

Brodine Brodinsky Contest, 1st place

Constance Snyder

FROM THE PEACH ORCHARD

comes a used crate the color of soil,
a perfect foil for this mound
of miniature sunsets swirled
scarlet-gold of a tropic evening,
fragrance rising like a generous spirit,
each dappled planet born of bees'
ravishing, marriage of the elements.

Push aside plans for pies, jam
and cobblers. Take up one
sueded globe of sweetened rain.
Lean over the sink. Press your lips
against velvet. Bite and suck
through silky flesh down
to the pointed, scrotal-patterned
seed so hard it will survive
years of composting. Squeeze
the sweet meat against your tongue
until your eyes close and juices
trickle past your wrist.

Of all this, make an amulet of summer
to slip inside a pocket of your mind.
Carry it with you through December.

Brodine Brodinsky Contest, 2nd place

Nicholas Giosa

Bath, England 1985

Who will read our ruins in reachless years to come,
caress our crumbled dust with gentle feathered combs,
asking what was dear, what heroes were revered -some
perched on gaitless horses and exaggerated tombs ?

Who will sift our stones, when we are long since gone,
lift our tumbled busts to their proper pediments -
though faceless and unnamed, whose victories now unknown -

try from oblivion to reclaim some modest monument ?

Who will sort our bones, many wars from now,
when we are on display in some fine museum –
like pheasants under glass – as they ask to know
from our radioactive dust, from what era did we come ?

To those who touched our wounds, discerned
our hieroglyphic cues, our wanton sorcery,
our assorted fits of folly; learned
what we avidly defended, fared so pitifully;

forbear our fallen totems and our rituals of fear,
as you chase the compass of your own careening years.

Brodine Brodinsky Contest, 3rd place

Patricia Hale

Still Life with Jackie and Unlit Cigarette

It was still too early for the raspberries –
they were all canes and spurs and sour fruit –

so we put off picking and swam in the pond,
sluiced water in and out of our mouths,

trying to grow gills, trying to outwit biology,
then sunned ourselves like snakes on the rocks.

After dinner we snuck into the new houses
they were building down the road from us,

walked the rafters, poked into corners
to see what the workmen left behind.

Didn't find much but crooked nails
and half drunk cokes. We practiced holding

cigarettes and looking cool, but nobody
watched us, nobody knew who we were.

It was nineteen sixty-two, we wore cutoffs
and sleeveless gingham blouses with ruffles.

It was nineteen sixty-two,
and nothing had happened yet, nothing at all.

