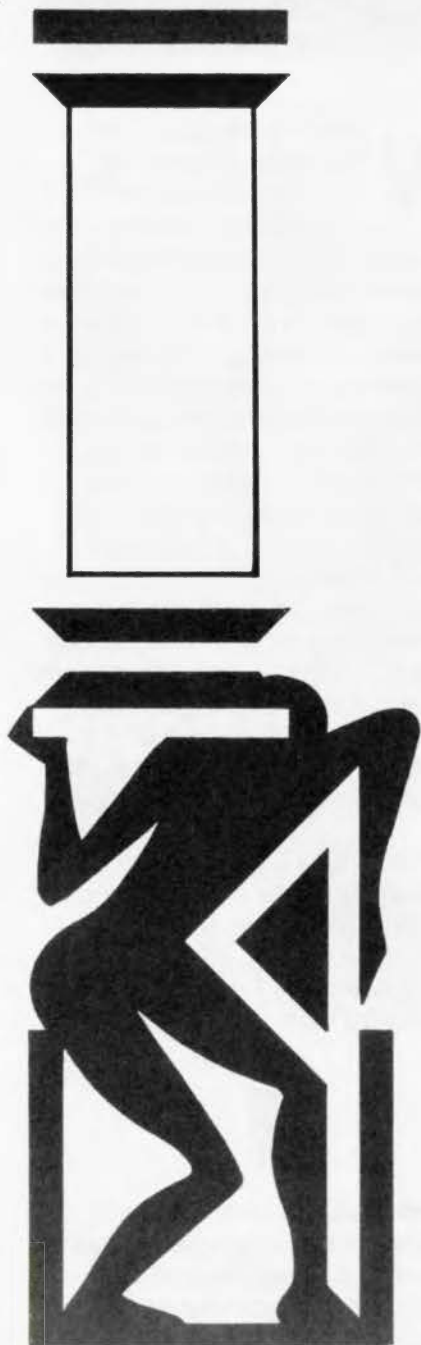
Edison had a summer residence of which he was very proud. He enjoyed showing visitors around his property, pointing out the various labor-saving devices. At one point it was necessary to pass through a turnstile in order to take the main path back to the house. Considerable effort was needed to move the turnstile. A guest asked Edison why it was that, with all the other clever gadgets around, he had such a heavy turnstile. Edison replied, "Well, you see, everyone who pushes the turnstile around pumps eight gallons of water into the tank on my roof."

Edmund Fuller, *2500 Anecdotes for All Occasions* (New York: Crown, 1943). Suggested by Hugo Trollope, a reader from Greencastle, Indiana.

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Steven Wright: I used to work in a fire hydrant factory. You couldn't park anywhere near the place.

Willem DeKooning: I think of myself as a really talented house painter who got a little excited.



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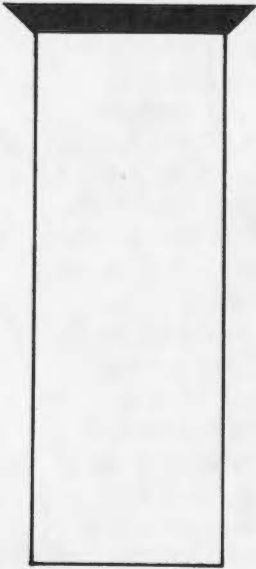
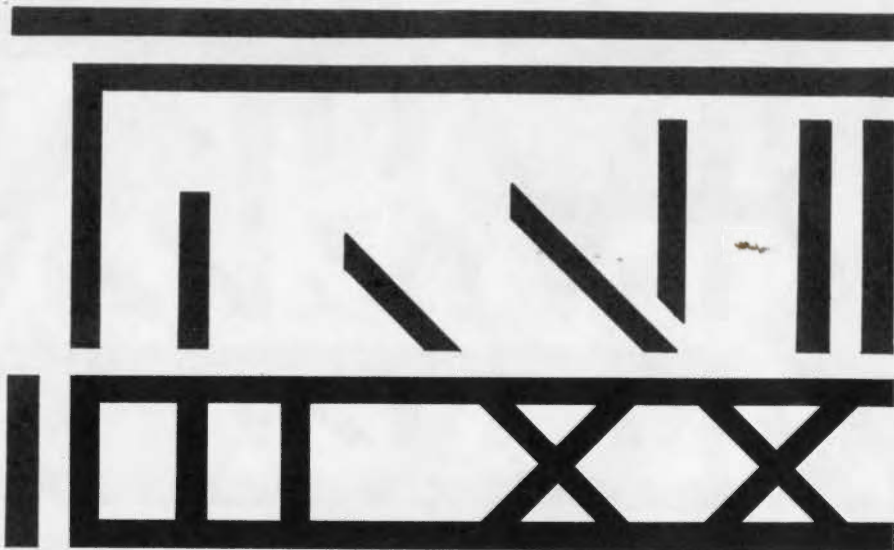
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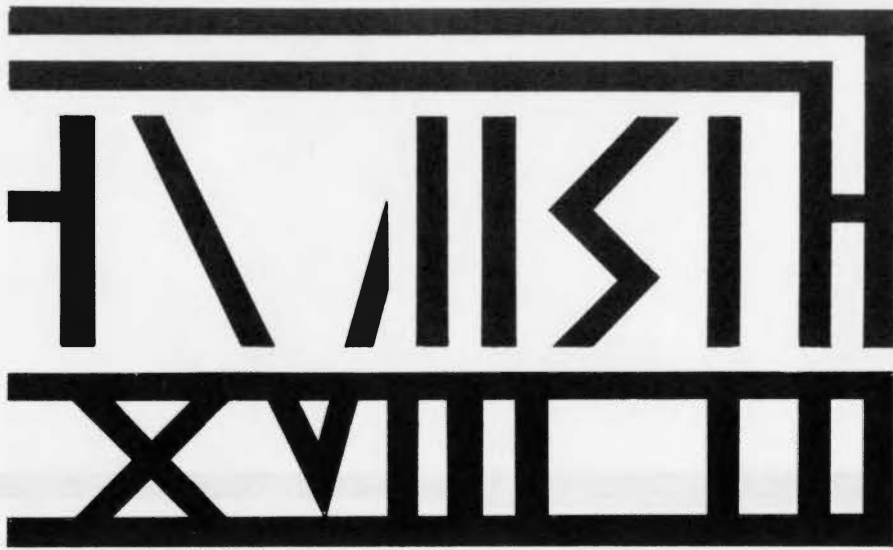


When I arrived in Florence, I hoped to find my dear father, and knocking at the door, a hump-backed woman in a fury showed her face at the window; she drove me off with a torrent of abuse, screaming that the sight of me was a consumption to her. To this misshapen hag I shouted: "Ho! Tell me, cross-grained hunchback, is there no other face to see here but your ugly visage?" "No, and bad luck to you." Whereto I answered in a loud voice: "In less than two hours more may it never vex us more!" Attracted by this dispute, a neighbor put her head out, from whom I learned that my father and all the people in the house had died of the plague.

Benevenuto Cellini, *The Autobiography of Benevenuto Cellini*, (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), pp. 89-90. Suggested by Darius Stanwyck, a reader from Dalton, Georgia.



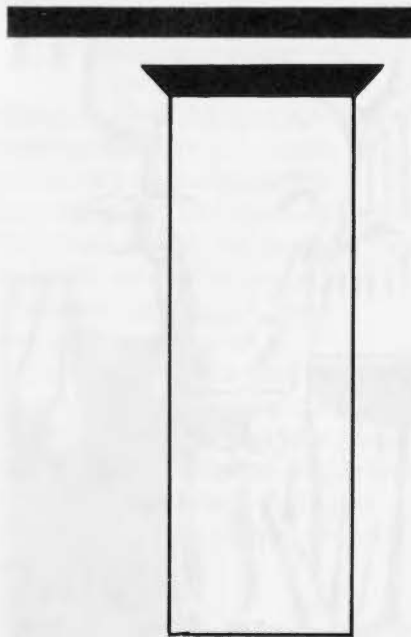
Mark Twain: Names are not always what they seem. The common Welsh name Bzjxlwcp is pronounced Jackson.



Scientists do what writers do...The natural biologist walks through a city park, across a suburban lawn, past an open shopping mall, and is half-consciously wondering: Why two leaves instead of three? Why pink flowers instead of white? Why does the plant turn this way instead of that way? Such rumination goes on without end in the scientist's mind, a continuous accompaniment to the rhythm of daily life. Whatever a scientist is doing--reading, cooking, talking, playing--science thoughts are always there at the edge of the mind. They are the way the world is taken in; all that is seen is filtered through an ever-present scientific musing.

Vivian Gornick, *Women in Science: Portraits from a World in Transition* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), pp. 38-39.

Dwight D. Eisenhower (while watching squirrels on the White House lawn): They have a freedom I would personally dearly love.



The time had come to go out to dinner. Mimi, for some reason, suggested one of the swankiest Florentine restaurants. We ate well, but we were under constant scrutiny. The fashionable diners and formal waiters looked at Mimi and Grooms with frank amazement. I suddenly noticed that the legitimate split on the side of Mimi's skirt was enlarged by a rent, and her thigh, which was covered with oil paint smudges, exposed itself every time she moved or gestured. Both Mimi and Grooms, who resembled a parrot with his red hair and yellow sweater, were aware of the sensation they caused and bravely tried to ignore the diners and waiters, but once in a while cast angry and moody glances in their direction.

Raphael Soyer (recalling a dinner in Florence with Mimi Gross, daughter of Chaim Gross, and Red Grooms), *Diary of an Artist* (Washington, D.C.: New Republic Books, 1977), p. 38.

An amazing number of creative people have been touched and moved by another person at some point in their lives. It might have been a parent, a grandmother, or very often a teacher. That person has communicated to them a sense of 'you matter' and made them aware of their own intricate worth as a human being.

Bill Moyers, "Sources of Creativity" in *For Members Only: A Newsletter for American Express Cardholders*, November 1982, p. 1.



Grant Wood: "The best ideas I ever had came to me while I was milking a cow." Pen and ink drawing by James Connors, Art Academy of Cincinnati, 1988.

The blood of the poet is what blood banks call "Rh positive"; his is the two-fold Rh of rhyme and rhythm; together they are his rhapsody, his rhaps + ody, his (in Greek) "ode-stitching." In the ballet of words, rhyme is the *pas de deux* of mated contraries; rhythm is Time in leotards.

Peter Viereck, "Strict Wildness: The Biology of Poetry" in *Poets and Writers Magazine* (May/June 1988), p. 8. Suggested by James Vredevoogd, a reader from Edinboro, Pennsylvania.



Steven Wright: I have an existential map. It has "You are here" written all over it.



Arise Evans had a fungous nose, and said, it was revealed to him that the King's hand would cure him, and at the first coming of King Charles II into St. James Park, he kissed the King's hand, and rubbed his nose with it; which disturbed the King, but cured him.

John Aubrey, *Brief Lives and Other Selected Writings* (New York: Scribner, 1949).

In her early twenties she married a man called de Selincourt. Before doing so they had agreed that, as sex was coarse, it should be a platonic marriage, based on a vegetarian diet and on the study of music and literature, but after they had been living together for a few months her husband brought another woman into the house with whom he proceeded to spend his nights while at the same time he switched over from milk and vegetables to beer and beef steaks. Beryl put up with this for a while and then left him.

Gerald Brenan, *Personal Record* (New York: Knopf, 1975), p. 95. Suggested by Daniel Druff, a reader from Sandbox, Nebraska.

Chico Marx: I wasn't kissing her, I was whispering in her mouth.

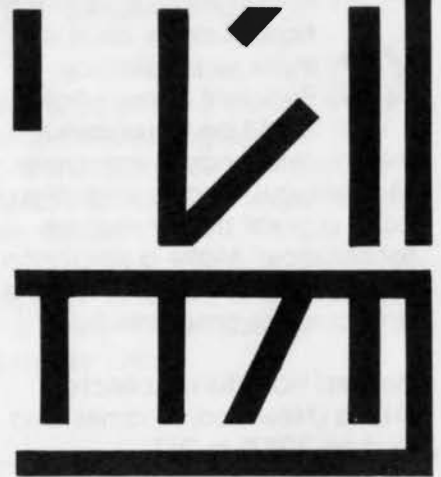
Anais Nin (*The Winter of Artifice*): The imagination is far better at inventing tortures than life because the imagination is a demon within us and it knows where to strike, where it hurts. It knows the vulnerable spot, and life does not, our friends and lovers do not, because seldom do they have the imagination equal to the task.

He planned a practical illustration of the harm alcohol can do. He came into Helgate's sitting room holding a tumbler of neat whiskey in one hand, a piece of liver in the other. Dropping the liver dramatically into the whiskey, he paused for a moment while the meat shrivelled up. "That," he exclaimed, "is what is happening to your liver all the time you drink as you do." Heygate, who was undoubtedly startled by this action, reported himself as replying: "What a shameful waste of liver and whiskey."

Anthony Powell, *Messengers of Day* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 101.

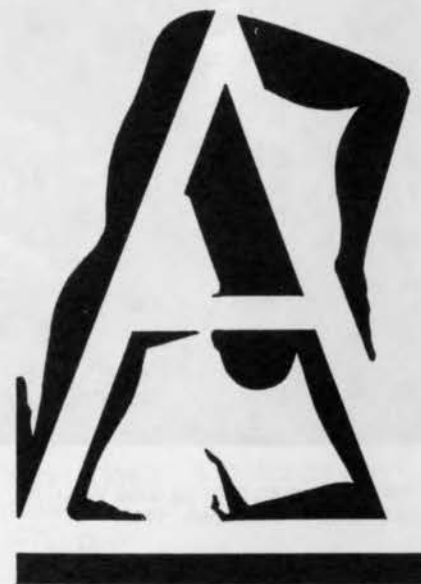
You are brilliant and subtle if you come from Iowa and really strange and you live as you live and you are always very well taken care of if you come from Iowa.

Gertrude Stein, *Everybody's Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1937), p. 224.



No one has ever enjoyed science as much as Einstein... Scientific problems, you might say, simply melted in his mouth...When he spoke of relativity, you could see it. The formulae were no longer abstract, they came to life through Einstein's gestures. One could almost say he did gymnastics while lecturing.

Dennis Gabor (*inventor of holography*), interviewed in Istvan Kardos, ed., *Scientists Face to Face* (Gyoma, Hungary: Corvina, 1978), p. 82.

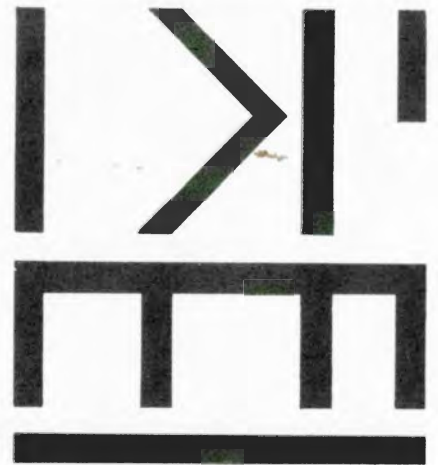


Charles Eames, on a visit to India, was asked by President Nehru what could be done about India's deficiency in computer technology. Eames said, "You have a great *papier mache* technology. Make a simulation of a computer in *papier mache* and prepare programs for it."

Richard Hamilton, *Collected Words* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1982), p. 267.



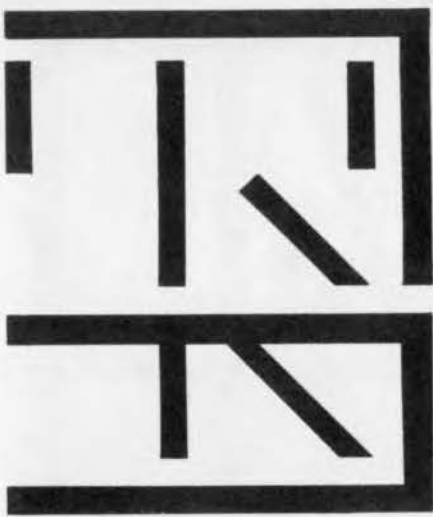
"Beau", linoleum print by **Gino Valle**, Art Academy of Cincinnati, 1988.



Pa was quite sudden sometimes. One morning when it was cold and snowing, he told me to bring in the wood while he went out to milk and to feed the stock. When he came in and saw the woodbox still bare, he asked me why I had not got the wood. I told him I couldn't get my boots on. He grabbed me with one hand and my boots with the other and threw me and the boots out the door. The snow on the ground sure made the boots go on easy. They had to stop me when the woodbox was full and some was piled on the floor.

Bruce Siberts in Walker D. Wyman, editor, *Nothing But Prairie and Sky: Life on the Dakota Range in the Early Days* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 7.

Gerald Brennan (*A Life of One's Own*): A life is like a long journey in a train. There is the scenery that rolls by outside and there are the incidents that take place in the carriage.

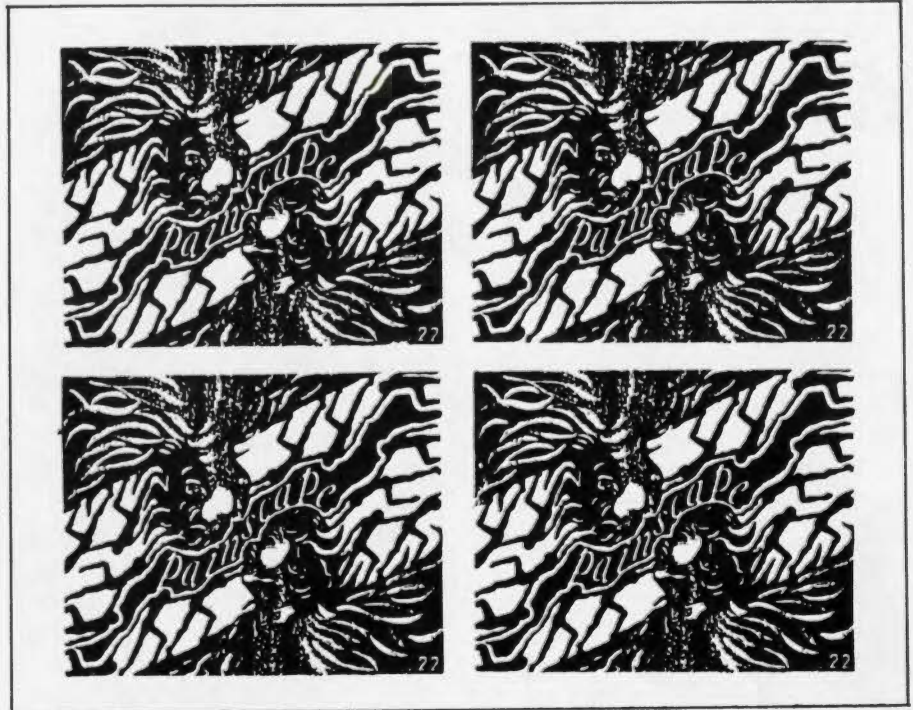


My friends and I made a point of coming to class unprepared and resorted to all sorts of stratagems...I smile when I recall the silly things we did to avoid boredom or provoke teachers who seemed devoid of any sense of humor or genuine interest in us. We would hand in cards with fictitious names made up of Jewish words of highly humorous or scatological character. The teacher would repeat these names in a rising voice, insisting that the individual in question identify himself: "Kishmir N. Tochas, come forward!" The difficulty would be to prevent ourselves from exploding in laughter. The teacher had only to count the cards to realize he was the butt of a prank. He rarely did. One or two tried to identify the culprit by comparing handwriting, but we had anticipated that and used capital letters or disguised script.

Sidney Hook, *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), p. 18.

Perhaps the greatest pleasure I have got from poems that I have written is when I have heard some lines quoted which I have not at once recognized. And I have thought "how good and interesting," before I realized that they are my own.

Stephen Spender, "The Making of a Poem" in *Partisan Review* (Summer 1946).



"Painscape", fictional postage stamp design by **Rosanne Jensen**, Art Academy of Cincinnati, 1988.

Walter Gropius (quoted in Jack Pritchard, *View From a Long Chair*): There are many branches on the Bauhaus tree and on them sit many different kinds of birds.

There are two kinds of snake in Switzerland: adders, or vipers as some people call them, and grass snakes, which are quite harmless. The viper has enough venom to kill a child or a man who is in a poor state of health, but these accidents seldom occur. Actually in the wilds there are many less dangers than in a city. What animal is as dangerous as a taxicab, or another man?

Stuart Cloete, *A Victorian Son* (New York: John Day Company, 1972), p. 84.

When I was three, I began drawing, and my mother, who had wanted to be a dancer, gave me a lot of encouragement. She told me many stories about her life prior to her marriage, when she went to the Jewish People's Institute and mingled with musicians, poets, and other creative people. Throughout my childhood, she told me colorful tales about the creative life, particularly when I was sick in bed, and these stories contributed to my developing interest in art, for, from the time I was young, I wanted to be an artist.

Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower: My Struggle as a Woman Artist* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), p. 3.

We must think of a book as a wedge driven into a man's personal life. A short book would be in and out quickly...A long book, on the other hand, drives in slowly and if only in point of time remains for a while. Instead of cutting and leaving, it allows the mind to rearrange itself to fit around the wedge.

John Steinbeck, *Journal of a Novel* (New York: Viking, 1969), p. 66.

Tom Robbins: The beet was Rasputin's favorite vegetable. You could see it in his eyes.

For my grandmother cleanliness was the first passion. Whenever I stayed, in my first years with her, she bathed me in a zinc tub before the kitchen fire and was always scrubbing me. Once she tried to remove a mole from my nose, thinking it was a speck of tar. For two days, on and off, she worked at it with soap, soda, pumice and grit and hard brushes, exclaiming all the time like Lady Macbeth, while my grandfather growled, "Let it bide, you're spreading his nose all over his face."

V.S. Pritchett, *A Cab at the Door* (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 32. Suggested by Ludlow (Hap) E. Valentine, a reader from Roaming Shores, Ohio.



Walt Disney: I love Mickey Mouse more than any woman I've ever loved.

Jean Cocteau: Tact consists in knowing how far we may go too far.

Talulah Bankhead: I have three phobias which, could I mute them, would make my life as slick as a sonnet, but as dull as ditch water: I hate to go to bed, I hate to get up, and I hate to be alone.

Before Cezanne, every painting was to some extent like a view seen through a window. Courbet had tried to open the window and climb out. Cezanne broke the glass. The room became part of the landscape, the viewer part of the view.

John Berger, *Success and Failure of Picasso* (Hamondsworth, England: Penguin, 1965), pp. 54-55.

David Steinberg: I believe that eating pork makes people stupid.

Polly Adler: Too many cooks spoil the brothel.

W.D. Howells: Some people can stay longer in an hour than others can in a week.

W.A. Clouston: If the human brain were so simple that we could understand it, we would be so simple that we could not.