DRUM

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One of the art forms they took from us when we came to this strange land was the drum. Here in Amherst we got our DRUM back after great struggle 9 years ago. We are learning how to remember the correct rhythms and we've got it right now. Check us out and let us know if you hear us for we are always in danger of again losing our drum.

Front Cover: John Kendrick
Back Cover: Frank Thornton

DRUM would like to extend its deepest apologies to Fritz Walker for not giving him credit for the fine cover painting on the South African Issue of **DRUM** Vol. 8 No. 1-2, and also to Edward Cohen for his photography on page 43 of that same issue.

Ana Andreu

Drum 1

It is as a rebirth
We now enter the world
Relying upon our own survival skills
We take with us
The Love of our family
But no longer shall we depend on them
And we shall continue to grow
To learn, to change
To live for ourselves
We must be
What we can be
And do
What we can do
For we have formed
Our own goals and expectations
It is as a rebirth

Mary E. Custard

Welcome to the Land of the **DRUM**: A land which is plentiful, jammed with unique thought, and totally for real. Within this issue you shall find the good works of brothers and sisters who are interested in sharing with you the very finest in literary thought and artful images.

This issue of **DRUM** represents the collective efforts of individuals who have come together in a 3 credit course to explore the possibilities of developing a magazine which can best be described as an "informational art form."

The 20 young adults comprising the **DRUM** staff have worked hard and with specialization and cooperation have proven again that undergraduate students can move together to produce works of great quality and lasting value.

Some of the thoughts within these pages echo the spirit of our dear sister Jill Dickenson who is recuperating from an "accident" which is yet to be fully explained. The staff and I felt inspired to be certain that this magazine reflects what Jill detested: mediocrity. **She, as well as we, believe that DRUM shall always be an affront to mediocrity.**

Therefore, I invite you to sit back and share with me the good works of a group of talented students who have made me extremely appreciative of the beauty of our next generation. They have once again convinced me that they too will struggle for answers and solutions to problems which beset all oppressed people. This "informational art form" depicts an artistic strategy—our hope is that you develop yours and carry the spirit on.

Our Best To You

Nelson Stevens
Associate Professor of Art
W.E.B. DuBois Department of
African American Studies
Co-ordinator of **DRUM** Magazine 1977-78
University of Massachusetts/Amherst

ENO

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DRUM

A SELF PORTRAIT:

by Carl Yates

During the Sixties, a second Reconstruction was taking place, that burned across this land, laying claim to the streets that are ours. From inside these revolutionary paces, came the need for documenting the historic occurrences of that time, the ideas, the thoughts, the heroes, the validation of ourselves and our cultural heritage.

In the latter part of those times, an event related to what was happening nationwide, took place here at the University of Massachusetts. That event, the formation of Drum, Black Literary Experience, a magazine founded in 1969 by Robin Chandler Smith.

Since its inception, Drum has held a very high standard of quality and stuck close to its purpose as stated in Article 1 of its Constitution—

"To disseminate information of a political, literary, social and cultural nature to the black community at large; to provide a constructive sounding board and platform for black students through which they may express their creative abilities and to educate the white community as to the intent and feelings of black and minority peoples everywhere."

Fiction, book, film and album reviews, poetry, art and interviews are some of the features of this twice-a-year publication (which is on demand by major colleges and universities nationwide.) Exposés as to the dehumanizing conditions in state prisons (universities?), information leading to the increased awareness of the struggles of black people worldwide, as well as here in the Pioneer Valley. Dedications to the children, our heroes and heroines (defined as our mothers and fathers, Malcolm, Martin, Angela) and countless others who've fought to open doors for us to be where we are, now. Interviews with Professors who are trying to do the same, educate us, the inheritors of the future, to our roles in yesterday's and tomorrow's history.

Drum is a revolutionary concept, born of a revolutionary time, a concept light years ahead of itself, and still moving. Historically, the drum has been a deliverer of messages, a communicator of Spirit/Life force rhythm. Presently Drum magazine maintains those ideals, continuing to communicate and deliver word and truths.

SUNNI

by Jenée Gaskin

FICTION

Back on the street when I was a real young girl there used to be this brother named Sunni, what lived in the apartment next door to Ida Thomas. Nobody really knew whose apartment it was, nobody really cared, 'cept on week nights when they kept up too much noise. On those nights when folks had to make it to work in the morning, and us kids had to go to school, Ida said them was the nights Sunni played best. He'd start off on his horn real slow and kinda quiet like, and somebody would hum and sing. Then one of Sunni's friends, the one what played the conga drums, would knock a beat. Ida said it would get loud and fast and the whole building would shake and rumble. By that time I could hear the music way down on Jersey Street. Up on the hill Sunni would blow and blow, and the congas would beat and beat as if they meant to wake the dead. Ida told me them was good nights for her, and I know what she mean. Sunni had a way with that horn, it would be like he was talkin' to us. The rhythms made me want to raise myself up outa that bed and dance and dance. Most times I did, but real quiet, cause if Mama or Cissy caught me I'd get beat.

Summer times on the street was the best times for me. Summer nights and Sunni, and 'course all his crazy friends. Me and Ida could stay out as late as we wanted, I'd always go up on the hill to Ida's stoop, seems like that was where all the fun was. Big fun! We'd play hot beans and butter with Fred and Tony, and when they got us too hard with the belt we'd holler for Sunni. Sunni would stand there not sayin' a word. He was tall, real tall. He had black, black, blue black skin, what shined in the dark; and black eyes what shined all the time even when he was sad. Sunni would look right through Fred and Tony and move his head from side to side so slowly slow. He looked somethin' like a lion all that bushy hair standin' way out. Sometimes Sunni would cop a squat on the stoop or lean up on the railings, and stretch his long arms. That's when he looked like a tree to me. He'd bring his head up and down, then point a finger and we'd all come closer, like we was possessed. We knew Sunni was fixin' to speak, and I loved to hear him talk. He spoke very soft and deep like a note he played. He'd clear his throat and think for what seemed like a real long time, then he'd smile, and maybe even laugh a little.

"Fred, Tony, these are your sisters. You mustn't be rough with them but you must be gentle. Do you know what I mean?" Fred and Tony would nod yes, but I knew that they didn't know what he meant, cause I didn't know what he meant. I was never too sure what Sunni was talkin' about, especially when he called us sweet ju-ju fruit. But I knew it was deep cause he said it sweet, and 'cides Cissy said Sunni was DEEP.

Sunni would pull us closer with his eyes and rap a long time to us about Africa, what he said was the Motherland. He'd tell us we was all special, and that we came from kings and queens. And when Sunni told us our skins was beautiful, he'd look right at me. Ida would get mad with me cause her skin was not as Black as mine, and she knew Sunni liked BLACK skin.

Those were good times on the street, Ida, Sunni, and all the folks. Talk of the cosmos, spirits, revelations and whatnot. Most of the stuff I didn't know nothin' about. I just knew that when Cissy said Sunni was a beautiful brother, he was just that. She and her friends used to call Sunni the 'Prophet'. I knew 'bout prophets from Sunday school, and when they said he was a star, I really did understand even if I didn't know how to say I did. Sunni was warm, even in winter. When I came up on him in the street, he gave off heat. But in the street things change, nothin' stays the

same. After a while Fred and Tony didn't want to play hot beans anymore, they wanted to play feel-up behind the steps or in dark alleys. Things changed for real. First Cissy and her friends cut their hair real short, or bushed it out like Sunni's. And though Ida and me were gettin' older, the streets was too dangerous for us to be out in on late summer nights 'cause older brothers started having rumbles with the police.

There was a change in Sunni too. I could hear his rhythms from the hill, they were not the same. The notes was hard and short like the shots that killed little Rickey. His music made me want to cry. I didn't want to dance no more to Sunni's music. Sunni, the Star, our Prophet was changin'. There was a far away look in his eyes—and fire. Yeah, that's where I first saw the fire, in his eyes.

Fire burned on the street from sunset to dawn. Mama and them wouldn't let me go out, so I watched from the big window in the front room. Everybody was outside. Young boys was runnin' and carryin' loot from the stores they busted in. Old men sat on the stoop and old ladies hung out of the windows watchful of the happenings. Grown-folks was cussin' and fightin', babies was cryin' and mothers was screamin' to they kids to get out of harms way. The street was full. Storefront windows was broke into and left open to anybody what passed by. Watkins the stink-mouth wino what lived upstairs took a brick to the window of Charlie's Liquors. A piece of glass caught him in the eye and blood poured down his face. He hollered and hollered, but folks was too busy gettin' into Charlie's to pay him no mind. His cryin' made me hurt. The alarm from Charlie's rang in my ears and Watkins fell into the street screaming. I started to cry and Mama yelled to Cissy to get me from the window. Cissy came for me, but I cried more and more. Seems there was a time when nothin' on the street would make me cry, but that was changed. Mama got mad with Cissy for letting me be in the window so long. She held me in her arms real tight and told me to hush. My tears finally stopped, but my insides felt real bad. Mama said maybe I was coming down with somethin' and put me to bed. I didn't sleep much though I kept thinkin' about Watkins and how one time he gave me a quarter for some candy.

Days before the fire me and Ida raced home from school. We loved to run in the street, seems like we was movin' with everybody else when we ran. And we ran fast. Zoom! We could fly, and I'm not afraid of flyin', cause you can see everything. Like one time I looked up to this building on Blossom Street, and saw this lady jump from the top floor. We kept runnin' though—didn't stop. Funny how we was in another world when we was flyin'.

We heard lots of things when we was flyin', like music, plenty of music. Gaby's Dew Dale Record Shop always had plenty of the hits blowin'. And the Zebra Lounge was jumpin' any time of the day or night. Sometimes me and Ida played like we was in the movies—cause the music pushed our flight, and I became Wonder Woman, leaping and jumping over all earthly things. I COULD FLY!!!

There were voices in the street, and we heard words in our flight like:

Nigger you better move! BITCH!!
Hit that ball Willie! Ah Shit!
Hey sweet Mama!!!

There were smells in the street, Ribs, bar-b-q chicken, liqour, pee and gasoline. Sometmes the smells from the garbage made my stomach hurt, but I paid it no mind. It was only that one time that I stepped in dog mess that I got sick.

Cissy met us at the corner like she always do and fussed with us. She said we was goin' to get our poor bodies killed one day from a speedin' car, cause we didn't watch before we took off across the street. Cissy was always preachin' to us about one thing or another. Like the time I put on some ankle socks in the dead of winter. When she saw me at the corner she fussed and fussed. She said we don't be about these Nordic temperatures, and I had better never go out with my legs uncovered again. She fussed so much I started cryin' and made her promise not to tell Mama. Even though Cissy got mad with me I liked her. She smiled alot and took me places, and she never laughed at me when Mama gave me a whippin'.

We walked to Ida's house. There wasn't much happening. Cissy went next door to talk to Rocky, so Ida and me decided to play hang-out. Ida lived on the 10th floor, so I wasn't scared like when we played with Tony what lived on the 19th floor. We'd all take turns to see who could hang out the window the farthest. I didn't like it much cause Ida always could hang farther than me.

Though most folks was back to dancin' in the streets, the memory of the fire stayed with us. I could hear voices in the night—Mama, Cissy, Jimmie, and his daddy, what live next door. They all whispered in the night, and Sunni's horn wailed a blues loud and pitiful, cryin'—it's not over—not over—not over.

Late, long after Mama had put me to bed, Jimmie's daddy, what name is Brown came to the house. I could hear Brown's big feet slap the floor as he walked into the kitchen. Brown was a mighty man. He was tall and strong. He said he got big from wrestling. Brown had smooth yellow skin and a gold tooth right up front, what winked at me when he smiled. He be away most times cause he works on a ship; so Cissy and Mama tell him all the happenings he missed when he comes home. The echo of Sunni's horn almost made me forget to listen after Mama and them, but the harder I tried to stay awake the farther I drifted into sleep.

I dreamed. I dreamed I was in a forest. The trees was brown and tall, and they leaves was black and woolly like Sunni's hair. There was a road in the forest, and I walked on it taking my steps real slow. I walked a long time until the trees were behind me. Then I heard the notes from Sunni's horn. I turned around and the trees was Sunni. There was about fifty Sunni's following me playing they horns. They took big steps and the notes came at me like hail stones. I got scared and ran, but they came faster—the notes, the trees, was quick and sharp. I ran on the road and within a blink I was runnin' on the street. I flew, this time for real.

Continued on page 24

SEXISM

AS VIEWED BY CAROL CARTER

Interview with Dr. Carol Carter, Associate Director of the Committee of the Collegiate Education of Black Students, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, Massachusetts

by Sherwin W. Moyston

Background:

Carter was born in Elyria, Ohio, but was reared in Canton, Ohio. She was educated in the Canton Public Schools and went to undergraduate school at Central State College in Wilberforce, Ohio. She taught for four years in Canton and two years in Gary, Indiana. While in Indiana, she earned her Masters from Indiana State University, and in 1968, she enrolled at the University of Massachusetts/ Amherst and received her Doctorate in 1971. Her educational training has been in the areas of teacher education, evaluation, and supervision.

Q. Would you please define "sexism" as you perceive it?

A. Sexism is discrimination based on sex. It is usually practiced by men against women. Take a look at history and you can see who gets the notoriety, or for that matter, note the way the word is spelled, HIStory, not HERstory!

Q. What is the difference between sexism and racism?

A. Racism is used to define, oppress, and exploit people of color (non-white people) of the world. Sexism, like racism, implies a kind of superiority of one group over/ another group. If one believes in the tenets of racism and sexism, then one behaves according to what is expected of that group. Some aspects of sexism I accept because I believe in sexual role clarification as an integral part of the natural order of things. However, I do not believe that sex should be used as the determinant which restricts abilities, opportunities, and capabilities for anyone. Neither do I believe or accept that there is any causal relationship between one's sex and one's mental capabilities. Like wise, I neither believe or accept that there is any causal relationship between the color of one's skin and one's mental abilities. If some equity is provided to individuals, I believe that educational, cultural, economic, and political differences contribute far more to the development of one's potential than any other factor, not race or sex.

Q. When did you first become aware of the effects of sexism?

A. I think that I became aware of sexism as a young girl. I am the eldest of five children and part of my responsibility was to take care of my siblings in my mother's absence. I had to do certain things my brothers did not have to do, and when I questioned my mother, she would tell me I had to do those things because I was a girl and the oldest. It did not make sense to me then, or now. As time progressed, I resented it but the practice was a part of my family and I had to do what was expected then.

Q. Is sexism an oppressor?

A. Yes, it is. Sexism is oppressive to both males and females. Sexual distinctions are made between males and females from the time we are children through adulthood. Someone establishes what the rules are and others are supposed to abide by them. In abiding by them, if one chooses to break from the traditional mode, it is very difficult for the individual. *"Big boys don't cry"; "Come on, be a big man"; "What are little girls made of?"*

Photograph by Edward Cohen

"Sugar and spice and everything nice". "What are little boys made of?" "Snips, snails and puppy dog tails". All those kinds of sayings suggest inherent strengths and weaknesses for each group.

Q. If sexism is an oppressor, then how does that affect Black people in our struggle?

A. Well, sexism is another kind of ploy that has been used to destroy whatever unity that exists among black people. Our history is one based on economic exploitation. We men and women were brought here as indentured servants and slaves to work according to the needs of others. If we tried to work together, one of the unique ways to neutralize us was to pit us against each other with various tactics. I think the oppression to us as a "People" is the issue. While I as a female am oppressed, I am also oppressed because I am Black. I think it is an oppressive situation for my brothers, too. Because they are male, they suffer from another kind of oppression, and it is exacerbated by race. For Black people, the two are inextricably bound together, and we are mutually affected. Our resources are too limited to argue whether or not a man or a woman initiates the effort. We have to continually keep our eyes on the bigger issue, which is the effects of capitalistic oppression on our people.

Q. What steps do you think can be taken to stop sexism with children and families in this society?

A. I think that if we want to start to combat sexism, we have to begin to teach our children that there are sexual differences, but emphasize that in some areas individuals are going to have more strengths, and more weaknesses, more abilities and limitations; but emphasize strongly that those distinctions have nothing to do with the fact that one is male or female. The most important issue is that the opportunity be afforded for one to actualize her/his potential.

Q. What help is it to have role models?

A. Role models are vital. When I was an undergraduate student, the first black woman history teacher I had was Wilhelmena Simpson Robinson. She turned me on to history in a way that I had never been exposed to and I immediately changed my major to work with her. She encouraged me to think, to question and to analyze. She apparently saw some potential in me and assisted to develop it. I will never forget her. I never got that kind of encouragement from my male teachers. I think that role modeling is terribly important. One has to see some real examples of others actively engaged in various situations in order to believe it can be done.

Q. How did sexism affect you in your career?

A. I am fully cognizant of the restraints of sexism. There are men who continually challenge whatever I say in professional meetings or who do not believe that I am knowledgeable or capable of doing some things. Sexism can be a problem, but what I do to combat it is to keep going and doing what I have to do. The residual effects of sexism have made me far more determined than ever to do whatever is necessary to accomplish my established goals.

AESTHETICS AND CULTURE:

A VIEW BY LARRY NEAL

written by Lisa DiRocco

Poet, essayist and playwright Larry Neal is the author of **Black Fire, Hoo doo Hollerin' Bebop Ghosts,** and **Black Boogaloo.** Neal has established throughout his writings the notion of a Black Aesthetic, just as there exist cultural notions among other ethnic and racial groups of the world. An expression of his notion appeared to be appropriate for inclusion in this issue of Drum, which is devoted to exploring the Black cultural concepts. Interviewer DiRocco became acquainted with Neal during an internship at D.C. Arts, a program sponsored by the D.C. Commission on Arts and Humanities, of which Neal is director. He was the first non-career administrator to be appointed to the post, in 1976.

LD. In many of your past essays you were trying to develop the idea of a Black Aesthetic. Could you clarify that concept?

LN. What I was simply saying is that there is a Black Aesthetic; we were trying to bring awareness of that from a theoretical point of view, so that scholars would study that phenomenon and how it works in Afro-American art. Or how it works in American art. American art utilizes aspects of Black Aesthetic forms—by that I mean blues, black rhythmic patterns—all those things most associated with African peoples in this country. The ways of creating out of a cultural ethos or matrix.

When we were talking about the Black Aesthetic, and we still talk about it, we are talking about a vocabulary—the ingredients that constitute a way of proceeding creatively. A perception of things, like a way of playing the blues. I mean, there is a way to play the blues.

Let me give you an example. I was talking to Max Roach. Max was down here last week. We did a show with A.B. Spellman. I was on the show; Max did a monster interview. He told this one story. He said he knew very early the difference between the things that he needed, and the things that would be required for conservatory training. So he went to the conservatory. At first he enrolled in a course on his instrument, percussion. This is after he had been playing with Byrd and all them. He's taking this course to get this thing growing, theory courses. He took a course in percussion and he said, "I realized from the way this guy was telling me to hold my sticks that I wouldn't be able to play the music that I had been playing. I wouldn't be able to play it if I held my sticks that way." So we said, "What did you do?" And he said, "I transferred to composition."

It's a craft procedure—the ideological concept behind the Black Aesthetic is for the Black scholars to be aware of that phenomenon as an existing phenomenon in American art and in Afro-American art. To not pretend that all art is the same. Afro-American music **does** sound different from hillbilly music; the Afro-American component in Western music is different from other kinds of components in Western music.

The kind of thing that Dvorak was hearing in Afro-American spirituals created certain sounds in the Dvorak symphony. Gershwin was hearing a certain kind of thing in "Rhapsody in Blue". Gershwin, for example, was after a certain kind of thing when he had black people sing "Porgy and Bess". He was looking for a certain kind of ingredient associated with Black peo-

ple, a certain modality, so to speak. That's what we're trying to get at.

On the ideological plane is the assertion that there are various ways of perceiving the dynamics of art, and that these must be acknowledged. The Black Aesthetic position forces all people that approach art to approach it with the respect that there is a history, a set of procedures within that form that should not be taken for granted.

Other people have called this Black Aesthetic other things. Ralph Ellison refers to the Blues Feeling. Albert Murray talks about an Afro-American Blues Idiom Aesthetic. Ishmael Reed talks about Hoodooism. All of these are grids, or forms of definitions, if you will, to describe this phenomenon of difference and activity, and the nature of that difference and activity.

That does not mean that the "Black Aesthetic" exists in distinction of relationships to other procedures. Getting back to the Max Roach conversation, he was saying that in the music that he wanted to play, that particular craft procedure didn't work; which would mean, therefore, if you were going to teach someone to play Max's music, to play that way, then obviously there's a methodology.

What we're trying to do is get the academic world, the critics, the scholars, and the artists themselves to recognize these elements—**consciously recognize them**—rather than say they are unconscious. So we proceed to develop books, scholarship about our music. We should be clear on the methodology, the aesthetic methodology involved in the creation of, say, Black dance, Black song, Black speech. So, what are the references—if you're trying to get at your cultural identity, the Black Aesthetic mode forces you to look at Black culture in terms of the specific uses of these items for art.

For example, the folktale, the spiritual, music, sermons, or whatever patterns one can think of: aesthetic patterns become objects to be used and be aware of. So that if you're studying writing, studying drama, studying choreography—you're working with these forms. You get a sense of the utilization of the existing aesthetic patterns and you recognize them, bring them out of the dark and bring them forward.

If you want to get at how Afro-Americans move, to choreograph a piece, it means isolating that element in Afro-American culture. You can't say, well, they move like everyone else, because it's not true; observation tells you that they don't. That difference—what does it tell a choreographer, for example; what does that language tell a choreographer or a musician. Since our culture, as Albert Murray pointed out, has become a "dance de-oriented culture"; that's also an awareness of a certain kind of aesthetic thrust. I call it black, but it could be Afro-American, it could be what Murray calls the "Blues Idiom Aesthetic"; I'm not going to quibble over that. The question is, we're talking about a phenomenon, a construct, a cultural construct.

LD. Looking at your earlier poems—I'm thinking of a volume called **Hoodoo Hollerin' Bebop Ghosts**—many of the poems deal with ghosts, mysteries, voodoo gods, other worlds—what is the relation of ghosts to the Black Aesthetic?

LN. What you're talking about is folk forms. I'm a writer who is very influenced by folk lore. I was a student of folk lore for a long time when I was an undergraduate, and then in graduate school. I'm a student of folk lore the same way James Joyce is a student of folk lore, or Faulkner is a student of folk lore, or many other writers that we know have been. I remember growing up and hearing ghost stories. Ghost stories are fun. I'm trying to deal with the world of the dead. The African world view is that the dead are not dead. The aead are really all around. So, those poems are trying to be informed by those ghosts. The ancestors are ever present, because that's one of the functions of ghosts.

I'm not saying that's the Black Aesthetic—that's my aesthetic. I'm not saying that it stands for the total thing, but it helps get at the question of voice. I think I'm going to do a novel when I finish this play I'm working on now. What I'm thinking about now, before I even get to that novel is the way narrative passages can be haunting. Do you know what I'm talking about? I want to write passages that haunt.

LD. What is the relation of Shine and the blues god to the Black Aesthetic?

LN. I'm working on a book of poems right now, called **Shine**, that is about Afro-American folk figures. You can read about the legend of Shine in Bruce Campbell's book on Afro-American folk lore. Shine was the only black man on the Titanic. There is a little rhyme that goes with that, and a whole set of urban narratives, called toasts. What I'm doing in that suite-it's going to be a slender book—is working with all that imagery: with shining, glow, the sun, sun people, niggers shine–all the permutations of Shine. He is also being reincarnated at various times.

I've been working with reincarnation a lot, and in that series there will be a lot of reincarnation moments, cyclical moments. The poem, as I've always thought of it for myself, begins in the heart of the sun; and then it goes through time, and various reincarnations of this figure called Shine.

The blues god is an attempt to isolate the blues element as an ancestral force, as the major ancestral force of the Afro-American. What I always say about the blues god is that it was the god that survived the middle passage. It's like an **Orisha** figure. Because even though the blues may be about so-called hard times, people generally feel better after hearing them or seeing them. They tend to be ritually liberating in that sense. And they represent a particular kind of poetry, but they also represent a particular kind of rhythmic impulse like you get in Count Basie or Coltrane.

If you go through Afro-American music, one of the things that make it Afro-American is the blues feeling. Once you take that out, you got something else. And if a cat can't play the blues you know he can't play. . . all musicians know that. What they're saying is that there's some particular kind of power endemic to the blues.

Albert Murray has done a very

fascinating book on the blues; he goes into a great deal of detail on the function of the blues. A book called **Stomping the Blues.** It came out last year-a fantastic book. It's a very good philosophical basis for discussing the blues. The other book where he connects the blues with literary themes is **The Hero and the Blues.** Murray has a lot of work on this. Ralph Ellison's essays in **Shadow and Act** constitute a major set of material. And of course LeRoi Jones' **Blues People.** These groups are all trying to get at the assemblable element of the blues in Afro-American life. The poetic and literary and artistic forms. So, that's **my** metaphor—the blues god—it's not nobody elses metaphor. It's mine.

LD. Getting back to your job as director of the D.C. Commission, how long have you been working there?

LN. About a year and a half.

LD. What are your goals and primary concerns there?

LN. My first concern is to get the city government to increase its commitment to the arts in both legislative areas, and budget appropriations—that's the major goal. From that point we go into expanding the program and the agency—to expand its capability and its services.

A long range goal is to help the city develop an arts industry, so that areas that need to be researched, for instance, the film industry: there should definitely be development in this town of a film industry. Also, some feasibility work has to be done on the possibility of a recording center. Since Washington, D.C. is 75% black, it could probably support a small recording industry to utilize the talent that they're training in the various schools. The talent is here. We could create a new economic area for the creative artist, for musicians and for technicians. Those are two large goals that I have.

The other is, we want to open up our humanities component because the commission hadn't been utilizing its humanities thrust. We have a major application in now to the

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Photograph by Edward Cohen

DESIGN WITH D

BIOGRAPHICAL REMARKS

Dr. Femi V. Richards is an Associate Professor of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. A native of Sierra Leone, Dr. Richards received his Ph.D. in 1970 from Northwestern University. He has taught at Lagos University, Ahmadu Bello University as well as Northwestern and travelled extensively throughout Europe, North America and Africa.

Dr. Richards specializes in teaching contemporary textile and fabric design here at UMass and offers us some insight as to the nature of his art:

Drum: What is the role of fabric design in a traditional African society?

Femi: Some designs in traditional African societies are used to manifest or enshrine belief systems, and cultural values. The designs contain non-pictorial motifs that can be deciphered by those sensitive to their messages. The kente cloth of the Ashanti in Ghana and the mud cloth of the Bamana of Mali are good examples in which designs are used as a means of non-verbal communication.

Drum: How long have you been working with textiles as an art?

R. FEMI RICHARDS

Femi: I have been working with textiles since 1963 when I was an undergraduate student at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria. I have always enjoyed the creative experiences associated with textile designing and printing. Textile designing and printing are an applied art form. The printed fabric is a lively and mobile form of art that gives the user a feeling of importance and self confidence or it provides protection against the inclement weather.

Drum: Colors and inspiration play a major part in the life of an artist, what inspires you to design and why do you choose certain colors?

Femi: The inner need which exists in most designers is to create something new and exciting. I draw inspiration from nature for designing what are basically my perceptual designs even though the final form is non-pictorial. My conceptual designs manifest an inner feeling and force that impels me to design continuously. The designs produced are an externalization of my imagery, feelings of joy, and disenchantments. My colors reveal my mood from day to day. They are exuberant, bright and charismatic. I like secondary colors—shades of yellow and red.

Drum: What are your theories of design related to fabrics?

Femi: My contemporary designs depict some of my perceptions of space within a pictorial field. I try to make every space within the field functional and interesting without creating a feeling of *horror vacui*. To create interesting shapes or forms within the pictorial field so that little or no negative space is left in the field.

Drum: What exactly is the process of designing on fabric.

Femi: The first stage, is the conceptualization of the design to be printed. The design is then put in repeat divisors of 36" or 48" and then transferred onto frosted acetate using a photo opaque ink to create a positive or negative film.

The second stage involves the preparation of a light sensitive 8XX 10XX silk screen by coating the fabric of the screen with a solution of potassium bichromate and gelatin.

Third, expose the light sensitive screen and positive or negative film on a 5 way light box.

Fourth, the exposed screen is washed out to reveal the printing areas.

Finally, the design on the screen is printed on a desized fabric using a fiber reactive dye. The printed fabric is then heat cured for 3 to 5 minutes.

Drum: What monetary compensation can an artist expect from the commercial fabric houses?

Femi: Most large scale commercial fabric houses buy scores of designs from freelance designers every year, and than transfer them on to furnishing or dress fabrics for consumers. The prices paid for a marketable design varies from $250 to about $2,000 depending on the reputation of the designer. In lieu of an outright fee a designer may accept royalties from the commercial houses, calculated on a percentage of the wholesale price of the printed fabric. This may range from 2% to 10% per yard price and if a million yards of the fabric are sold the royalties could be quite considerable. Designs for furnishing (drapes, carpet, wall paper, etc.) seem to command a higher fee than designs for fashion (dresses scarfs, etc.) because furnishing fabrics are kept and used

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Larry Neal—from page 12

National Endowment for the Humanities for a project I want to do this year—a big project about Washington using the humanities called, "Visions of D.C." To reiterate—we're talking about budget appropriation and legislative commitment. There are, for example, areas for legislation on artists rights, and just a variety of activities needed to get the arts going in Washington, D.C.

LD. What are some of the projects that the commission is assisting right now?

LN. We are assisting organizations like Chamber music groups, 20th Century Consort, Radio Station Pacifica, WPFW, Capitol Ballet, New Playwright's Theatre, Miya Gallery. We also have a large CETA program; this is the first time the city has had a CETA arts program.

We also want to make sure that any funds coming in from the Labor Department that can go to the arts be earmarked for that. That's a major struggle because they just now are getting used to the fact that arts people are workers. That's not an easy concept to get over to any society, but particularly not in Washington.

LD. Is there any kind of tension between your art and your administrative functions, and how has this new administrative function changed your writing?

LN. This job helps me, as a matter of fact. The ability to write, the ability to plan, the ability to develop proposals—to just communicate in general—those skills are very useful, particularly in an arts program where you are always writing programs. What I try not to do is write in burekucratese. I try to write really good letters, as careful as I can. I'm always concerned with style, no matter what I'm doing. I know my letters are definitely different in tone from a lot of the stuff that comes out of many bureaucrats. So, that's something always to be aware of—the importance of keeping the language fresh and imaginative.

The only problem I have maybe is I have to discipline myself more to

the time I'm supposed to be writing for myself. For instance, I'm a night writer. I have a studio apart from home and apart from the office, naturally. And I go there to work. So there's a definite place where I go to do the creative work that has to be done for me. I know that I'm averaging at least six hours of writing a day. There are times when there is a clash, times where I'm working on something, and I know I have to go to work in the morning, and I really want to sleep late and get back on it again.

LD. Can you recommend some books, articles or periodicals on culture that would be necessary for someone to understand American culture a little better?

LN. Albert Murray's **Album of the Americas** should be read. All of his books are important. Ralph Ellison's **Shadow and Act**. LeRoi Jones' **Blues People. Black Culture and Black Consciousness** is a book that just came out—I've forgotten the writer—it's a very important and formidable book. It's in the spirit of folk culture, all the stuff we're talking about. There's a book coming up soon by Stanley Crouch on black music that should be very important. That will be published by Viking.

I think key novels are, of course **Invisible Man;** Albert Murray's books; Toni Morrison's work; **Black Fire** done in 1968 by me and LeRoi Jones is very important. That book indicates the major shift in the orientation of young black people; in many ways it really announces the emergence of another kind of generation of black writers. Of course, I'm pushing my own book, but it is important, I think. Janheinzi Jahn's **Muntu** is a book people might want to take a look at again. Ishmael Reed's novels are important—almost every one of them utilizes a great store of world information. He has a great knowledge of black folk culture, particularly hoo doo and all that kind of stuff. I think Andre Malraux's **Voices of Silence or Museum Without Walls** are essential. Kenneth Burke's work—particularly **Counterstatement.** I think that's an important critical work, then maybe **Function of the Literary Form.** Off the top of my head, I guess that's about it.

Photograph by Ana Andreu

Femi Richards—from page 13

much longer-5 to 10 years-by consumers than dress fabrics which may be changed every six or nine months. The high graduate unemployment among artists today is forcing very good artists to seek work and training as freelance textile designers.

Drum: What is the business aspect of textile designing?

Femi: It is plausible to assume that there are great potentials in the business end of textile designing. Everybody wears clothes or uses some designed products for furnishing or dress. The best and least problematic way to get started and hopefully prosper in the textile business is for a designer to print and market his/her own designs and printed fabric. That is to design, print, style and sell the end product to retail stores or in the designer's store. Most successful designers we read about today started out this way. By printing their own designs they can maintain complete control over their color schemes, motifs, and exact reproduction. In contrast, commercial houses may alter the designs to suit their clientele and or the idiosyncracies of the company's designers.

OSCAR PETERSON

MUSIC

by Cheryl L. Crowell

Oscar Peterson was 14 when he won his first award as an accomplished pianist. Nine years later he was a featured pianist with Jazz at the Philharmonic in New York's Carnegie Hall. Now, at 52, Peterson is considered the greatest pianist in jazz history.

Born Oscar Emmanuel Peterson in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, he began his musical career as a trumpet player. A bout with tuberculosis forced him to direct his talent toward the piano, an instrument with which he had some familiarity—three siblings were aspiring pianists. His mastery of those 88 keys has been rewarded many times as he has been presented with a Grammy, at least ten of the **Playboy** "Musicians' Musicians" Awards and **Downbeat** magazine's Best Piano Player award, annually in 1950-55 and 1959-67.

Peterson gained prominence in the United States under the management of Norman Granz, who initiated Peterson's appearance with the Philharmonic group in 1949. Since then, he has made numerous recordings with jazz greats like Billie Holiday, Lester Young, Ella Fitzgerald (also managed by Granz), and Louis Armstrong, to name a few. Some of his own compositions are **Canadian Suite, Hallelujah Time,** and **Hymn to Freedom.** In addition to recording, Peterson began concert touring, and continues to do so in this country and Europe almost annually. His audiences respond royally. "Oh—I don't know what to say. It is overwhelming. The piano is like an extension of his own physical being. I'm amazed at the speed of his creativity," remarked a close friend and admirer. Peterson, a staunch believer in the art of improvisation, does not rehearse prior to his performances.

Not satisfied with only expressing his own creativity, Peterson has helped expose other jazz talents. In 1974 he had a television series in Canada entitled **Oscar Peterson Presents.** The show, which spotlighted leading jazzmen and singers, was awarded a plaque at the 17th International Film and TV Festival in New York. The Advanced School of Contemporary Music, founded by Peterson in 1960, demonstrates yet another aspect of his encouragement and responsiveness to young jazz musicians. Peterson's latest project, a book on contemporary jazz piano, will be released soon and promises to be an instructive and exciting experience for up-and-coming jazz talents.

Recently, Peterson gave a solo performance at the University of Massachusetts. He talked with me for DRUM following that recital.

—In your marvelous master class today a student made the statement that jazz and rock are fusing. You felt that they would never fuse, the same as jazz and classical have never fused. Considering everything that has happened, like Ellington mixing his jazz with the music in the classical vein, what is your definition of jazz as opposed to jazz rock? jazz classical?

Jazz is a music that is based on concepts that have been set out by people like Ellington, Fats Waller, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, Lester Young. And it is basically instant composition. It is improvisation. Jazz has to retain its rhythmic content, its harmonic movement. That has been set forth before us. To fuse it with anything else would be to change it from being jazz into something else. You can relate to something else in your jazz playing, but I see no reason to try and fuse it. It is a separate, independent entity in its own.

Photograph by Ana Andreu

—Along that same vein, then, what are your thoughts on the use of electronic instruments like the synthesizer in jazz?

Well, I think they represent a very important stage of musical development in this era. I want to be very candid in saying that I am not one that disapproves of them. I happen to play them for my own benefit and gratification at home. BUT it takes a specific knowledge of those instruments to play them. It is not as easily done as many people think. I do not think that they have been delved into; they have not been here long enough. They have not been exploited the way they should have been exploited. For instance, we do not have one really well-known synthesizer player. In other words, if I say trumpet, you might say Eldridge. You might say Dizzy Gillespie. You might say Miles Davis. Saxophone, you would say Cannonball or whoever. I say synthesizer, and you have to stop and think—simply because the instruments have not got that kind of seniority, chronologically speaking, for someone to take one of them and say 'this is my instrument, this is what I am going to do.' And I know there are several instruments with which that could be done. But, it is youth. It is a matter of youth in the music.

—So you do not plan to go any further with that yourself?

I've got my hands full with this [the piano and concerts]. I am hoping to do an album, an electronic album, but it is not something for which I want to negate this. It is just something that I want to do. Over the years many listeners have queried why I never played any of the electronic instruments on records. I recently did. Both Count Basie and I play electric piano—Fenderwoods piano. If the album goes the way I want it to, it will encompass some of the electronic instruments. I am not against them. I do not think they are the complete answer jazz-wise. I think that when used properly, they are additives.

—Growing up black in Canada: how did that affect or influence your life? your music? your acceptance in the United States?

Well, going point by point of what you ask: growing up black in Canada I would imagine is no different from growing up black in Boston . . . Indianapolis. You are basically part of a minority race, numerically. I will not get into rights and vestiges. It is not mandatory that we go through it. I'm just saying that environmentally, that is the niche—the category—that you fall into. I do not think it is that much different because of the proximity of the two countries. The popular music in Canada is the same as the popular music here. Jazz is basically the same as jazz here, in and obviously of the jazz realm.

What were some of the differences? None, other than, I guess years ago if I were down in the deep, deep South when they had the really violent racial problems, it would have been different. But we did not have them to that extent in Canada. We may have them in the future, but we have not had them up to now.

In so far as my arrival in the United States: did it have any bearing? I think it had a certain amount of a curiosity factor, I'll put it that way. I think it would have to, because I was not that well-known to all Americans. So naturally, when someone says 'Here is a jazz player, he is from Canada' it is like saying 'Here is a trumpet player, he is from Yugoslavia.' It could be the same thing. I don't think it made that much difference other than the curiosity. You still have to do something once you are announced, no matter where you are from.

—What about your family? What influence did they have on you, specifically in terms of you playing jazz as opposed to classical music?
They had a great influence on me because they concurred with my desire to change over from classical music to jazz.

—And what first sparked that desire in you? Why jazz?
The possibility of invention, of long period invention. Improvisation. And, of course, the stimulus of the rhythmic patterns, harmonic progressions. Most importantly, my older brother—who no longer lives—was, at that time, a pianist in a jazz group. So, I was intrigued with the things he was doing.

—Were there any other influences?
Nat Cole, Teddy Wilson, and Art Tatum. Nat had the ability to make a group swing, and swing hard. Teddy had the neatest piano. Art Tatum, well, he could do it all.

—I assume you are referring to the communication element you spoke of earlier today?
Communication is a big part of the secret of playing together. If you do not communicate, you are not playing together.

—Have you been playing recently with a trio?
I keep my hand in it. I do some appearances. I just did a thing in Los Angeles with Ray Brown and Louie Bellson. It is a part of my musical life that I do not want to lose altogether.

—You, Ray Brown, and a third musician formed a different kind of trio when you founded your School of Jazz. What happened to that School?
Nothing really. We had to curtail it because it took so much time to open up each semester, and obviously, we had to be there to close it. The school just took too much time out of the schedule. At that time, whether my career was getting bigger—I guess that was mainly it—the commitments were a lot heavier than I could handle. We tried it, and we did it for about five or six years, but it just got to where we could not handle it. I could not do that and this [perform].

—Was there very much difficulty in retaining other musicians to help with the school?
No, we did not have that problem. We had a problem with one thing that made it a little cumbersome—the premises. We rented the premises, and basically they were not used while the school was not in session. It is quite a responsibility holding a building of the size and nature necessary to run a school of that type. The school only ran, at the most, four months a semester. So, it was vacant eight months of the year, practically speaking. It was quite an overhead expense to worry about, plus we found out that even the four months was not enough time. I just could not give up any more time.

—I know that you are also an advocate of formal training for musicians.
We had formal training at the school also. I found it was more expedient to have—rather than waste my time giving a student that needed that particular type of training along with jazz training (and when I say wasting, I think that this is what I do best)—I brought in a classical player to handle those problems in classical playing.

—So, you have mastered classical and jazz. You have been an instructor, a composer, a Grammy award winner. You are probably the world's greatest jazz pianist. Where do you plan to go with your music from here?
Well, to be very honest with you, I cannot really say where it is going to go. I do not know myself. That is a part of growing—you just hope you continue.

I am going to be doing quite a bit more writing. I think it is time now. As one of the players that has been on the scene, I owe it to the music itself, to the form, to leave some kind of equitable musical direction. This is one thing that jazz needs. (We need more soloists too.) We have never had the written—the vast amount of written background and research material for players. And I think that if more players do this, it will make it a lot easier for aspiring young players.

—You are still considering the book on music, then?
On piano? The book is just about ready. In fact, it has changed from a book to a book with cassettes, and now we are talking about video-cassette teaching—possibly subscriptions to a video-series.

—Thank you for talking with me.
My pleasure. I'm sorry it was so short.

Special thanks to Dana DeBarros, David Letters and Hi-Fidelity Magazine.

Photograph by Ana Andreu

SCULPTURE

Photographs by Ana Andreu

Valerie Maynard is a black sculptress living in New York City. Recently she spoke with DRUM about her work, her life and her opinions.

—As a woman has it been difficult for you to succeed as an artist?
It has been difficult making an artist of myself, because I am really doing what everyone else is doing —like any woman anywhere. But I am putting in many more hours, 20 hours instead of 10 hours, or whatever, just to survive. Difficult in the sense that I do not know whether it is art, whether it is black art, or women's art. It is creating my earlier experiences, but it is difficult because I always

saw what no one else saw. I realized I had to learn some way to articulate my visual impressions. It is like making a language that hopefully, someone will understand. There are those things in your mind, and somehow you have to say something about them. You know that it is happening to someone else too, so out of the whole, you try to pick out a little bit, try to say something about that bit. You might get an impression from the immediate community, but then it starts travelling everywhere. You find the whole human family, whether in language, age, or whatever. Art transcends all of this, and someone will say, "Okay, yes, I understand." The sacrifice is the primary difficulty because I am working for that small company—that which goes on in my head—and no one can see it unless I do it.

—Looking at the works you have displayed here, I would say that most of them have very expressive faces. Some are executed in stone, some in wood, and some in bronze. What other media do you use?
I do some painting, printing, plasters, ceramics—just about anything I can put my hands on. I am curious about everything. Any material at all, and eventually I will work with it all.

—Do you find working with wood more challenging?
No, it is all challenging. Each thing presents its own challenge. Wood is perhaps more physical, but as you see, I love wood. Several lifetimes would not be enough to carve it.

—How do you begin work on a piece of wood?
First of all, the wood is here in my studio. I try to become one with it; I have no particular plans for it. It just sits there. It is a telephone table most of the time, but one day I will look at it and see exactly what is there. At that point, I will stage what I have seen by blocking out the image. Now, when I go back to finish it, that is a different matter. For me, the initial thing has happened. When I carve on wood, I am not working on a piece with which I am then finished. I may not touch it for six months or a year. I may begin again in five months or one and a half years. I do not time it unless I am doing a show or something. If I am printing or painting I have thousands of pieces of paper with little drawings and notes about pieces I have done. I may look at them, and I may not.

—In other words, you are open to your feelings?
Yes, but it is difficult to achieve that initial feeling because I am going to find all kinds of things as I go along. When I finish a piece I am seeing it for the first time, just as you are seeing it for the first time. I do not carve when I already know what is going to happen.

—So it grows with you?
Yes, the piece and I work together.

VALERIE MAYNARD

—What is your educational background? Have you had any art training?
I went to Public School 136, then I went to City Park, and then I went to a Fine Arts School. In 1955, I believe I was particularly sensitive and vulnerable; I was offered the chance to go to other schools after high school, but because I felt I was going to be isolated from my community, I decided not to go to college. I just began working with my art. It was a personal thing. I taught and did other things—arts and crafts, made furniture, worked with public school centers. Last year, though, I enrolled in a course on monumental sculpture at Elaine Journet. With all of that, I find that I am fairly well disciplined.

—Was your experience and education an evolution of interests?
Well, I have been showing my work since I was about 27. I began exhibiting in libraries and community centers. Then, my pieces were displayed in a couple of galleries and museums, and then my work began travelling across the country. I was invited to teach at Howard in 1975, and I taught at Jersey State for one term. The students worked well, but it was really difficult for me to start at the beginning again, so I decided not to teach for a couple of years. Basically that is what I have done, and now I am working on some commissioned pieces.

—You began your work in the mid fifties. I have here an article that says that during "the fifties there [was] an increase in the number of women artists who [had] achieved public careers." Women with careers are a primary concern right now.
But, do you know of any woman artists who succeeded? I do not know of any.

—Exactly, and that is what makes you so interesting. You came out of high school, you did not go to college, or receive any formal training—and here you are living and working as you do.
At that time, I felt that all I could do was teach. They would say "Okay, you are a black woman. You can teach or be a secretary." There were few things for me to do, and even though I did not know what it was that I wanted to do specifically, I knew that serving your community was a regular part of life. But I did not feel that was all.

—Since we have mentioned women artists, do you feel that your work relates to that of women artists?
Automatically it does.

—According to Lawrence Alloway,

"a feminist is a woman who is willing to work with other women ultimately to reduce inequality, or to insure some reform." Do you consider yourself a feminist?
For a few minutes everyday, it occurs to me that I have to deal with that label. I think I am, but, like everything else, it is only momentary. Life has not been luxurious enough for me to be anywhere longer than it takes for me to accomplish something. During the sixties I was dealing in a political way. Somewhere in this country I happened to be aware of what was going on, when suddenly, I was standing in front of twenty guns about

to be blown from this earth. Another time I was in New York fighting the judicial system; another time I was doing none of that—just sitting in a park playing with some children. Another time I was the superintendent of a building; another time I was working at a factory on 17th Street; another time I was teaching at Howard. Another time I was in Maine gazing upon a lake and painting a landscape; another time, whatever. All of it is integral. The worst thing about this society is that they want to label everyone, and as such that label will be worn from the first moment. Everyone will do her research to see what was said about a person, but what is really sad is that while we are able, while we are living and doing

everything contemporary, nothing will happen until we are dead. To try to stop life is preposterous. One thing we depend upon is changes. As far as defending women or them getting together, what is done in this lifetime as a woman will be cumulative.

—In reference to changes, Alloway also says that "the women's movement in art can be considered avant-garde because its members are united by a desire to change existing social forms of the art world." You said that you think of yourself as a feminist in the sense that you do not feel totally integrated into one group or movement, but let us say—
And certainly not under the banner of changing the art world. I am not an idiot. I happen to be into art, not because I had nothing else to do, nor to support myself, nor to change anyone's ideas—nothing like that. I was finding my voice.

—But is that not similar to bringing social change?
No, not really. Women have been creating artworks since the world began, just as man has. Why would I spend my time trying to change that? My energy would not be directed toward change for that reason.

—So what concerns you are expressions and the language?
For everyone to express her language because if everyone expresses her language or sings her songs or uses her voice, the result will be harmony.

—Which means that the Feminist Movement is a total waste of energy?
I think that it is valid for some people—those who believe that that is what is stopping them. Hopefully, with energy and communication, they will perceive that and outgrow the situation.

—You have mentioned language, what can you say about contemporary artwork, in which technique plays an important role?
I find that now people are very involved with the technical vehicle. They are so busy dealing with that, they have forgotten matters of life. I can do everything totally, beautifully, technically, and have nothing to say—which is what we find proliferating all over the country—nothing human, nothing that reflects life itself. Nothing. We have to know the language of everyday life so we have to be people, and artists who are social and communative. That is what it is all about.

—How do you present your artwork in galleries, schools, or universities? Who invites you and how do you feel as a third world woman? Are there any problems in dealing with your hosts?
When people say "Now, how did you get to show with us?", I have no idea. I do not know. It is the type of situation where no one knows who is going or coming. No one knows what is there. It is very difficult. It will always be as a woman and as an artist, especially to get into any of the major museums, to be taken seriously or criticized. Our entire society has been brought up with a certain way of seeing black women as maids, as prostitutes, or whatever. I forgive them. People have invited me many places not knowing who I was or what I looked like. I sit there and enjoy, and remain aware of all that is going on, all the while they are looking for Valerie Maynard. Then, I will get up and say "I am Valerie Maynard," and watch the people as they just about pass out. They do not believe I am who I say I am. Other people have come to exhibits and said "there is only one name here. Where are the different artists? You did not put the labels on."

Then galleries will say that they will sell my work for me and take forty or fifty percent. How can they value a sculptor's work? It takes me a year and a half to do a piece. I have to carry my work with me. Already I have spent 150% of my time and money—in addition to the space necessary to work on the piece itself. When somebody comes along and says "I want 50%," 50% of what? Of my grandfather's sweat, my father's and my mother's sweat? On the other hand, the museums want to buy my work. But what you must realize is that when that piece is bought, it is put on the floor for a year, and then buried for the next hundred years. As long as the piece is not here for me to control—so that you may see it—it means that I can be bought out of existence. There is not a patron willing to donate so many thousands of dollars to keep that piece of work on the floor. So, for the next 300 years I have never existed. What this means is that I cannot afford to take the money that is sometimes offered to me. A multiplicity of things happen; the black artists, and so many other third world artists, have to deal with many problems.

—What thoughts do you think the gallery and museum directors have in their heads when they make these statements? Is it because it is the work of a woman? a black woman?
It is the result of the way one has been educated, of the way one has been shown. It is only recently that kids are seeing black people in art books. Unless you looked at National Geographic, you would not see billboards with black people. There was no such thing. No reflection of you or me anywhere. Like a blitz, a desert. Everything you saw was what surrounded you—your family and such. If they had a strong image, then you had a strong image.

I grew up in New York-Harlem-and I got around quite a bit. My mother was the type of person who would send me anywhere, so I rode the trains and buses at a very young age. I had no fears about going anywhere. If I was the only black person, it did not occur to me to notice that fact. I was occupied with what I had come to see.

—In what galleries have you exhibited?
All kinds. Not many here in New York, but by choice. I have been exhibiting in the streets since I was 19, and people have offered to buy things from me. Before I even knew who I was, I had intuitively said no to these offers. This may, at the end of my life, have been an error, but it is the way I have operated.

I have some graphic work showing in South American museums. It is an exhibit presenting the work of several black graphic artists. And I have some work in a three woman show travelling in Sweden. I thought the Swedish exhibit would

be good—my intuition said 'okay, I can do this.' I basically live and do my work by intuition. I cannot look at my work like it is a great business adventure. I do not know if I am going to live past tomorrow, so I cannot say 'I am going to do this or that in the future.' Now is the time to do it.

—And if something happens to you? What will happen to your works of art?

I would like my work to go to Black institutions, a place where young blacks—all kinds of people—will see it. Not all of my works need go to one place, in case something happens to that institution. I do not want any of it to be in a place where it may be buried, or taken for a personal collection. I do not pay much attention to my prints and paintings. People can buy them—except for the ones about which I feel very strongly.

—Did African art have any influence on your work?

All I saw was us, my own people. People would often say that my work looked African. My work represents the way my impressions came through me. As for the images, an African artist and I may have similar ones. We are exactly the same—the way it has always been—in the way we sit, the way we carry ourselves, the way we talk. Afro-Americans use another language, but the tone and mannerisms are exactly the same.

I went to Africa for the first time last year for the Festac Festival '77, where black people from all over the world—artists, musicians, dancers—gathered together. There I received the opportunity to see and feel the tremendous palette of our people, and how we reflect upon each other.

Afro-Americans have been here over 300 years. That realm of time is like a grain of salt in comparison to how long we have been on this earth. It is nothing. How I see did not come from the outside, but from within. I do my art the way I feel it.

In terms of visual things, when I was younger my mother would take me down to the Village, to Chinatown, and I always asked, 'Where are the pictures of us?' There were few blacks. Bearden Lewis, Morris and Jacob Lawrence, and other people were working in New York City at that time, but I did not know it. I belonged to the YMCA and other community organizations, but I just never went to their art centers. I never knew they were there until I was older—and that was pure coincidence.

Chinese and African art were the first two types of art to instruct me spiritually. Whatever it was that hit me when I saw those images was a matter of the spirit, and I immediately felt it and understood it. I always knew there were people like me. It was just a matter of finding them.

by Margarita Vargas

Valerie Maynard

Continued from page 7

SUNNI

I winged across roof tops and became a note. I was music, singing and shouting—REVOLUTION—REVOLUTION—REVOLUTION!!!!!!!!

Mama was fixin' Brown a plate. I could hear her clangin' the dishes in the cupboard as she was reachin' for the good dishes. She always serves Brown on the good dishes when he first comes home. She says after a mans been away workin' he ought to be treated to somethin' special, especially cause some of our men don't take care of business the way Brown do. I knew Brown was smilin'. He loved to eat Mama's cookin'. He always smiled 'round Mama anyway, cause he said she was a beautiful lady. Mama fried him some chicken and made him greens and fresh bread. Brown was makin' all kinds of sounds while he was eatin'.

"Umm, Ummm, Ummmm! Baby this is soo good!! Umm, Ummmmmm!!!!" Between his "Umms" he told Mama about his trip and wanted to know about the trouble in the neighborhood. I could hear Mama sigh real heavy as she sat down at the table across from Brown. She paused for a minute, then picked up the salt shaker and twirled it around a bit. That's how Mama do before she gets to talkin' about somethin' serious.

"Yeah, Brown, there's been lots of trouble 'round here since you been gone. You know them old broken down tenements up on the hill—well Jessie Durden and his gang set them on fire, it caused such a commotion everybody took to the streets. Seems like Jessie's family was livin' in a real bad building. there was no hot water, the toilets wasn't workin', no heat, chipped plaster, broken down stairs—the works. It was a real rat trap. Well anyway, poor Mrs. Durden and all her kids was the only ones left in the building. Conditions got so bad that anybody who could do it left. Poor thing—she tried so hard, but she just couldn't seem to find a place big enough for her and all her kids. Anyway, the landlord raised her rent, and set to collecting it too. He lifted not one finger to fix the place up. She couldn't pay no more rent—she could hardly pay what it was before. And you know Mrs. Durden, she's a proud woman—she wasn't collecting no welfare or nothing. Well honey, times got so bad that she wasn't makin' her rent payments at all. No sooner had two or three months gone by that white boy sent somebody from the court up here and had her served with an eviction notice. Her babies, and all her belongings was settin' right out on the street. The young folks 'round here got so mad—I mean you can't blame them. Jessie and the boys he stay with set fire to that building and every building like it. The hill was blazing! Lord, Brown, from that moment on people have been goin' crazy. Anything that wasn't owned by Blacks was destroyed. Not a white boy has been up this way since, 'cept the police of course. I've been told that it's not over. Theses children are talking about revolution. Can you imagine, REVOLUTION! I'm so afraid one of these kids is gong to be killed. It scares me to let Cissy out, but I'm really upset when I have to let Naomi go. Brown, she's so young to see all of this."

"Now Maxine, the world is turning, and things are changin'. We have our part to do and the kids have theirs. You gonna have to understand what they be tellin' us."

Revolution, I hardly knew what the word meant. I asked Cissy and she said we was fighting The Man. But I didn't know what man she was talkin' about. Ida said it had somethin' to do with white people. The only white people I knew was my teachers in school and the old jew man what came collecting money for furniture.

White folks didn't phase me. My teachers never bothered with me and I never bothered with them. We never read anything good in class, so I read my own books what Cissy got from the library. The old jew man smelled funny, so I never went around him when he came to our building, 'cides he never came to our house. My mind was mixed up. Cissy told me revolution was going to free all poor people like us. I didn't know we was poor, so I started cryin'. I didn't want to be poor, cause then maybe somebody would put us out on the street like they did to Mrs. Durden.

Brown was gonna be home for a couple of months, and since Mama was so worried about us Brown promised to meet us by the projects everyday after school. Brown stood tall like a big bear, always looking in the direction we was comin' from. He kept one hand in his waist pocket, while the other hand held a toothpick in his mouth. Occasionally he let it tease one of his back teeth or pick at his gold tooth. As soon as he'd see us comin' he'd start to smile, and me and Cissy smiled back, always walkin' faster to get to him. Brown gave off heat, he be warm just like Sunni be warm. Sometimes they put me to mind of each other. Cissy said it was because they was both guerillas, and guerillas don't take no shit! But I was scared of gorillas, so I thought it was just because of what I said—they both be real warm. Everyday Brown had a treat for us. Sometimes he'd pull four or five Mary Janes from his pocket, or he'd let us stop at Phil's Candy Store, where we could pick out anything we wanted. When Brown walked us home I felt real good. He got a way what always made me feel like jumpin' up in his pocket and hangin' out with all his dimes and quarters and Mary Janes. That was one thing 'bout Brown, he never kept no pennies, just big change.

On Monday afternoon me and Cissy got up to the projects and Brown wasn't there. Cissy said maybe Brown forgot 'cause it was Monday, the first day of the week and all; but I knew Brown didn't forget. He don't forget nothin', and 'cides Brown never breaks a promise, and he promised Mama he'd meet us. My heart started beatin' kinda fast, and I thought that we

Continued on page 43

Carl Yatos

Photograph by Jack Luron

WHAT IS AN ENO?

DANCE

What is an Eno? Eno is an Afrikan word originating from northern Nigeria. Roughly translated, it means the "gift of God." I would not be so audacious as to grant myself a name that is an attribute of God because, in all honesty, I don't feel that I am worthy of such titles.

The name, "Eno," was granted to me in 1970 in Portland, Oregon by Dr. Okon Essiet, Ministry of Education, Calabak, Nigeria. Dr. Essiet was teaching at Mt. Hood Community College and had formed an Afrikan-based cultural group call the "Oyoyos." Many days and nights I spent with the Essiet family breaking bread, exchanging histories, and sharing cultural traits. And, there was plenty of dancing! The Essiets and I would dance at the beginning, middle, and end of each visit. This was a form of communication; a sharing of hope, love and trust. We were all secure within our individual identities and our cultural ties. Dr. Essiet told me that I danced "like a Hausa (an indigenous people of Northern Nigeria)," and termed my style "asabo" again, roughly meaning, "controller of natural sources." I danced with the Oyoyos until the Essiets returned to Nigeria three years later.

As Donald Washington, I had been a principal dancer in two other community-based groups: "Ibanduwo," and "We Black and Tans," between the years 1967 and 1970 in Portland. Both companies were based at the former Albina Arts Center, once a thriving hotbed for Black talent and creators. "We Black and Tans" evolved into "Ibanduwo" and both groups fought for years attempting to keep the building from being foreclosed for non-payment of utilities. Benefits for the Black community in Portland, Eugene, Oregon, or even the Oregon State Penitentiary became our trademark. We supported ourselves by doing every other thing. We were not bitter about our sacrifices because it was this "dues" that brought our collective art and beings together. We made masks, graphics, taught art, dance, music, and crafts free of charge to children and adults at Albina Art Center. Just as politics and culture are not separated in the traditional Afrikan sense, neither is it in the Pan-Afrikan sense. The Black and Tans, and Ibanduwo had many exchanges with the "Black Educational Center," Portland's only accredited school for the "positive education" for Black children. Though the Black and Tans and Ibanduwo have physically disbanded and members relocated to different parts of the globe, there is still constant communications. All of us, though staunch individuals, still retain inseparable communal and ancestral links. Our bond has been forged in the fire of our wills and the purgatory of our existences.

I remember dancing from the time I first learned to walk, but since I don't recall how old I was at the time, I usually say that I've been dancing since 1960 when I first learned an Afrikan-American social dance called "the Watusi." I was always the last one on the block to learn a dance, but once I learned something, I would never forget it. I practiced constantly and one of my favorite methods of retention was to learn a dance "backwards" or in reverse order. I do remember before I was officially enrolled in kindergarten, I would watch my mother and father from my bedroom as they danced the "St. Louis Bop," a dance evolving out of the original "Lindy Hop," or "Jitterbug." My mom and dad were somewhat amused by my interest in dance, and later showed me how to "bop," designating a broom as my temporary "partner." I continued to catalog movements, steps, dances, and history, into a personal vocabulary of Pan-Afrikan dance. I have studied under such great teachers as Mrs. Jacqueline Schumacher of the Portland Ballet School, Ahmand Sahir, a great exponent of Afrikan dance, Raymond Sawyer, formerly working with the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre, and Nontsizi Cayou, a teacher of Afrikan and Jazz dance at San Francisco State College.

I have not limited myself to one particular style of dance. I incorporate all styles. A true artist cannot be limited by forms alone. Content and context determine forms and neither of these three can be viewed and evaluated separately

from the other two. This philosophy, while congruent to traditional or ancient Afrikan philosophies, is antithetical to Western or European derived philosophies. This philosophy is also true in Pan-Afrikan dance forms where matter and manner combine to produce certain contextual phenomena.

To describe what constitutes Pan-Afrikan dance, a brief overview of Afrikan dance must be presented. Afrikan dances are not considered to be "art" in the European sense of the word. It can generally be said that everyone in Afrika dances, except of course, those few individuals who identify with Western aesthetics and attempt to sever their historical and cultural ties with the land. It is not uncommon to see elderly Afrikan men and women dancing the same way one might expect to see children and young adults dancing. There are dances done for every occasion, and each dance and occasion has its own particular drum rhythm and musical pattern. The dance is not done for the sake of the particular individual or occasion, but for the entire Afrikan people.

The individual doesn't exist in a vacuum, but as an integral part of the Afrikan social system where democracy was first implemented on Earth. The Afrikan artist is a "functional" artist. Art has to have a purpose, a justification, and a meaning. Afrikan art cannot exist for its own sake, but for the sake of the communal body from which it spawns. When dance, which was first done to communicate with heavenly spirits, becomes a showpiece, it loses the power to bring people together and instead, it separates people into the privileged and the not-so-privileged. Though Afrikan dance has not been static, it has generally remained true to its historical context.

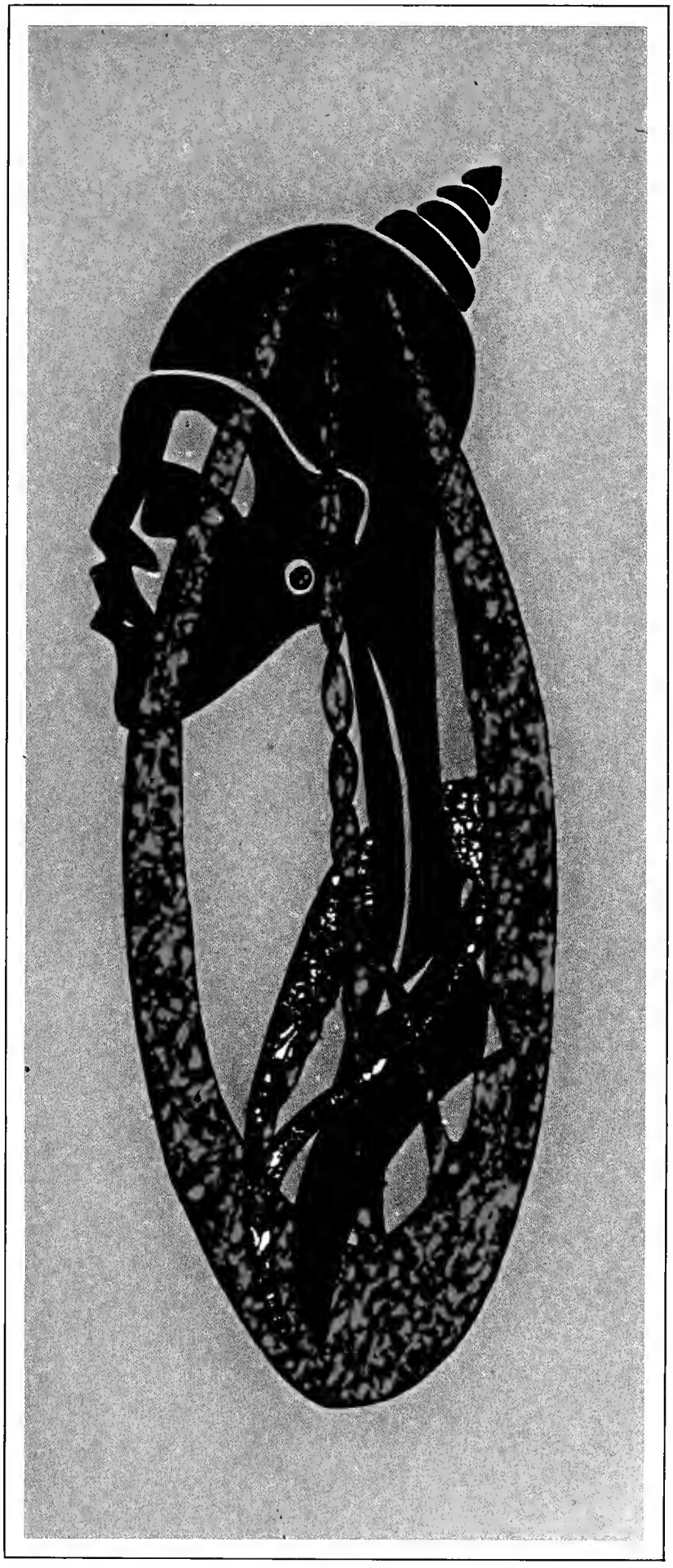
There are two types of Afrikan dance: recreational and ritual. Recreational dance is informal, allowing for free improvisations and closely following current trends in music, fashions, and standards of acceptable behavior. Ritual dances, however, are relatively unchanging. As stated by Lee Warren in her book, **The Dance of Africa**, ritual dances are "the bones and blood of Afrikan culture with deep psychological and religious roots." Afrikan dance has, for centuries, expressed a functional unity of art and life, a total synthesis of mind, body and spirit.

Under the yoke of colonization and slavery, Afrikan dance began to change. Many slaves brought into the West Indies were priests and religious leaders, and a number of surviving rituals have been shown to be similar to those performed in Afrika. According to historian John Hope Franklin, there was a great interchange of slaves between the West Indies and mainland Afrika which had an adverse effect on Afrikan dance.

The North American settlers stripped the Afrikans of their culture by prohibiting the playing of the drum and any gathering of large groups until 1812. The slave hunters purposely sought out, tortured, and killed the principal carriers of Afrikan history, religion, art, science and medicine. The principal carriers of African culture were the witch doctors, the musicians, the dancers, and the priests. The immediate and extended families were slaughtered as well because the slave owners knew that Afrika was basically a non-literate (not illiterate) system of education, i.e., oral tradition,

Continued on page 69

Photograph by Ana Andreu



An Inmates Work—Anonymous

FOR DOLLAR BRAND

Piano keys paint this scene:
Woven gold cloth
torn by voracious winds
and flapping over a rust desert.
And piano keys paint this scene:
A black bar of cloud
hangs iron heavy
over a bone-dry sand belly.
That is us,
storm sight
cloud obscured.
But Dollar Brand stands,
a South African man,
in touch with all his land
and space, intones us to feel
the immeasurable mercy
of Allah; O play Abdullah Ibrahim.
Compose a
prelude-
humanity
against
all odds.

Frieda Jones

Photograph by Edward Cohen

BUTTERFLY WINGS

Love flies with the colored wings of the Butterfly.
I borrow a pair and take flight.

Her wings are often whimsical,
Ephemeral,
Flying here, there,
Away.

I've bypassed these.

Mine is the Butterfly, landing
When he has discovered that special flower
holding his nectarous existence.

May you be that flower,
And I
your Butterfly,
where on my colored wings
in a benign symbiosis of love,
We'll fly above
the mundane and earthly ills,
Prospering, Caring, Loving.

Last nite
I tossed through
significant dreams
that pointed towards
my former pain with you.

It still lives
inside my soul,
rotting away my insides
and asking why? how?
and getting no answers.

I sit here
wondering why
this rift between us. . . ?
who broke the spell
we cast upon each other?

Geneva Mae White

Photographs by Edward Cohen

John Kendrick

Spirits in the Street I

To My Friend 12, April 1976 1:40 am

My Friend
Your face drowned
in
silent tears-
it is not your time to smile.
Your terrestrial high
has
de
scend
ed
fifty leagues beneath
seas of blue.
Slowly
pain
envelops
your body's desires/
quiet wanting to speak/
be with/of someone.
My friend-
THE CREATOR HAS A MASTER PLAN;
We
need not know what it is,
We
need only to come unto self and
believe.
Through belief,
positivity will flow
as
the con
tin
u
ous
thoughts
through the
crevices
of your troubled mind.
My friend
carefully float
above the sea—
float
that
the
essence
of
blue
will not
evade you. . .
that one day
the light of blue
will
shine
unto you.
As-Salaam-Alaikum

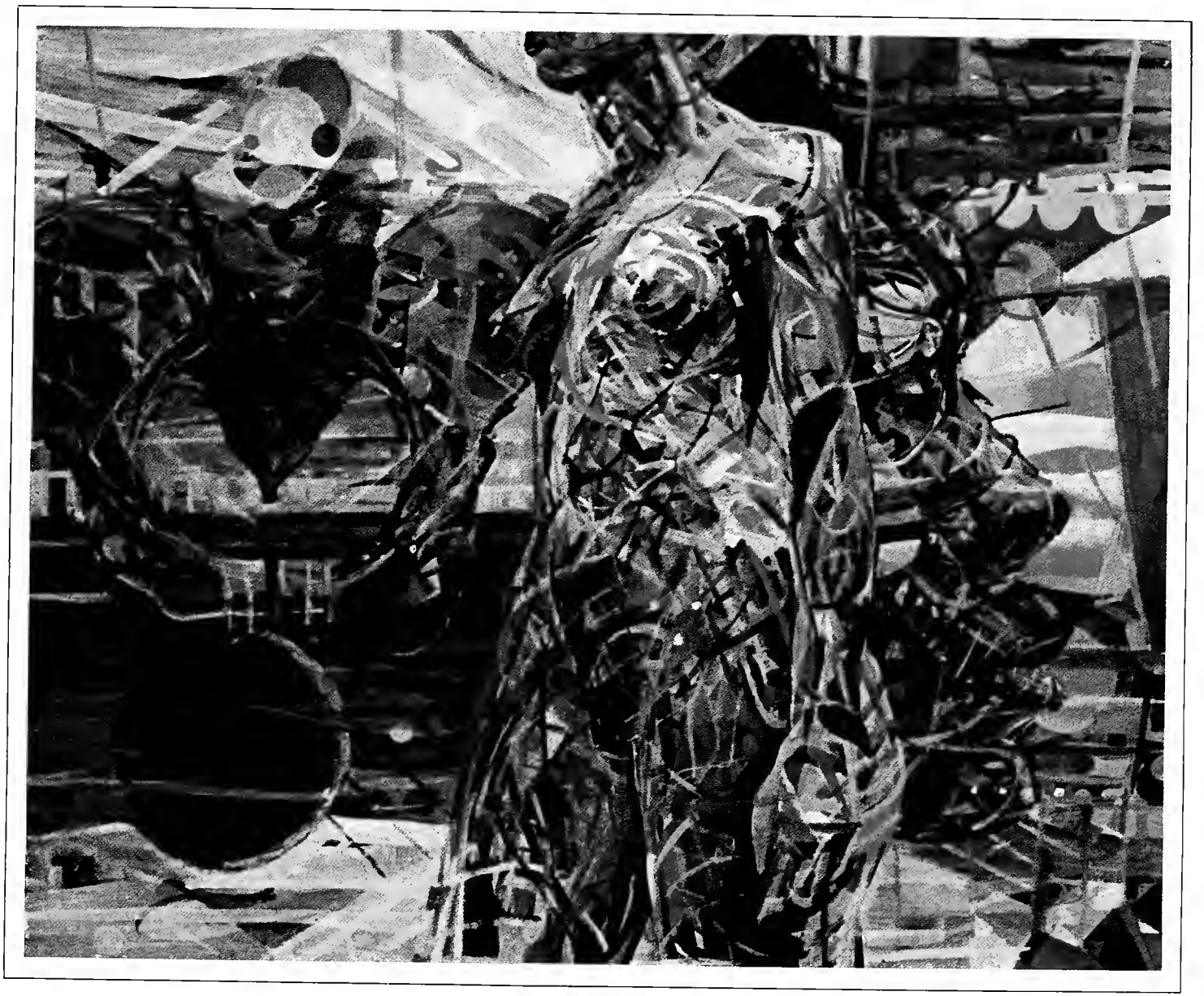
Zenola Harper

Decisions

an aura beckons us
as we tread from here
to a distant place.
we follow bent fingers
in patterns that wind
distortingly;
look for solid ground
and stable stars
to proclaim our journey
definite.
one finds a comfortable
place to rest
and dormantly remains.
another is reminded
of a hiatus in the past
and returns to
familiarity.
and we follow bent fingers
that tell us to try
to catch up to ourselves.

Jacqueline L. Jones

Dana DeBarros



Oya, Hoo Doo Bone Series

Nelson Stevens

I Remember Yesterday

Yesterday I ran on youthful legs
through a field of golden wheat, and
each one of those beautiful plants
held hands and formed a golden
carpet especially for me. When
I decided I no longer wanted to
run, my friend the wind breathed
her light summer breezes, carrying me
wherever I pleased to go.

Yesterday invisible hands visited me on several
occasions bringing cake and ice cream, and even
a brand new dress. I never worried about those
hands because I knew they'd always return.

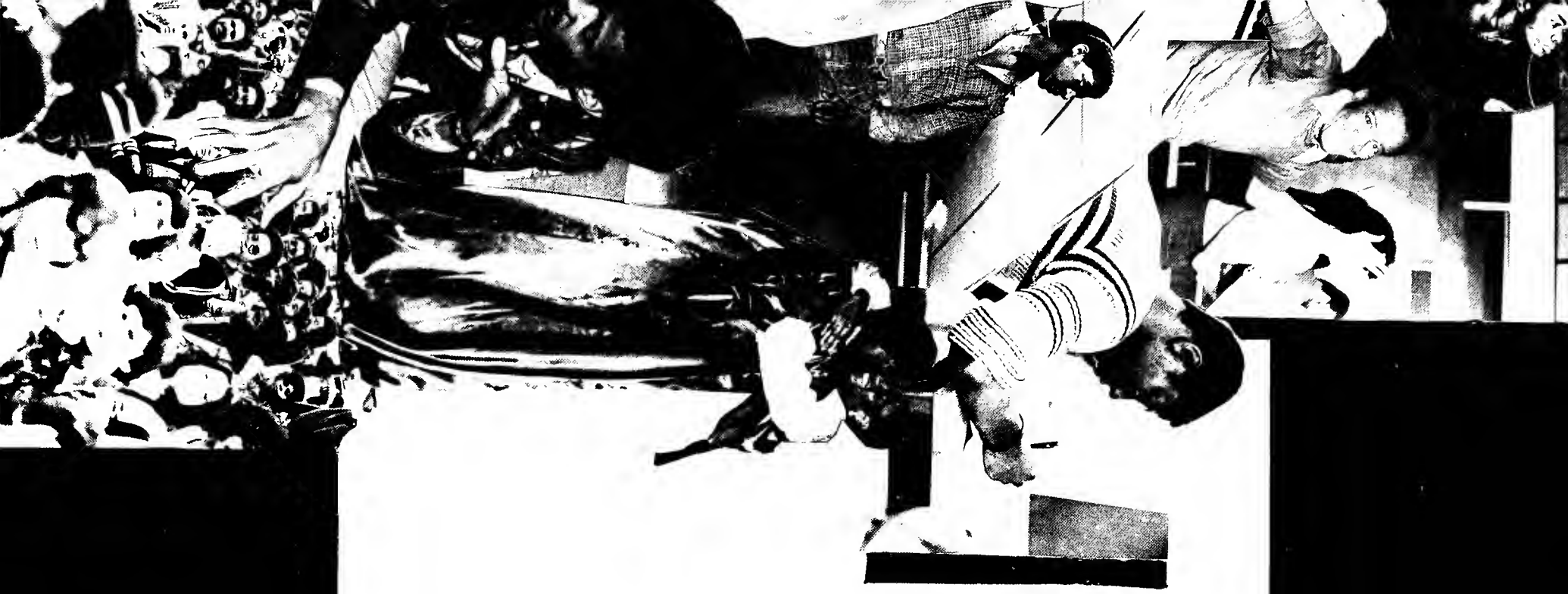
Today I walk through a cement jungle on maturing legs,
and each pebble makes its way through the holes
in the bottoms of my shoes. When I get tired of
walking, the wind blows her hot heavy breath on me
sending me in the direction she pleases.
Sometimes I land at the unemployment office,
sometimes to a new house-cleaning job.

Today invisible hands brought my gas, light, phone bill,
and even a can of leftover pork and beans. I worry
about those hands now, because I know they'll
always return.

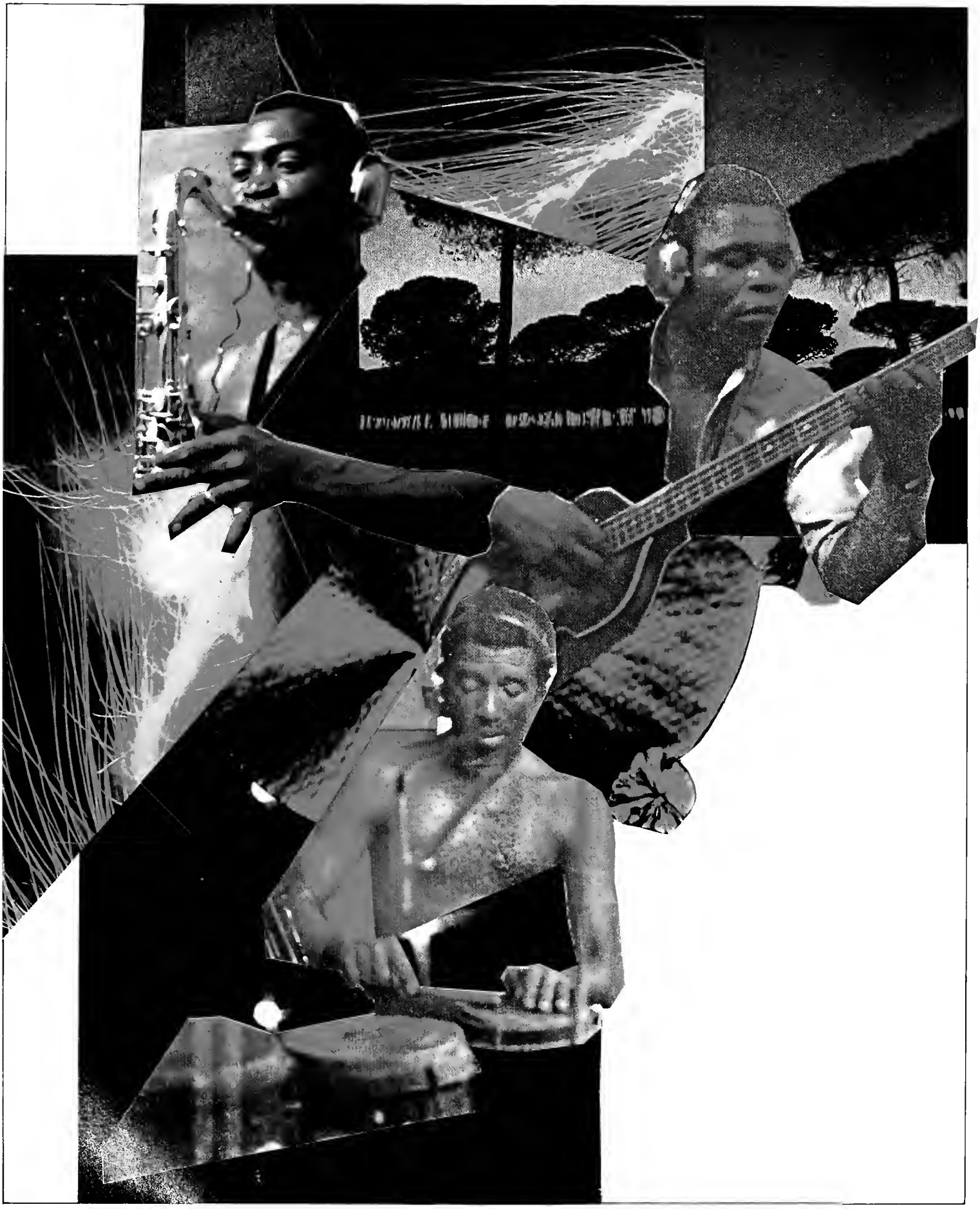
As a warm, wet tear rolls down an aging face,
landing into a can of leftover pork and beans,
I remember yesterday.

Sartreina Cooper

Frank Thornton



CAMPUS LIFE



Tribute to Fela and Afro-Beat

Carl Yates

H_2O Ritual II

John A. Kendrick

Chicago Winter Remembered

Nipping winds of January come
bluing raw lips of winter
From the lake, now solid Michigan
ice cracking breaths send away
the cold: "We have walked four winter days
deep in snow carrying a pair
of shoes and a box of tampons."
Preparing for our future;
fixing our footsteps firmly. Sometimes
we inch on along slowly
ignoring the lake, now solid
Michigan, sending winter
upon us. We pause between buildings
to hide; too tired to retreat
to a better place. Icicles melt
under my skirt-thick-opaque-
rich-against the dark brown of my legs.

Cassandra West

DANCE (YOUNG DIANA)

Self possessed while looking inside at something hip
I saw me moving
You can move for the right reasons
You can move for the wrong reasons and get hurt bad
You can move and soothe the pain
Move rock and raise a child
Move reel and cop an attitude
Somebody watching you move saw you cop that attitude
And became rich
Don't pretend to move
Really move and fake them out

Bill Hasson

The eve of the unbirth of my child
I sit,
I think,
I wonder what it would be like
To have this seed grow round inside of me-
Kick, tumble and turn.
Then to have it emerge
As an alive human being.
To hear its cries.
To see the first trace of a smile,
And to feel the tender soft skin.
To watch it learn and grow
And suddenly be old someday
To face a dreaded decision like my own.
The eve of the unbirth of my child
I cry.
Why
or
Just when it was
But remembering still
That it was a sweet kiss.

****

After it was finally over-
She was glad.
She fought it to the end,
Crying and cursing him and yet
Loving him.
She knew if she could just
Do the right thing
Or whisper the right words,
He would fall to his knees
And realize what he had denied them both.
The months of frustration
Turned into years
And love became a gnawing obsession.
She was filled with need
Until one day she realized
It was not the need of him
But the need of love that drove her.
Slowly, she stopped the pleas,
The nagging and the tears,
And the painful gnawing also ceased.
After it was finally over
She was glad-
For then she was reborn.

Shelley Y. Johnson

Sunni—from page 24

should wait, but Cissy said no so we kept walkin'. Cissy was walkin' real fast and I had to run to keep up with her. She laughed at me and said we got out early anyhow, and we would probably meet Brown on the way, but she still walked real fast. We got up to Phil's Candy Store and Ida was in there.

"Hey y'all, come on in and I'll get you some jaw breakers!" I was going to go on in, but Cissy hollered out, "Another time Ida we gotta be getting home." I got mad with Cissy, but she said that I ate too much candy anyway. My mind went back to Brown, cause I knew if he was here he would let me get some jaw breakers—and then I started thinkin' about where he could be.

We turned into our block and there was a crowd of folks around our stoop. I couldn't see much of anything and went to run off into the crowd, but Cissy grabed my hand and pulled me up on Miss Smith's steps. From there I could see everything. Felicia Roberts was screamin' and cryin' over her husband Ray who was layin' in the street bleeding. Some cop had his hands on Brown, and Brown was yellin' for him to take his hands off of him.

"Get your fuckin' hands off me, cocksucker!!"

"You better get in that car monkey!!"

"Hell motherfuckin' NO!!!!!!!! Brown jerked himself away. Another cop came 'round behind him with a coke bottle in his hand. He lifted it over Brown's head. "BROWN, BROWN!!!!" I screamed, and Browns' blood came pouring out of his head like water gushes from the hydrants in summer. I pulled away from Cissy and tried to get to Brown.

Brown was punchin' one cop in the face and ended up pickin' up another one and threw him onto his car. Jimmie Durden and his brother came 'round from behind me with bottles and bricks. People were hollering——voices screamed from everywhere. I couldn't tell one from another. It all seemed like ONE LOUD CRY. Somebody roared, "Oh Shit!" and then I heard a shot. The same sound I heard when little Rickey died and Sunni's horn cried, Help Us, Help Us!!! I screamed for Mama, I screamed for Cissy. People kept pushin' me away from the house, but I could still see. Brown was on the ground. I kept cryin' for BROWN-BROWN-BROWN!!! I was hollerin' and jumpin' up and down. It seems that something entered me and wouldn't let me go. I was shaking and trembling. My lungs ached. With every breath I took the pain reached across my chest, yet I screamed louder and louder. I pulled on somebody's pants and just hurled myself into the crowd, tumbling like a trash can takin' by the wind. Someone stepped on my hand and the pain went right through me, clearing my head, and opening my nostrils. I couldn't even cry. I felt these hands on me, firm around my waist. I was being lifted. Seems like I was going up and up and up real high. I knew then I was in Sunni's hands.

Folks called it brutality, and I knew what they meant. I saw that bottle in those white hands, as it opened Brown's head. I saw Ray's life juices flow all over our street. His blood is only a faint stain in the sidewalk now; but sometimes when I pass I can see the blood filling the cracks in the pavement, just like it did that Monday.

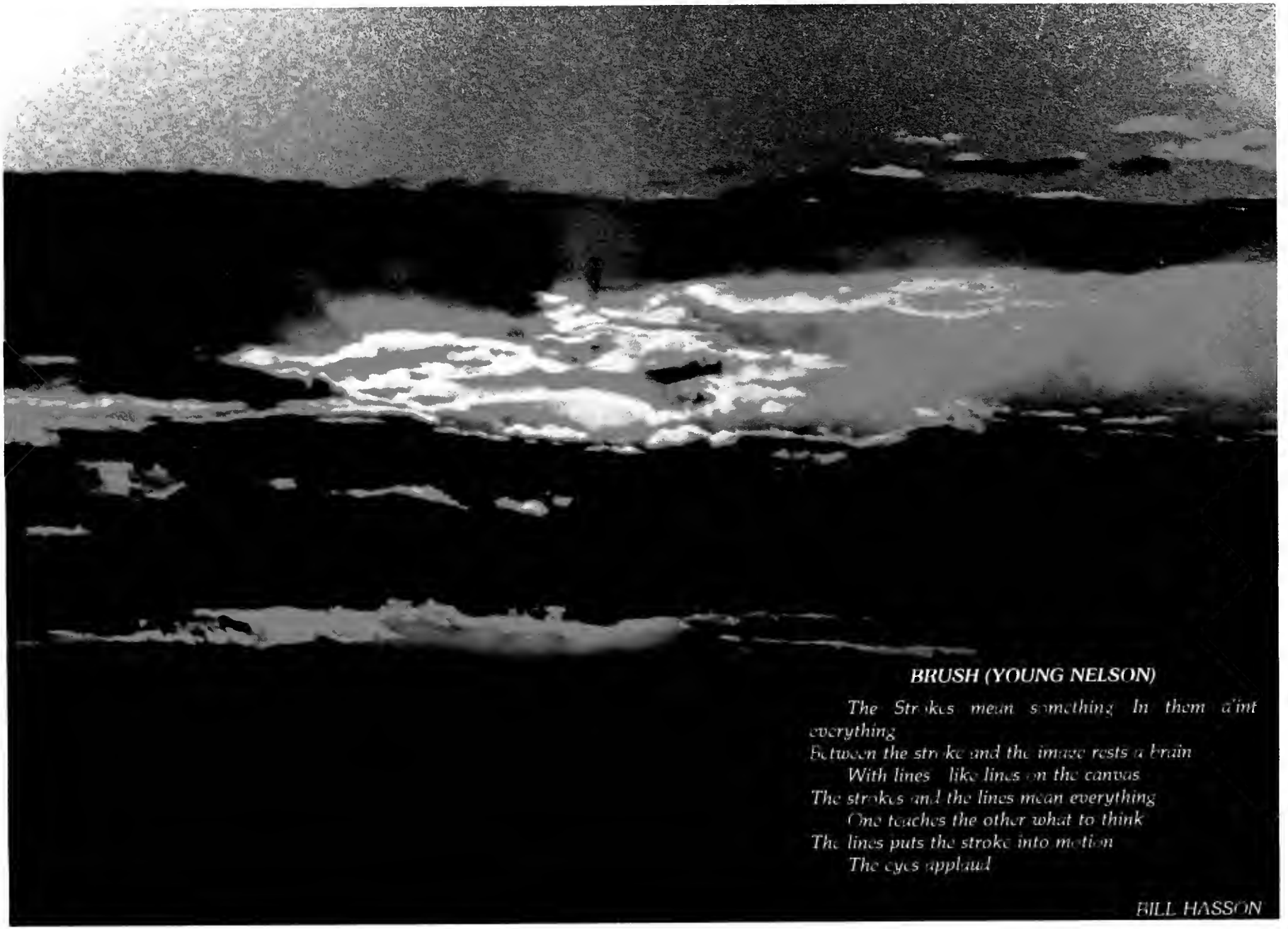
Ray died a few days later and the street echoed with Felicia's wails for weeks. I thought maybe Brown was gonna die too. I couldn't keep nothin' on my stomach, cause my fears lived in my stomach and wouldn't let anything else in. I couldn't go to the hospital cause I was too young, but Sunni told me that Brown was sittin' up and smilin'. He said survival was Brown's resistance. I must have looked real strange cause all Sunni said after that was "A change is gonna come."

Summer time came and Brown was in prison. Sunni moved away, but came back some nights to play his horn. Folks draped the street to listen to Sunni talk. Mama let me sit on the stoop with her and we had jugs of Kool-Aid and bags of nuts to munch on. One night when Sunni came around we all took turns singin' and dancin' while he played his horn. Cissy got up and read a poem she wrote for Sunni.

Sunni's got a new thing goin'
See him there, cuttin' the fool;
  He's really a mean dude.
Last night Sunni was
  blowwoowooin' his horn
  talkin 'bout thems that got
    and thems that not
Sunni says we thems that got.
He jammed and grooved cooling the
smelting pavements and heating
  the
  minds of Black folk
      hangin' out windows
      sittin' on stoops
Sunni riffed through the streets
and bounced in the alley,
he flew across the roof
    then got down in the basement.
Yeah, Sunni got a thing goin' on
Rappin' to Black folk 'bout solid
  things
Like REV-O-LU-TION!!!!!!!!!!

A New Love, A New Season
for 22 million ex-slaves.

Everybody clapped real loud for Cissy, and Sunni gave her a kiss on the cheek. He played his horn long and low. Mama smiled and I fell asleep on Mama's lap, thinkin' 'bout Brown and how I wished he was home.

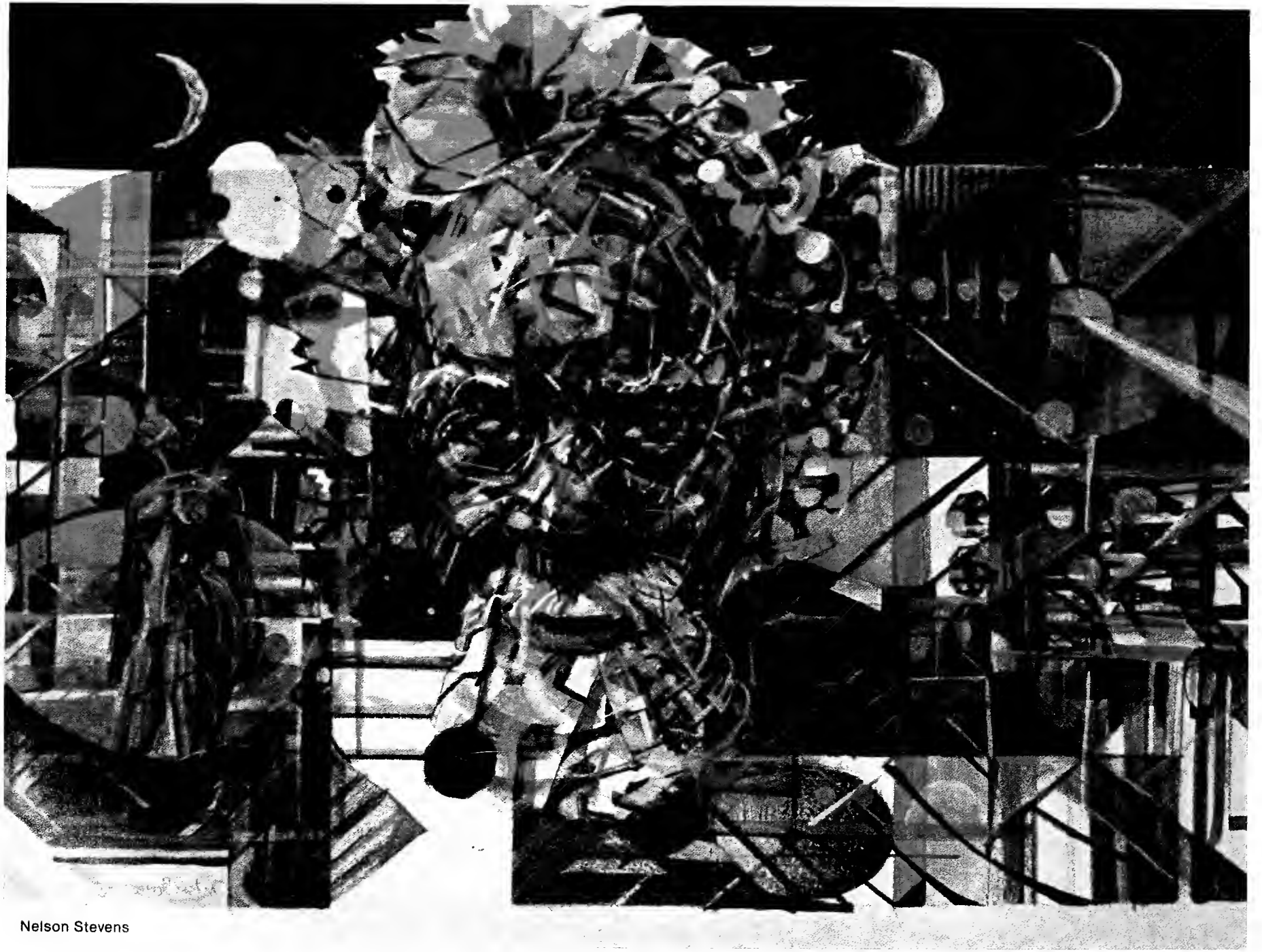


BRUSH (YOUNG NELSON)

The Strokes mean something In them a'int everything
Between the stroke and the image rests a brain
With lines like lines on the canvas
The strokes and the lines mean everything
One teaches the other what to think
The lines puts the stroke into motion
The eyes applaud

BILL HASSON

Photograph by Miriam Carter



Nelson Stevens

Wisdom in the New Moon, Bringing Gifts, Shango Series

LAZARO

aqui estoy en la vanguardia de los presos,
atado y escapando,
orando y maldiciendo,
viviendo el resto de mi cuerpo
medio muerto.

"Lazaro, levantate y dispara."

Es un grito que me personaliza.
Espera!
Hoy, soy el arquetipo, la pregunta;
manana, al hombre que hoy quisiera,
la respuesta.

LAZARUS

Here I am among the vanguard of prisoners,
rope-bound yet breaking loose,
praying yet cursing,
my trapped half-dead body only half alive.

"Lazarus, get up and shoot."

That warscream makes me real, concrete.
Hold on!
Today I'm only an archetypical question;
tomorrow I'll be the man I'd like to be:
the answer itself.

TU Y YO Y TODOS

Hice crecer mis dedos tratando de alcanzarte
y converti los ojos en una hoguera abierta
para que hubiera luz:
te tuve entonces cerca.

Quise hacerte sentir todo mi nombre
y con una hacha rompi cientos de huesos
del escombo que era yo
cuando me hacia difisil.

En el fondo vi que eramos muchos
picando a dentelladas el silencio.
Y abriendo por los labios de la noche
un gran camino.

corrimos tu y yo, y todos nosotros,
asesinando yardas de terreno
sin prestarle atencion al flaco viento,

que al vernos de las manos de los ostros
colgar como un helecho,
detuvo su marcha;
y, encorvado,
lloro la ausencia de recuerdos.

YOU AND I AND EVERYONE

I made my fingers grow trying to reach you
and changed my eyes in burning charcoal pits
into light.
Then I got you close.

I wanted to make you feel **all** *my name.*
So with an ax I broke hundreds of bones
that were fragments of what
I was when I used to make myself incomprehensible to you.

At rock bottom I saw that we were many
persons biting silence with our teeth
and opening through the lips of night
a huge passage.

We all ran, you and I and everyone
assassinating distances
and ignoring
the skinny wind who

in seeing us hanging from each others' hands
like fern-leaves from a stem
stopped
and bending down
whined over the absence of memories.

LE PREGUNTO A UN HERMANO

Te pregunto, hermano,
hacia donde volcare mis ojos
manana cuando el sol traicione
la espalda de los montes.
Te pregunto hacia donde
porque han muerto los caminos
y no hay puertos en las orillas de los mares.
Te pregunto, hermano,
porque tengo que partir hacia algun lado,
solicitar un rumbo;
y se me ha hecho tarde.
"Hacia mi, companero,
hacia mi que te llevo a los ostros hermanos."

TO A BROTHER

I'm asking you, brother,
where I can turn my eyes
tomorrow when the lit sun betrays
the mountains' backbone.
I'm asking you where
because all the roads are dead
and there are no jetties on the oceanfronts.
I'm asking you, brother,
because I've got to go someplace,
I have to find the route,
my time is running out.
"Come towards me, comrade,
I'll take you to the rest of the brothers."

Poems by Miguel A. Rivera

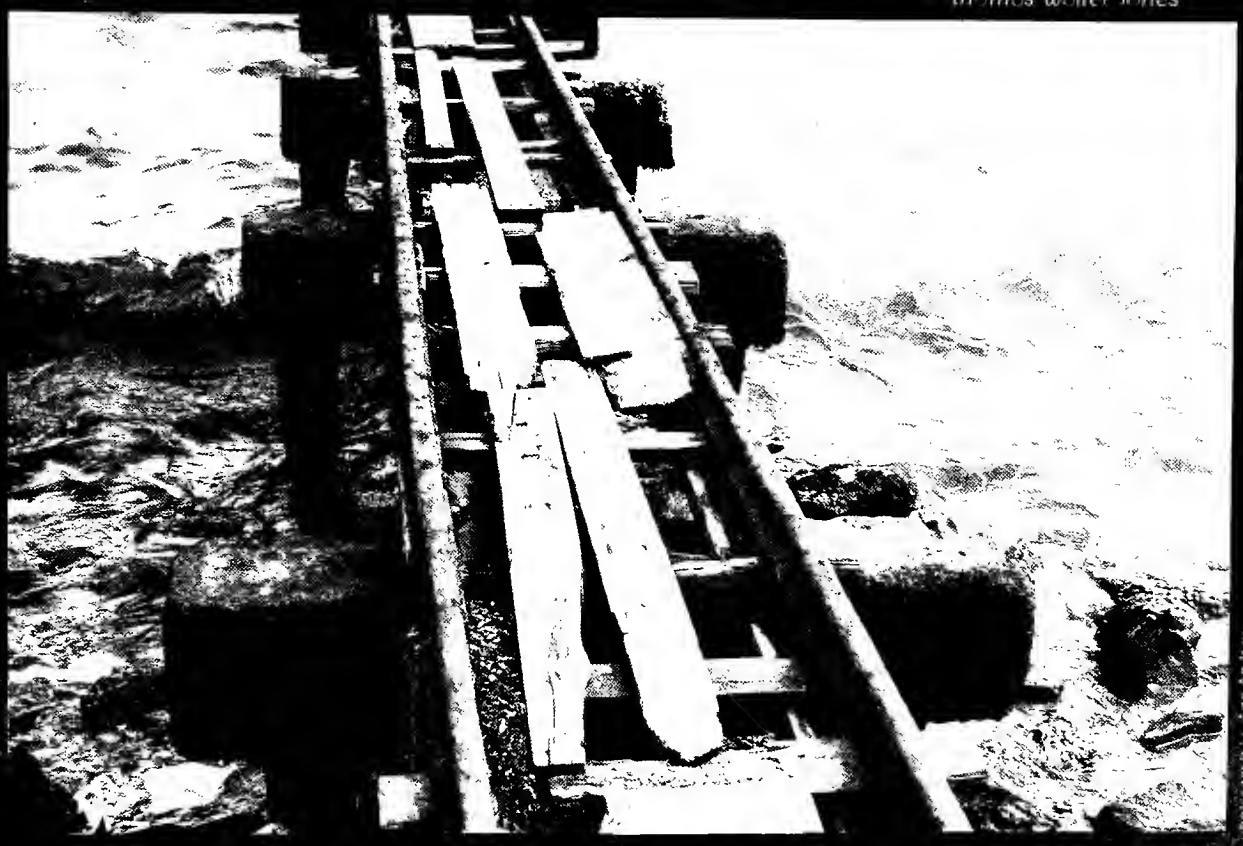
Untitled Song of Love (for charlene)

i am a reaper of nights
giving birth to its song,
and i scream with mourning
turning in seasons.
i am a reaper of broken colors
that trap love in these eyes of meaning-
these eyes soft as dew,
faint as breath exhumed in bendings of the wind,
glistening silently
as whispers of rain are the sky's barren voices.
and in these seasons
death is carrion laced on static wings

spat upon the horizon.

once when earth was again naked
there was you as there was
eye,
and our dance was ripe with rhythm;
it was supple as water teasing the shore. . .
fanciful like haitian markets that sweep colors
into air.
and i/eye
i am a dreamer, this night,
my love splinters in smiles
and is naked
a prism raw upon an ebbing shore.
this feeling grows vain against its laughter,
tattered like memories of aging words.
but it writhes and seethes with sinew.
and i am with love
in this bending night of dreams.

thomas wolter jones



CCEBS Door: *Honor to the Ancients* Margarita Vargas

John Kendrick

Spirits in the Street II

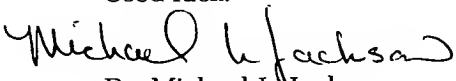
CCEBS 1978 GRADUATES

The committee for the Collegiate Education of Black Students (CCEBS) would like to congratulate the Class of 1978. This year's graduation exercises will mark the sixth time that CCEBS students will receive their diplomas from this institution. It is our most fervent hope that this year's graduating students will be as successful in their career and life pursuits as their predecessors have been. Many of you have been accepted into graduate and professional schools and some of you have decided to take positions in the business and corporate community. But, no matter what you have decided to do, you must realize that you are truly fortunate to have the opportunities you now have before you. It is imperative that you take advantage of them. It is of the utmost importance that you continue to strive for intellectual and personal growth. It is also very necessary that you never forsake those who have helped you to progress this far. Remember, you do have a responsibility to your family, friends, classmates, and the academic advisers that have aided you during your undergraduate years. Make them as proud as other former program graduates have. We now have alumni who have earned doctorates in medicine, education, dentistry, and psychology. We have alumni whose activities range from being on the staff of the Mayo Clinic to serving as executives of International Telegraph and Telephone. CCEBS alumni are now principals of schools, administering national education programs, and working in academic support programs at other colleges and universities. Many others are making contributions to their communities by working in public service agencies. I highlight these activities so that you will realize that you have a lot of "hard-acts" to follow. But, I know you can do it. The CCEBS staff and your families believe that you represent a new "elite." You symbolize the hope and desire for a brighter future, which we all share.

So, go forward and never be afraid. Remember, **there is no progress without struggle**. As Arna Bontemps said in his poem "Nocturne at Bethesda,"

"The golden days are gone. Why do we wait
So long upon the marble steps, blood
Falling from our open wounds? and why
Do our black faces search the empty sky?
Is there something we have forgotten?
Some precious thing we have lost,
Wandering in strange lands?"

Good luck.



Dr. Michael L. Jackson
Executive Director
Committee for the Collegiate
Education of Black Students

Marjorie B. Barnes
Donald Byrd
Giselene Charles
Sook N. Choo
Stephen J. Cleary
Michael E. Coblyn
Mary E. Custard
Alexander L. Daughtery
Dendra L. DeWitt
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Karl A. Erikson
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Judith Grillo
(Adele D. Hall) Arifah N. Rasool
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LaVerne D. Mitchell
Lloyd W. Alford
Frank Anderson
Lisa M. Clarke
Aundre L. Clinton
Walter Howard III
Judy A. Jones
Hubert L. Kelly
Lenora Mobley
Elaine Nichols
Yvonne (Brown) Powell
Michael B. Pyatt
Samuel C. Rivers

SPLICED

Like you,
those, who care,
live spliced
into the mountain,
going to the top,
always,
with everybody else,
equal step
for equal step.

With wild flowers
in your hair,
don't look back!

The plains are bare;
the hopeful,
like the sky,
are all around you.

Andrew Salkey

LOVE LAST FOREVER

It must be my fault
because you are gone
and I am left alone
I won't lie
I love you more than I realize
The love I feel for you
will never die
It will last as long
as creation
cause it is given to us by the Creator
I die each time our paths split
but new life is found
through an undying love
I am so sorry
I can't meet your desires
for whatever you want you should have
My arms are open
You may come to me or another
Don't worry about me
cause I love you enough
to want you to be satisfied

Annie Carpenter

Darlene Y. Spencer
Vickie T. Taylor
Melvin S. Downes
Broderic O. Grant
Judy Yee
Albert M. Morrishow
Linda J. Stalker
Geraldine Blocker
Valinda T. Cannady
Cathy Crosby
Toni J. Johnson
Kim O'Quinn
Sharon Turpin

ALONE

Whenever
I
Am Alone
My
Mind Wanders
To Visit Friends
And Family. Our Reunions
Are Always Nice; We Smile
And Laugh-Reminiscing of the Past
Until Again My Mind Wanders
Back Into The Present
And Once Again
I Am
Alone.

Harold Massey

Photograph by Debbie L

Freida Jones

"Bird and Bud and Minton's"

During the 1940's Minton's playhouse on 118th Street & 7th Avenue in Harlem, was one of the places where Charlie Parker, Bud Powell and many other master musicians developed the classic music known as Bebop.

Photograph by Ann Andrew

ROOTS

roots—the base of existence;
the foundation on which to build;
the backbone of our being; the heart.

to follow our lives backward in time;
to learn from past failures and accomplishments;
to trace the Tree back to the very beginning.

perhaps we'd all be surprised to find
our roots were all one and the same.

Barbara Jefferat

The literature which I am introducing are poems from brothers at Walpole State penitentiary. Society has excluded or tended to isolate these artistically inclined inmates. **Drum** has drawn special attention to these prisoners and has given them the recognition in which they deserve. We the members of **Drum** have the knowledge and the appreciation of the quality of your work. We are aware of the condensed language your poetry portrays. We hear and see your instantaneous convictions.

Brothers, you have helped us to help you communicate and contribute your talents to the outside world.

We Made Music

we made music
to be in rhythm with life
to laugh
to smile
to hum a natural tune
to a natural song
to get a mellow feeling
from a soul searching
musical dream
of perpetual happiness
WE . . . MADE . . . MUSIC

WE MADE MUSIC
to give life
where life was gone
to give hope
where hope was gone
to give a sing-a-long
with Aretha
for we fell
from a bridge
into trouble waters

and rode the waves
with Our guitars
Our drums
Our dreams
and our natural voices
So, we made music

Our vocalcords
harmonize
with divine togetherness
formulating
a beautiful scale
of sweet soulful sounds
which penetrates
the ears of man
and brings life
as a musical breath of air.

Omar Abdullah
(Clemis Franks)

Her Feelings

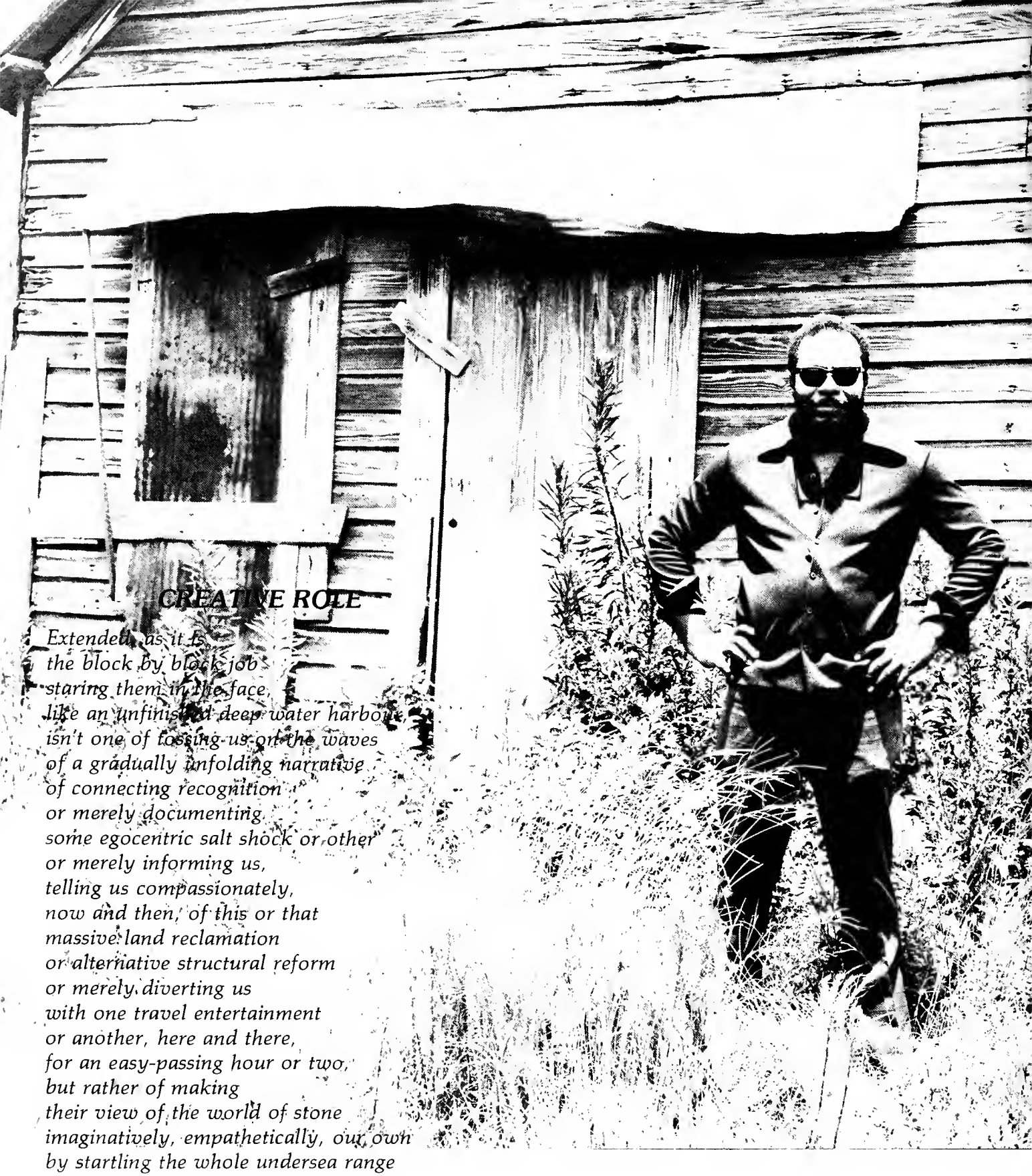
Say brother! Do you understand your woman's feelings?
Do you know how she feels, when you her man is gone, and she feels empty, or when she feels blue?
That's right brother, no man knows when trouble call and he isn't there, no man knows
when his woman is trying, while he is gone.
No man knows his woman's hurt and pain. Why?
Because no man really cares enough to give a damn.
Yes no man knows his woman's suffering when she's in need of his love.
No man knows when his woman's heart aches and her lips are silent.
Yes no man knows, that his woman really tries, no man knows her tears, or how she feels inside. No man knows, because no man takes time to give a damn.

Richard Alston

FESTAC 1977, Lagos, Nigeria

Photographs by Nelson Stevens

FESTAC 1977, Lagos, Nigeria



CREATIVE ROLE

Extended, as it is
the block by block job
staring them in the face,
like an unfinished deep water harbour,
isn't one of tossing us on the waves
of a gradually unfolding narrative
of connecting recognition
or merely documenting
some egocentric salt shock or other
or merely informing us,
telling us compassionately,
now and then, of this or that
massive land reclamation
or alternative structural reform
or merely diverting us
with one travel entertainment
or another, here and there,
for an easy-passing hour or two,
but rather of making
their view of the world of stone
imaginatively, empathetically, our own
by startling the whole undersea range
of the nerve-ends of our conscience
and leaving us slowly emerging
in a state of permanent change.

Andrew Salkey

The Ethiopian

I do not belong here.
My soul is heavy.
Will they change me?

The secret song is always in her heart.
She remembers Home—where the sun shone
Fierce against her naked breasts. Home,
Where she would be a princess, not a slave.
Home, where the flame trees burned.

I do not belong.
Here, my soul is heavy.
They will change me.

The grating words are always in her head.
She was unique. Her hair flowed like the Nile,
Her skin was black as onyx. She became
the one the master craved. Nine times
She pushed his life from her womb, and she is tired.

I do not belong.
My soul is heavy.
Here, they have changed me.

The droning chant is always on her lips.
She mutters it. Her hands, like withered birds,
Flutter softly in her lap. Her hollow
Eyes gaze at a graying ash tree.
It stands, dying, in the dusty yard.

My soul is heavy.
Change me.

Camilla Parham

Mural Program 1977: Paintings on Doors

Margarita Vargas

"Iblis, the beast in you"

big bad funky beast
getting down
singing, dancing
doing the double bump
kissing, laughing, loving, praying
playing the part of Jesus Christ
on Sunday
focusing on the immaculate conception
of Nuclear Warheads

you are
the humanitarian of death
Iblis, that diabolical beast
in living technicolor
instilling his very being
into the minds of the people
choking them to death
into a subconscience reality
a dream land

making monsters out of them
that encroach upon society
stealing their Welfare Checks
and their underwear

Dracula, Frankenstein
the Pope of Rome
Jack the Ripper, ripping off America
and sucking the blood out of
its vital organs
Getting high & high & high
& high & high
and falling off into a nod
into oblivion
not knowing if you're coming
or going or gone

big bad funky beast
trying to blow Gabriel's horn
but not knowing the tune
blowing his nose instead

trying to become a magician
ab-bra-cadabra
open sesame
pin the tail on the donkey
stick the pin in the doll
and puff
this society is turned
into a bag of fags,
with high heel shoes
and pocketbooks

preying on the educated
the ignorant
and the silent majority
that haven't got enough sense
to stop playing
Casper, the friendly ghost
or Silent Man
or Silent Mind
because everybody's dropping a dime
being a rat
watch me pull a rabbit
out of my hat

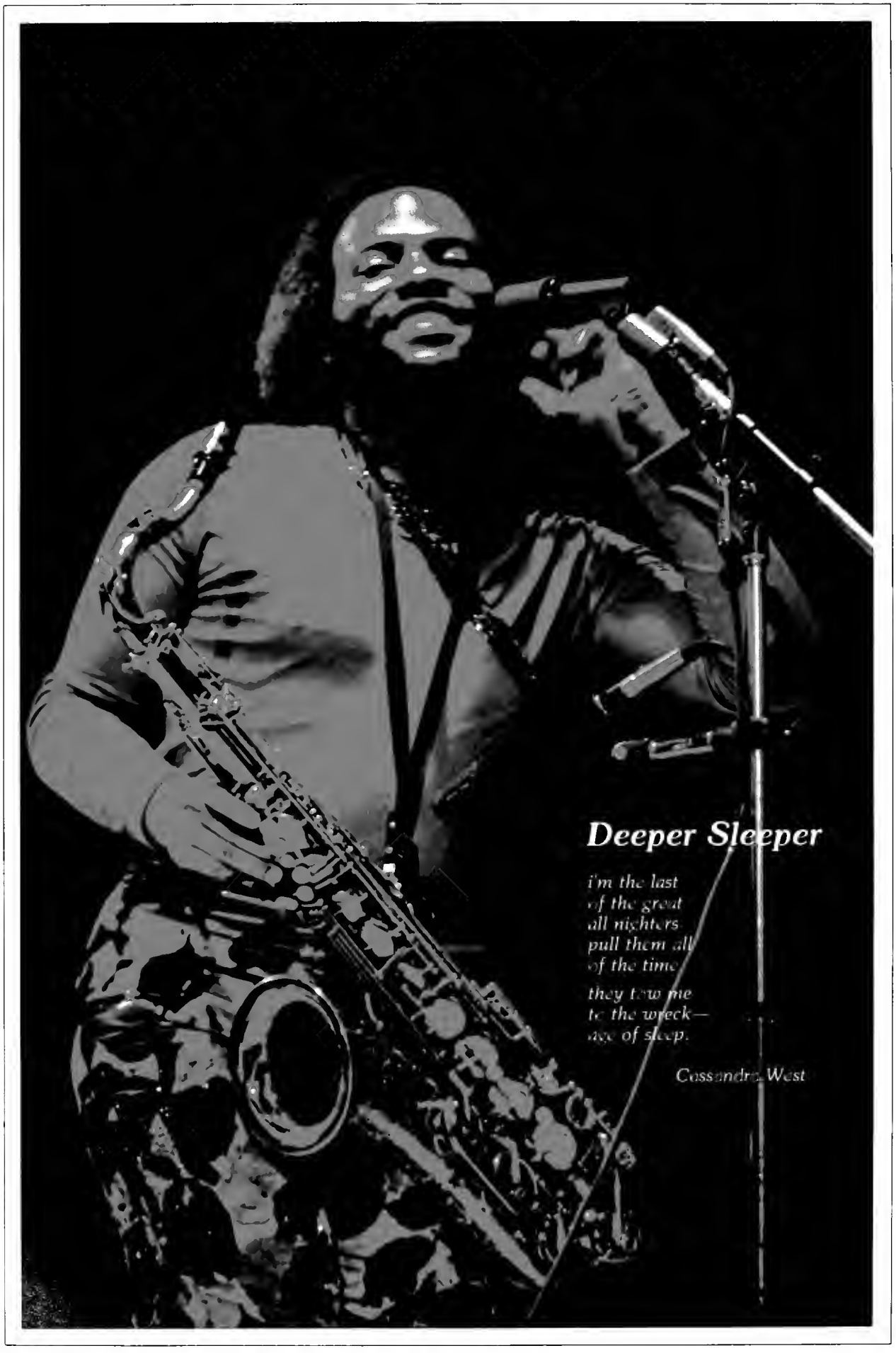
big bad funky beast
I know you
Here is wisdom.
Let him that have understanding
count the number of the beast;
for it is the number of a man.

Omar Abdullah
(Clemis X. Franks)

Awake

Awake Black brothers from this sleep you sleep.
Can't you hear your black women crying?
I have heard their cries.
I have seen your women, awaiting for relief
for a job
for you their men to awaken from the dead.
Yes, I have heard their cries because it's late.
Because they can't feed their babies.
Yes they are awaiting for you their men to awake, because they're tired of maybe's and later on's.
Isn't it time you awaken and stop permitting whitey to destroy what little pride you have to defend. Prove yourself to be black men and lend her your hand.

Richard Alston



Deeper Sleeper

i'm the last
of the great
all nighters
pull them all
of the time
they tow me
to the wreck—
age of sleep.

Cassandra West

Andrew Woolfolk

These are just a few of the songs that exemplify Earth, Wind and Fire as the leading group of today. All 'N All We love you

Al McKay

Frank Thornton

"I have returned to BUILD a Pyramid"

Carl Yates

Feelings

It's difficult to choose a world
when you're scared to take a step,
but it's even harder to make a choice,
without ever having a regret:
living with regret is not hard,
but when your feelings do come through,
who can tell you how to act,
or just what it is you'll do—

The feelings that I have for you,
are feelings hard to show,
the expression that is on my face,
may not be the one you know,
I'm touched by your concern for me,
but never by your hand,
allow me to enter your mind one day,
maybe then you'll understand

Let's not do it through the phone this time,
or photographs or ink,
yes, why not try it through our mind,
just tell me what you think;
it's not that hard to visualize,
the obstacles you have gone through;
perhaps it hasn't dawned on you,
I may have faced them too.

Barbara Jeffcoat

You're Perfect My Love

You must have come from
a distant point on Rigel,
for I could never have
imagined anyone as divine as you—

a complexion as clear
and as gold as honey;
eyes like deep black coal,
with a single flame
burning within their midst;
an angelic face,
one that would make even Eros feel inferior.

You make my days, my nights, and my life,
You are perfection my love,
and our love is indeed perfect.

a body like none I've ever seen,
as stern and firm and strong as a tree;
a mind as complex as a computer
yet you make everything seem so simple;
and your soul my love, is like a church,
always open and full of faith.

You make my days, my nights, and my life,
You are perfection my love,
and our love is indeed perfect.

Barbara Jeffcoat

Photograph by Edward Cohen

We were trying to find the functional art. In this quest I ran into a door and then many more—but not a maze, rather an ordered function based on its reality. For me the spirituality of the image/doors of Totems. Totems fashioned with a memory of Middle Passage Portholes, structured like Afro-American Turf Boards and Shields to protect in the Wilderness of North America. I deal in substructures since understanding Middle Kingdom Egyptian painting and examining the order of the doors of the Oba of Benin.

There are other kinds of bridges than those which span water and connect land. There are bridges which span time and space to connect souls. And so doors have become my bridges.

Nelson Stevens

Step Back in Real Joy, Turf-Board Series

Nelson Stevens

What is an Eno?—from page 28

word of mouth communication, and the famous "talking drums." All ties with Afrika were supposedly severed. But, Afrikanism did survive, and can be seen in the voice of the drum and the dancing in the churches of the South.

The characteristics of Afrikan dance also remain the same: 1) bent knees, with the body close to the earth; 2) the use of the whole foot and immediate transfer of weight; 3) the isolation of body parts in movement; 4) the rhythmically complex and syncopated movement; 5) the carrying of as many as two or three rhythms in the body at once (poly-rhythm); 6) the music and dance as a single expression; 7) the individualism of style within a group style; and 8) the functionalism (becoming the art of "real life".) Functionalism cannot be understated, for Afrikans have always known that the dance is not just to have, but also to be. Lee Warren also says that "a sense of community is more basic in African culture than it is in our own. Each member of a society understands his role as one unit that is part of a whole. This commitment to a mutually shared loyalty, this awareness of who one is, can be envied by Americans bedevilled with an identity crisis. The torment of isolation is uncommon in traditional African communities." With the exception of the wizard or priest who does dance alone, Afrikans do not usually dance **for** someone, but rather, **with** them.

Of the two settings, the church and the social gathering, the church has remained much more traditional in terms of Afrikan dance (though not called dance because it was considered to be sinful)—free almost entirely from other influences.

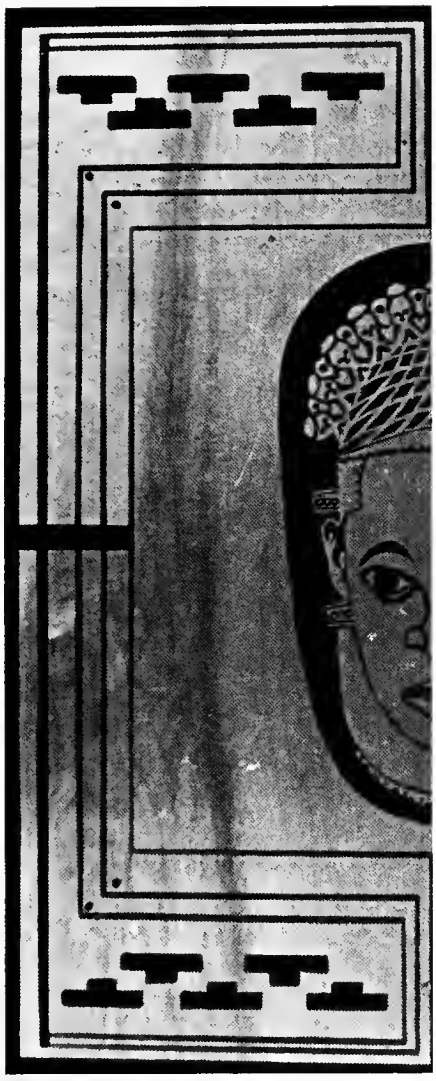
"The European influences on the dance expression of the slaves came primarily through specific steps from European folk sources. When the traditional African characteristics of rhythmic complexity and syncopation were combined with some of the movements of the European folk dances, the first development was tap dance in the mid 1800's. More precisely, tap dance was the earliest tangible development we are aware of. I am sure that hundreds of other developments occured which were never popularized or seen by whites and therefore were not institutionalized in any way. The point about the institutionalization of dance is an important one. The beginnings of jazz dances for many people equalled its appearance on stage. For these people, the dance did not exist until it had gained the sanction of a socially accepted white institution,"—as stated by Nontsizi Cayou, in her book, "Modern Jazz Dance."

It is Ms. Cayou's last statement that I think bears the crux of problems that arise in the presentation of traditional Pan-Afrikan dance or the true dances done among themselves by Afrikans. The fact that Afrikans, in the United States especially, do not/have not/will not build institutions to preserve their own cultural movements and dances is because of the lack of financial resources. The capitalism that still enslaves our brothers and sisters in Mozambique and Azania and pits our own against our own in the various forms of neo-colonialism, only offers further suffrage to Black people the world over. Our mothers have told us that we don't put a fire out with another fire, but with water. In the face of vicious hatred, we must exhibit supreme love. . . for ourselves. In the face of fear, we must show a warrior-like courageousness. In the face of disunity, we must hold ourselves steady with faith, prayer, and patience. At the center of these stand our art forms, our image-makers. They can sway us one way or another. Our art forms can rock us passively to sleep, or they can rock us actively into overt action. We image-makers have an important role. Do we carry our role as our ancient ancestors did, bravely, and if necessry, against all odds for the sake of the community? Or, will we lay down our arms and submit to the ravishing neon lights and American corporate individualism? This is my question to you. For I, am "Eno."

Staff Collage

Margarita Vargas

FESTAC 1977



Reflections by
Nelson Stevens
Documented by
Lisa DiRocco

The Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, or FESTAC 77, took place in Lagos, Nigeria from January 1₃ to February 12, 1977; 15,000 artists from 57 lands assembled to share their variegated creations and ideas and to realize and take pride in our common heritage.

For the official opening of FESTAC 77 in the National Stadium, 60,000 spectators assembled to witness over two hours of colorful regalia, music, dancing and songs as the contingents from each country paraded around the huge track, carrying their nation's flag and its banner, and wearing national costumes.

They stopped before the receiving stand holding Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria's head of state and Festac's official host, plus other dignitaries representing foreign lands; the groups paused while acrobats or dancers entertained the officials and the audience.

The procession was led by an Ethiopian sword carrier and ended with Nigerian dancers balancing flaming urns on their heads. In between were Brazilian women costumed for Mardi Gras, Guineans walking on 14 foot stilts, Aborigines from Australia, belly dancers and acrobats from Egypt. After each nation introduced itself to the audience in its own way, the diverse peoples walked around the track together. A lone runner, dressed as Shango, the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning, carried a flame to the roof of the stadium to light a huge torch, and 1,000 pigeons were freed into the air.

The American artists represented 24 states; among them were Nelson Stevens of the University of Massachusetts Art and WEB DuBois Departments and Bernard Bell of the UMass English Department. The participants caught a glimpse of the constellation of black artists scattered around the globe, and returned to the U.S. rejuvenated with international horizons.

* * * * *

I had known about the planning of FESTAC for many years and although I had no doubt it would take place, the question was always "when." The only thing I was sure of was that whenever it would take place, I wanted to be there; not only because it would be the largest world festival of the arts, but for other reasons which are more profound. It is well known to most African Americans that the vast majority of us came from GUINEA COAST. And Nigeria, the host of FESTAC '77 is central to this location. So in a sense it is a reversal of the process—going past the auction block and the middle passage and returning home after four hundred years.

Another reason for my great anticipation has to do with the culture of YORUBA-LAND. The Yoruba heritage of transported blacks has survived the middle passage journey and makes itself felt from Brazil and Haiti as well as New York City. I think of the Yoruba GOD of Thunder SHANGO every time I look from my NEW ENGLAND window to witness "the Devil beating his wife". It was also this area of the world that produced the art forms which have revolutionized the twentieth century concepts of art and aesthetics. All these things were going through my head at the J.F. Kennedy airport in January 1977 where Jeff Donaldson had started to explain some of the experiences that we could anticipate as participants in FESTAC 77.

A sister in the group asked about Nigerian food and water in reference to health. Jeff replied, "We have been eating bad food for so long that when we get some good food some of us will probably get sick."

Not many of us got sick and most, if not all, satisfied our personal and collective goals. The only drawback I can imagine is that about two hundred of us who attended FESTAC on the first flight to LAGOS missed seeing Alex Haley's **Roots.** *I do not think it a drawback in any sense, for personally, for three weeks I felt like the whole tree with deep strong and healthy roots.*

Our contingency of 200 Afro Americans were delivered outside the stadium to participate in the procession. We stood amid lines of costumed participants being viewed by great crowds of Nigerians, assembled to watch the festivities. We arranged ourselves along side the people from Zaire, men and women dressed entirely in green garb, sporting the silkscreened portrait of their country's president.

Each representative group, with the exception of the U.S. wore such unifying and identifying costumes. I became very conscious of this, but recognized our group as having our own unique dress too. The 'uniforms' we wore varied according to life styles of the Afro Americans present. We had people in bare feet, sandals, people with Frye boots and platform shoes. We had very great extremes in terms of the dress our contingency represented as national costume. The United States did not supply us with uniforms for the venture as most of the other governments did. Most governments represented also sent National Troupes to walk into the stadium, very much like the Olympics. We were given an American flag as well as an identifying banner. Our collective decision though, was not to carry the flag. Rather than walk in with the stars and stripes, we chose to carry only the banner. Our next decision was what we were going to do while inside, parading around the stadium track. We decided to sing "Lift Every Voice. . ."and began practicing. But the anthem became very weak in the second stanza, and we decided to leave it alone. Our final agreement was to sing "Amen".

When we entered the stadium it seemed as though I had never seen so many black people before in my life. A sea of sixty thousand black faces. As we entered singing "Amen" the gathering seemed to unify and the song was picked up by each area we passed. They threw positive gestures at us, saying some very nice things that I cannot recall now. I do remember thinking that as we represented the most diverse group in terms of dress, we also had the most varied racial breakup of any group. We had people in our contingency who could pass for white, as well as for any of the African countries that attended. And I distinctly remember friends of mine, trying to find themselves among one of the tribes on the African continent, the people that most resembled them.

The experience of that five minute processional spanned a lifetime. Gathered in the presence of more black people then we had been with before, I felt my feet never touched the ground for the entire four hundred meters.

Our reception at the festival was extremely warm and we were saluted very highly. Upon returning to the United States I heard and read reports identifying us as the vagabonds. The ones without uniforms. I don't think this was felt by any of us while marching. We were representing ourselves as ourselves and the rest of the Afro-Americans who could not go.

The feeling I think most of us came away with, was that of participating in a collective baptismal on a world stage. Baptised in a sea of faces and feelings. We were treated as that part of an extended family who had been away for a long time and had finally come home. This feeling was made real by the Nigerians and the other people represented during our entire stay.

* * * * *

For the next four weeks, artists travelled around the city to the various exhibits to meet other artists and view their work. There were traditional and contemporary displays in all mediums: from folkloric theatre to a staging of of Eugene Perkins satiric drama, "The Image Makers", about Hollywood's black exploitation films. From Burundi came 7-foot Tutsi dancers, and girls from the Ivory Coast did fertility dances, while a modern dance troupe from Brazil conveyed their statements in body movement. Artists met and discussed their work and its relationship to their culture; new understandings ensued.

* * * * *

After checking out the art exhibits of all the nations represented in the National Theatre, I kept coming back to the works of Malangatana Ngwenya. Everywhere I went afterward I told people that I wanted to meet the monster artist from Mozambique named Malangatana, because I really dug his concept of man as a natural force, and his ability to deal with Western techniques within an African sensibility.

We were introduced in the National Theater by an Oriental man from Mozambique who said Malangatana was looking just as hard for me. Malangatana and I got along well and we spent the next three days together. By day we attended art exhibits where he would explain the Africanness of form, the political implications of symbols and icons in each picture, while I did the same from my background; at night we would do drawings for each other talking of the similarities and differences in line and rhythms to better understand each other's strokes. Despite being an artist of international reputation and minister of culture for Mozambique, he is one of the warmest people and one of the best teachers I have ever had the privilege of knowing. At the end of this learning encounter, we gave each other several drawings. I am sure on both exchanges, that I got the best of the deal. Thank you, Malangatana

* * * * *

The theme of technology versus tradition was a common concern among scholars, too. For two weeks, a Colloquium of 700 intellectuals participated in an interchange of ideas on the general theme of "Black Civilization and Education." Academics pursued such topics as a means to improve research in Africa and greater freedom of expression. They discussed the problem of allowing scholars more academic freedom in a continent where most of the universities are government funded. Many presented papers expressing fear that by bringing in Western technology, Africa may also bring in undesirable Western values such as racism and the diffusion of African traditional values.

The First World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture took place in 1966 in Dakar, Senegal. Plans were made at that time for the second festival to be held in Lagos in 1970 but because of Nigeria's civil war from 1967-1970, the festival had to be postponed. Other emergencies caused further delay. When a

Continued on page 74

Malangatana

FESTAC—from page 72

definite date was finally settled, Lagos rushed to prepare itself for its future guests.

At a cost of $60 million, a new National Theatre was constructed. There, scholars would present their papers and exchange thoughts; dramas would be staged; other visual artists would exhibit paintings, sculptures and films; musicians and dancers would display their art.

The National Theatre resembles an ark—it was designed by the Nigerians with the concept of Noah's Ark in mind—the idea that people would come two by two from around the world. The streets were cleaned and lamposts decorated with banners and flags of the Festival's emblem; a government order was issued forbidding automobiles on the city streets every other day, to reduce traffic jams. The population in Lagos is 2 million.

Six miles outside Lagos, FESTAC Village was constructed, an $80 million housing project for the participants and others who travelled to Lagos to view the festival. Construction of FESTAC Village was not complete when the artists arrived; they stayed there, anyway, and construction continued. Other complications which plagued the Nigerians for the festival included an dispute with Britain over rights to the Royal Ivory Mask of Benin, emblem for FESTAC 77.

The 16th century ivory mask was worn by Benin kings during religious ceremonies until 1897, when it was seized by the British during an invasion; it currently sits in the British museum in London. Symbolically, the British refused to send the mask back to Africa for the festival—they feared it was too fragile. Finally, rights were secured so the Nigerians could register a replica of the mask and trademark it as the official emblem of the Festival.

* * * * *

My most memorable day got off to a slow start. It was about ten days after we got there. We were standing around waiting for the buses, which were late—it wasn't unusual to have to wait a long time, and I got tired of doing that. Ed Spriggs told me he was going to the International Secretariat Building—which was where the structural unit for the entire FESTAC was located, so I went with him.

When we got there I passed out cards of work that I was doing. This drew a crowd for two reasons. One was the art work, the other was because there is a paper shortage and I was passing out paper. That's a phenomenon that I found was strange there.

Two of the people that I met while passing out cards introduced themselves to me. One was named Gbenga, the other Ayo. I knew they were both Yoruba by their names and they told me that they worked for Fela, who is a very popular musician in Nigeria. "Fela Ransone Kuti." "No! Fela Anikulapo-Kuti."

I had heard of Fela, so I took out a Malcolm X card, and wrote "Brother Fela, from one artist to another—I would like to see more of Nigeria. Signed, Nelson." And added my flat number in the FESTAC village.

That was about noon. When I got back to my flat at midnight, I was putting the key in the door. Napoleon, "the Weaver," Henderson, my roommate, had not come in yet, and I realized there was someone crouched at the foot of the door. At first I was startled; then the man got up and explained that he had been sent to bring me to Fela. So I went in and quickly got a bunch of things—camera, silk-screen, some prints and different things that I thought I might need and extended an invitation to Ademola Olugedefola. He declined.

Then we went down and he flagged down a passing car. He just stood right in the middle of the road and made the car stop. He told the driver the two of us wanted to go to Mushin. He and the driver had a little argument, but the driver decided to take us when Fela's name was mentioned.

On the way there the man who was sent to get me explained that he had been waiting 10 hours and had fallen asleep. I was not to tell Fela about his sleeping.

When we got to Fela's commune, the Kuti Republic, I noticed that it was surrounded by a high barbed wire fence. There were crowds everywhere—outside of the commune and inside, too. We pushed our way through to the gate and were cleared; we went inside. I was escorted to a large waiting room where I was served pineapple, coconut, palm wine and cola nuts. They kept bringing me gifts and different things to drink and eat—just good Nigerian hospitality and information about Fela.

Fela came in and I presented him with my gift, a silk screen print I had done; I told him that I wanted to catch his concert that night at the African Shrine. The African Shrine is a nightclub that Fela owns and performs in. It's always filled to capacity because of its popularity. Fela then invited me to a recording session of his music, which would take place after the concert.

Fela began talking to me about his religion and his music. He and his people are Yoruba. They are not Christian and they are not Islamic. They believe Islam and Christianity are both corrupt subversives from outside Africa. For them, the only indigenous African religions were those that had been there through the ancestors, like Yoruba. Fela wanted to draw on that traditional experience as a basis for his politics and music.

We talked a long time about the United States and FESTAC. Fela wanted to know a great deal about both. He was very politically aware of what was happening in the United States to his Brothers and Sisters. He remembers that those who were educated abroad—either in the United States or Europe or even Russia—had come back in Western suits, and with Western mentalities. "Western Suits and Western Minds!"

In the sixties, he saw on television, brothers in the streets of the U.S. very proud of their African heritage and African traditions, trying to revitalize and revive them. He said it gave him a great sense of 'correctness' in terms of his own movement. It allowed him see on a larger scale what was happening, and to reject some of the Western influences.

We left the Kuti Republic for the

African Shrine which was just two blocks away. We walked, and all along the walkways on either side of the procession of people following Fela, there were spectators. They were standing, clapping and hollering, 'Fela for president!'; 'Fela's my man!'; and 'Fela's a bad nigga!' He's a very powerful man. He possesses the charismatic strength of Muhammed Ali, James Brown, Stevie Wonder, and O.J. Simpson all forming one Yoruba deity. His performance at the African Shrine that night was packed with people dancing and laughing in total freedom.

Fela's music is called Afro-Beat. They did a number called 'Africa is Upside Down,' which was about how the rich get richer and the poor poorer. Nigeria is the sixth largest oil exporter in the world, and Fela is very concerned with the poor getting a share of some of Nigeria's new wealth. After the concert we went to the recording session with his 16 piece band, eight women singers,and road managers, Ayo and Gbenga.

Despite his heavy schedule, Fela and I became very good friends over the next week and he wanted Gbenga to show me and some other people around. Gbenga would come to FESTAC Village and get a bus; it seemed as though he could get one much easier through his channels than we could through ours. So they secured several buses for us to see old slave quarters, Benin beaches and Yoruba ceremonies while the East coast of the U.S. was engulfed in the coldest winter in memory.

They also took us to a Shango Priest where I was given my name, after telling my life's story. The priest did not speak directly to me but had an interpreter. Frank Smith, Adger Cowans, David Stevens, Vincent Smith and I went on that trip and I believe we were all given names.

I was given the name Oya Deli. At first I didn't understand, because Oya's a woman's name. I said, 'Why do you give me Shango's wife's name?' He was delighted that I knew. Then he told me Deli meant at home. So my name means the goddess Oya would be at home with me.

When I got back to the United States, I read in the papers that the Nigerian government had ransacked the commune. There were rumors that at least one person was dead. I was very worried about a lot of people. Since that time I've gotten calls to alleviate me from those worries. But the Nigerian government was very rough on Fela's people after we left. I felt very safe when I was with Fela, and his friends; I did not realize that while we were there we were protecting him.

* * * * *

At the closing ceremony, all the nations assembled one last time, and danced a final dance together. The feelings of solidarity reached their height when Commander O.P. Fingese, the festival president, declared, "We are no longer the third world. We are the first world."

"For the first time," said musician Bayo Martins, "it dawned on me that all black people have one thing in common, a culture and a heritage. I believe in the spirit of FESTAC, the need for black people to get together and rekindle their consciousness and confidence."

An excerpt from the Nigerian Daily Times reveals the task undertaken by past participants in FESTAC, and the goal of FESTAC 81:

"There is a black nation, a black world. It is a world whose citizens are spread all around the globe, a world whose peoples share not only a tradition of customs, but also of ethical values. And it is these values that demand that we exert ourselves, not only in the realm of art, but also in the realm of politics. The black world must continue to see its civilization and its freedom as threatened so long as a single black man or woman remains oppressed anywhere in the world. This is the inescapable challenge which this gathering has placed before us."

INTRODUCING:
VEA WILLIAMS

MUSIC

Photograph by Ana Andreu

by Kelly Wright and
Diane Mitchell

The Amherst area has been subject to a distinct rise in the awareness and appreciation of Black Classical Music. In the past years, the residents of this area have had the opportunity to host such giants as Max Roach, Marion Brown, and Archie Shepp. More recently, there has been a greater exposure of the vocal aspect of music. In expanding on this subject, **Drum** held an interview with a dynamic jazz vocalist, Ms. Vea Williams.

Vea is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where she began performing with a group known as "Sisterhood." She describes this experience as being most rewarding. For it was with these sisters that she developed the techniques necessary for being a lead singer. Vea reminisces fondly of the closeness and progressiveness of this group.

In 1973, Vea travelled to Atlanta, Georgia where she lived for three years before moving to the Amherst area.

She is now employed with the W.E.B. DuBois Department of African-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, and has recently been performing in this area with the group "Welcome." Together, they create an atmosphere of harmony and love which Vea feels is the overall message to share with her audience.

Her inspiration stems from dynamic women and artists such as Sarah Vaughan, Nina Simone, Dinah Washington and Betty Carter. Like these artists, Vea feels committed to the music she sings. Many artists of Black Classical Music have been pressured to alter their style of music to obtain support by a commercial industry. A number of artists have made this change, while many more will not. Vea believes she can carry her message to her audience without turning to the commercial industry.

Members of Drum feel growing artists such as Vea Williams can be recognized in their field with the consistent support of listeners.

We feel it is essential that we support our brothers and sisters in their endeavors of unity, on this campus and throughout the world.

The Idea of Duke

". . . As though I were some very, very special child, my mother would say, "Edward, you are blessed. You don't have anything to worry about. Edward, you are blessed."[1]

Here we find ourselves dealing with a vast field of colors, colors that stand out of a long tunnel of memory. Somewhere from very deep inside dwells the urge to manipulate these colors in space. It always seems quite natural to know that Duke once studied painting, and considered making that his primary craft, and not music. Who knows? But it is certain that Duke's mother was right, Ellington was "blessed" and any art form he encountered would have been enriched by his blessed vision. Mercer Ellington has noted the relationship of his father's music to painting; the way Duke had of establishing and maintaining an ever evolving sense of tonecolor and textures. The complex palette of sound springs from every musical source imaginable; but are yet linked implicitly to the elegance and eloquence of the blues.

But Duke's idea though texturally complex is undergirded by his firm sense of the role of the individual in the overall ensemble of color making and design. Duke's idea here stands for me as the model of the ideal society, the ideal social system. Duke Ellington was both aristocratic and democratic as an orchestra leader. On the one side of the sensibility we have the ability to make aesthetic judgements not only about music, but about people also. In this manner Ellington constructs for us a new kind of aristocracy, first a Duke must lead. But he must also listen as he leads if he is to be able to secure his kingdom. So that when one considers the idea of Duke we encounter a unique artistic relationship between Duke and the exemplary members of his orchestra, the sense of a collective will to create ones own personality within the ensemble (the nation), but also to create for the sheer purpose of adding to the beauty of the ever emerging musical idea. This is what I mean by the democratic idea symbolized by Duke's orchestral history and conception.

So for me Ellington's artistic method and intelligence constitutes the basis for a "governmental form". This form is both national and international in scope. Yet like Ellington's music it maintains a specific ethos, a specific cultural reference and firmness of identity amidst the confusion of the world. This intelligence is both meditative and active. It is both sensual and at other times austere. But it is never afraid to see what it sees. *(Max Roach's anecdote about the recording session with Mingus and Ellington comes to mind: Duke said that Max's drum solo should picture a lovely flower in a quiet rain forest that is suddenly attacked by a snake.)* So now we find ourselves talking about an intelligence that is also poetic as well as visual. An aspect of the idea of Duke which is the attempt to keep his music encyclopedic. Duke's music is never really parochial in any real sense of the word. Perhaps that is because the entire body of his work indicates a merger between the science of music, emotional density and the rhythmic wisdom of the blues.

As an out-chorus one wonders whether Duke's musical idea can be consciously extended to the realms of government and society? Is the orchestral idea no less worthy of being a paradigm of government than the human body? Consider the minute connection between Ellington and the brilliant colleagues that surrounded him, the intermingling and blending of diverse voices to create the shape of Duke's idea. And like Ellington we have been blessed, blessed to have heard him and to have helped create him.

Larry Neal 4/23/78

[1]**Music is My Mistress** by Duke Ellington

In Praise of the Coonville Brigade

The arrival of Africans in the Western World changed more than a few things in America. The Africans' ability to synthesize their own diverse cultures and to transform—or personalize—the values of whites and Indians, resulted in a new facet of human experience. An American cultural militia was formed, a militia that fought many campaigns against the European conventions that could not speak to the realities experienced by African-Americans of that era. The changes affected by those African-Americans in American music, humor, and dance is a significant part of this country's culture, just as the Jews and Germans have affected European thought over the last two hundred years.

I choose to call the African-Americans involved in those changes the Coonville Brigade partially because the name is humorous, and partially because I envision an assemblage of musicians and dancers marching in constant rag tag, elegant and arrogant review, extending from sawers of plantation fiddles to manipulators of the many buttons on saxophones, from "pattin' juba" to Diane McIntyre. They are the warriors who have won more international respect and sparked more international emulation than any other single group of American performing artists.

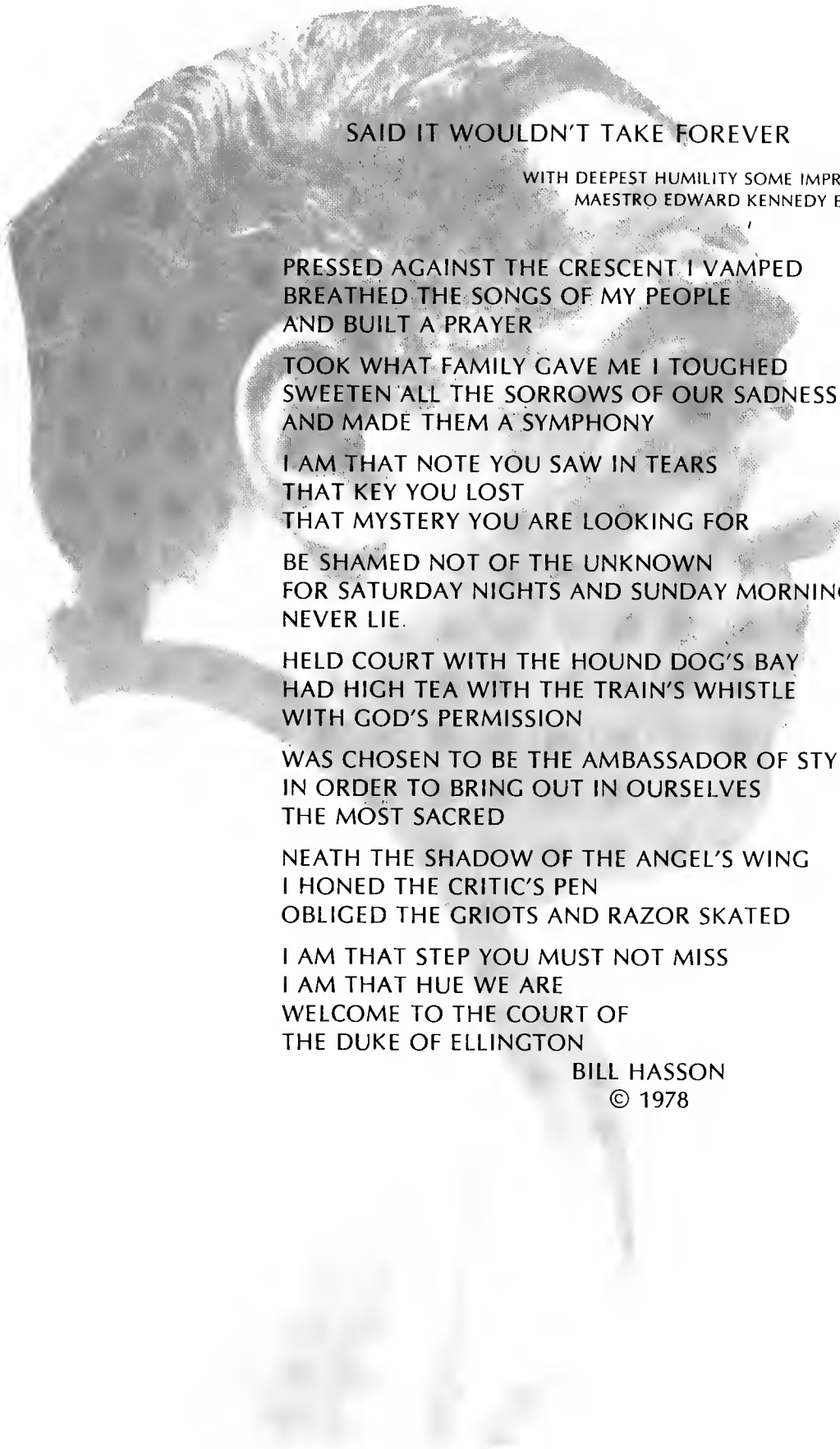
African-Americans have been at the intersections of American development since their arrival: changing the way people season and cook their foods, how they walk, talk, listen to, sing and play music. And simultaneously, African-Americans have been influenced by the improvisational nature of America. It is a country that evolved through invention and adaptation.

It is the musical arena that the Coonville Brigade has made its most obvious impact, not only in the development of the Spiritual, but in maintaining fresh ideas and perceptions of popular music and art. It is very difficult to imagine popular song, from Stephen Foster to the present, without thinking of those African-Americans who ignited that first spark. (Though it is just as important to know that there were black composers in the 19th century who were quite popular during the rage of the "Ethiopian Airs.") In high art there is the music known—some might say misnomered—as jazz, which has been responsible for innovations in form, harmony, melody, and instrumental technique. The innovations of black musicians have allowed us, in the 20th century, to hear trumpets, saxophones, basses, trombones, drums, flutes, even synthesizers, very differently than they were intended to be heard. In fact, the saxophone has replaced the strings (violin and cello) as an instrument of intricacy and sensitivity; it does for American music what those other instruments did for European concert music.

Statements like those above are often dismissed as self-defensive, ignorant rantings, or chauvinistic by the cultural politics encountered in most academic institutions. Many others know very little about the sources of the styles to which they have become so accustomed. They might think, for example, that there were indeed drum majors in Europe who knew how to strut while twirling and catching their batons. They would, as Martin Williams pointed out, be surprised to find that the true originators served in the Coonville Brigade.

When we think of the many, many contributions that have come from members of the Brigade, we can better understand the heroic possibilities of human life. We can better understand Duke Ellington's dictum: "The good thing about a problem is that it allows you an opportunity to invent something better than you were given." And all the medals of honor are all those complimentary extensions of those innovations.

Stanley Crouch



SAID IT WOULDN'T TAKE FOREVER

WITH DEEPEST HUMILITY SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE
MAESTRO EDWARD KENNEDY ELLINGTON

PRESSED AGAINST THE CRESCENT I VAMPED
BREATHED THE SONGS OF MY PEOPLE
AND BUILT A PRAYER

TOOK WHAT FAMILY GAVE ME I TOUGHED
SWEETEN ALL THE SORROWS OF OUR SADNESS
AND MADE THEM A SYMPHONY

I AM THAT NOTE YOU SAW IN TEARS
THAT KEY YOU LOST
THAT MYSTERY YOU ARE LOOKING FOR

BE SHAMED NOT OF THE UNKNOWN
FOR SATURDAY NIGHTS AND SUNDAY MORNINGS
NEVER LIE.

HELD COURT WITH THE HOUND DOG'S BAY
HAD HIGH TEA WITH THE TRAIN'S WHISTLE
WITH GOD'S PERMISSION

WAS CHOSEN TO BE THE AMBASSADOR OF STYLE
IN ORDER TO BRING OUT IN OURSELVES
THE MOST SACRED

NEATH THE SHADOW OF THE ANGEL'S WING
I HONED THE CRITIC'S PEN
OBLIGED THE GRIOTS AND RAZOR SKATED

I AM THAT STEP YOU MUST NOT MISS
I AM THAT HUE WE ARE
WELCOME TO THE COURT OF
THE DUKE OF ELLINGTON

BILL HASSON

Courtesy Duke Ellington Center, New York City

"El Charanguero—Jorge Medina" Margarita Vargas

NOTES ON CHANO POZO

by Jorge Medina

Those of us that are into contemporary Afro-American music, whether we call it jazz, funk, disco, Salsa, or Brazillian, have realized that the last few years has brought an intensive exchange of ideas and styles between Afro-American and Latin-American Musicians. Two good examples are Gil Scott-Heron and Eddie Palmieri. The reasons for this are many, but it is essential for us to realize that no matter what the modern influences and processes are, one thing is certain: our music—Salsa, Afro-American, Carribbean, or whatever—is similar today because of a common heritage, our common roots.

North and West Africa have greatly influenced not only New World, or American music, but have also helped to mold the music of people from throughout the world. Eastern people, like the Arab and Islamic people, may also make the same claim. Prior to the discovery of the Americas, southern Spain was a center of Islamic culture from the seventh to the sixteenth century. As such, there was a diffusion of Islamic music and thought to the rest of the world.

A more recent period, the 1930's to the present, offers us several musical talents that helped stimulate the type of exchange about which we are talking. Machito and Mario Bauza, Afro-Cuban greats, and Duke Ellington and Charlie Parker of the Afro-American culture, are among those talents. Many others deserve credit, including Stan Kenton, but one figure in particular stands out—the great Afro-Cuban percussionist Chano Pozo.

Born in Cuba in 1915, Chano Pozo was a third generation Latin-American. His roots, therefore, were firmly planted in the Mother continent—Africa. Like most of us, he was a victim of oppression, having to face harsh conditions of poverty and racism throughout his life. The experience of going to prison was not absent from Chano's life, and he later became a counselor for other inmates—never having forgotten from whence he came. Despite the pressures (or perhaps due to them), Chano became an expert interpreter and creator of Cuban music.

Pozo, whose real name was Luciano Pozo y Gonzales, played professionally in Cuba for some time. Like most artists, he held many different jobs—jobs that had nothing to do with music. Nevertheless, he maintained an impeccable and highly creative style of Afro-Cuban drumming, which many feel has never been equalled. Before coming to the United States, Poco, being a member of a local Comparsa[1], participated in an Afro-Cuban religious cult. This cult, called Abakua, was a group whose beliefs and practices were not much different from those held by the people in West Africa.

New York, the center of Latin and Afro-American music then and now, was Pozo's first home here in the States. Having been persuaded to come to this country by Miguelito Valdez, the famous Afro-Cuban musician, singer, and composer, Pozo arrived during a time when Latin music was receiving a significant amount of attention. Musicians like Machito, Mario Bauza, and Vicente Sigler were enjoying great popularity as they played their Cuban and Puerto Rican rhythms to thousands. Afro-American music was also enjoying much celebration. The big band era had begun with the musical genius of several Afro-American masters. But the music was not the only thing people were relishing; dances like the "Swing," the "Conga," and the "Mumbo," were all very popular.

Chano Pozo met Dizzy Gillespie, a jazz trumpeter and band leader, sometime in the forties. Pozo "satin" with Gillespie's orchestra and was hired to work with the group shortly thereafter. Afro-American music, or Bop, began receiving Latin influence via Chano Pozo. Unlike Bauza, whose influence was felt through musical arrangement, Chano was one of the few who influenced the music as a participant. Like many Latin American drummers, he possessed rhythms that were new and revolutionary to many Afro-American musicians, and drummers in particular. It took a while for the Latin-Afro-American blend to jell, but it was not long before Bop rhythms increased in complexity and richness.

Latin-jazz or Afro-Cuban jazz was being created. Chano composed songs along these veins, songs like **Tin-Tin-Deo** and **Guachi-Guaro,** which was later recorded by Cal Tjader and retitled **Soul Sauce.** Other familiar tunes of the era were **Afro-Blue** and **Night in Tunisia,** as recorded by Charlie Parker. Many of the tunes recorded then can be heard at the jazz festivals of today.

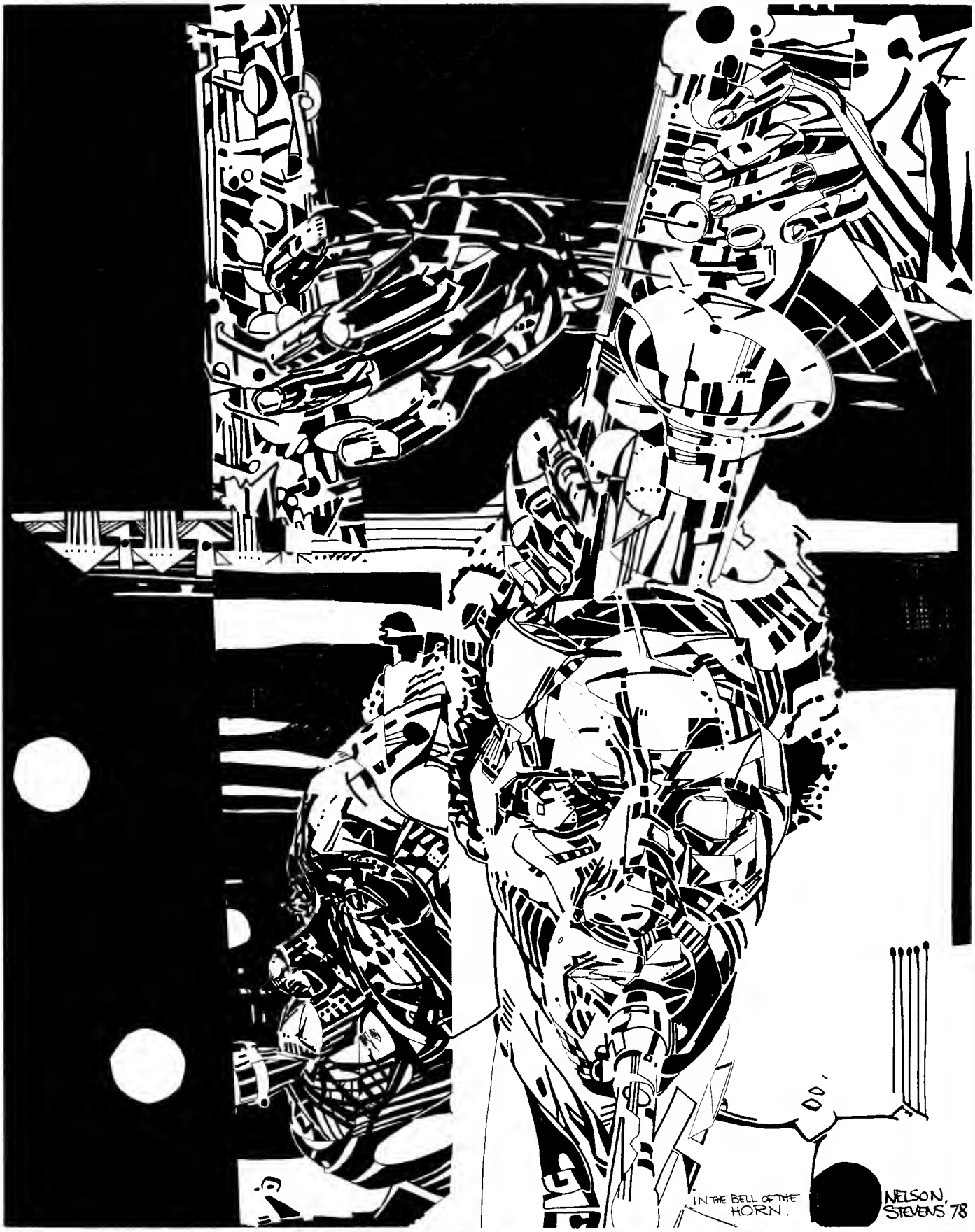
As too often happens with our leaders, be they musical forerunners, political activists, or spiritual comforts, Chano Pozo died a young man. Having worked with Dizzy Gillespie for a year, Pozo met his death in a Harlem night-club. Curiously enough, his death occurred on the eve of the feast day of his patron god, Chango.[2]

Much more can be said. We have not really covered all of the give-and-take that our musicians have experienced between each other. We are witnessing yet another peak in the coming together of Afro-American, Latin-American, Salsa, and other African and New World music. This coming together on the stage, in the studio, concert hall and on the dance floor reflects our coming together as ONE people. When we listen to our new types of music, whether it be for relaxing, boogying, or hustling, let us remember folks like the legendary Chano Pozo.

FOOTNOTES

[1] These were community based non-professional groups that practiced Afro-Cuban Dance and Music. Their main activity was preparation for competition in the Annual Comparsa festivals. Los Dandy was one of the more popular of these groups.

[2] Chango is one of the many gods or "Orichas" of the Yoruba and other West African religions. He is among other things, god of the drums and father of all African Drummers.



Nelson Stevens

Marion Brown

EVENING SONG

for piano

nia music

EVENING SONG

Was inspired by the poetry of Jean Toomer, Harlem Renaissance Poet. It is a structured improvisation for piano. There are two parts, both are connected by a motif in the bass. **Part I,** is based on the following lines from the poem **Evening Song:**

"Cloine, curled like the sleepy waters where the moonwaves start" . . .

Part II,

"Cloine dreams, lips pressed against my heart" . . .

The interpretation of the music is left to the Performer. What I have written serves only as reference for improvisation, and identification of the composition as specific melodically, rhythmically, and with regards to form. Because improvisation is the goal of the music, the Performer is at liberty to choose tempo, dynamics, and length of performance. This is intended to give the Performer space in which to make the music live by combining what I have written (the composition), with how the Performer feels (his interpretation, and improvisations) about the music.

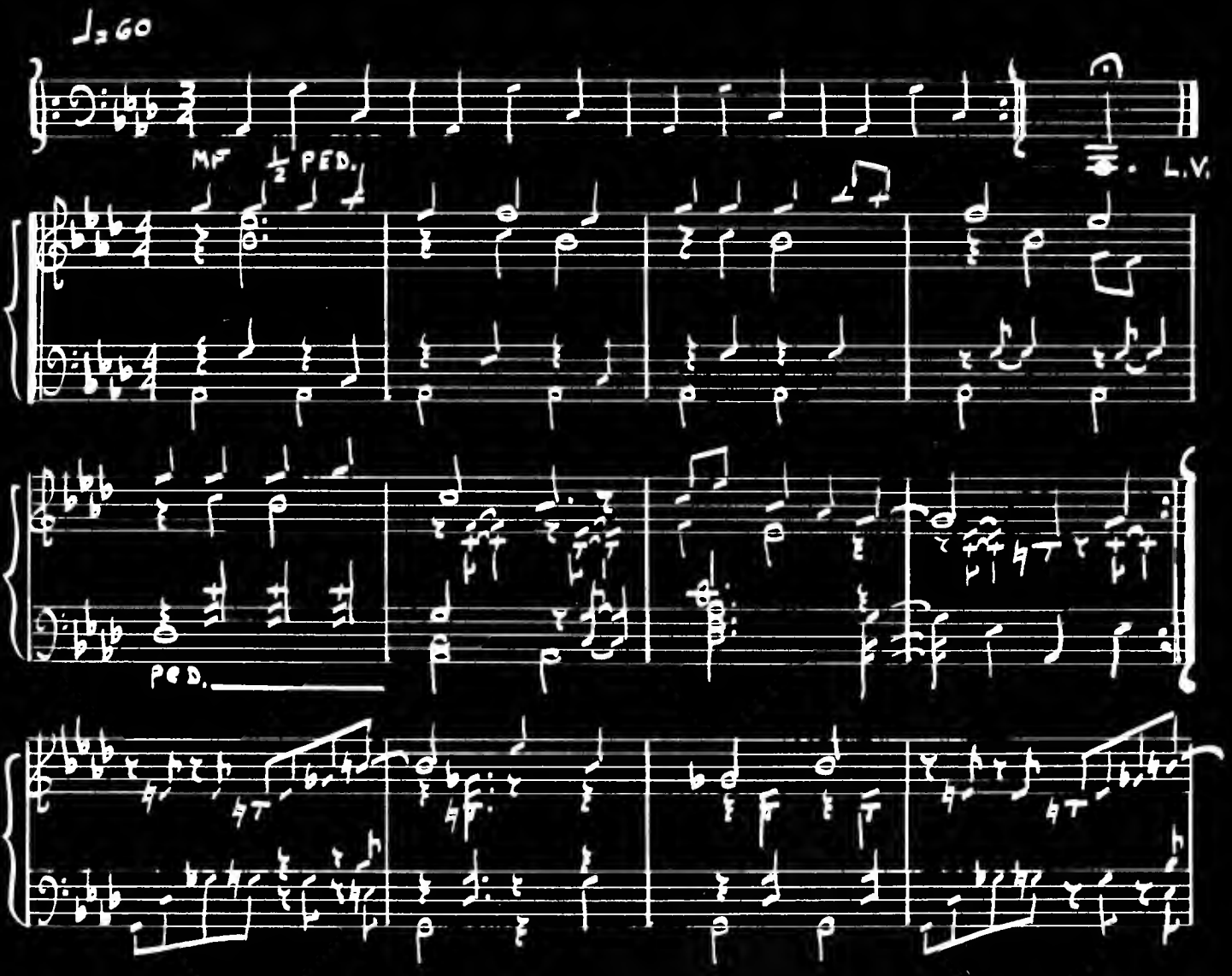
I would like to thank the National Endowment For The Arts for helping to make the composition and publication of this music possible through assistance given to me in the form of a Grant.

Marion Brown

"Cloine, curled like the sleepy waters where the moonwaves begin"

Jean Toomer, from Evening Song.

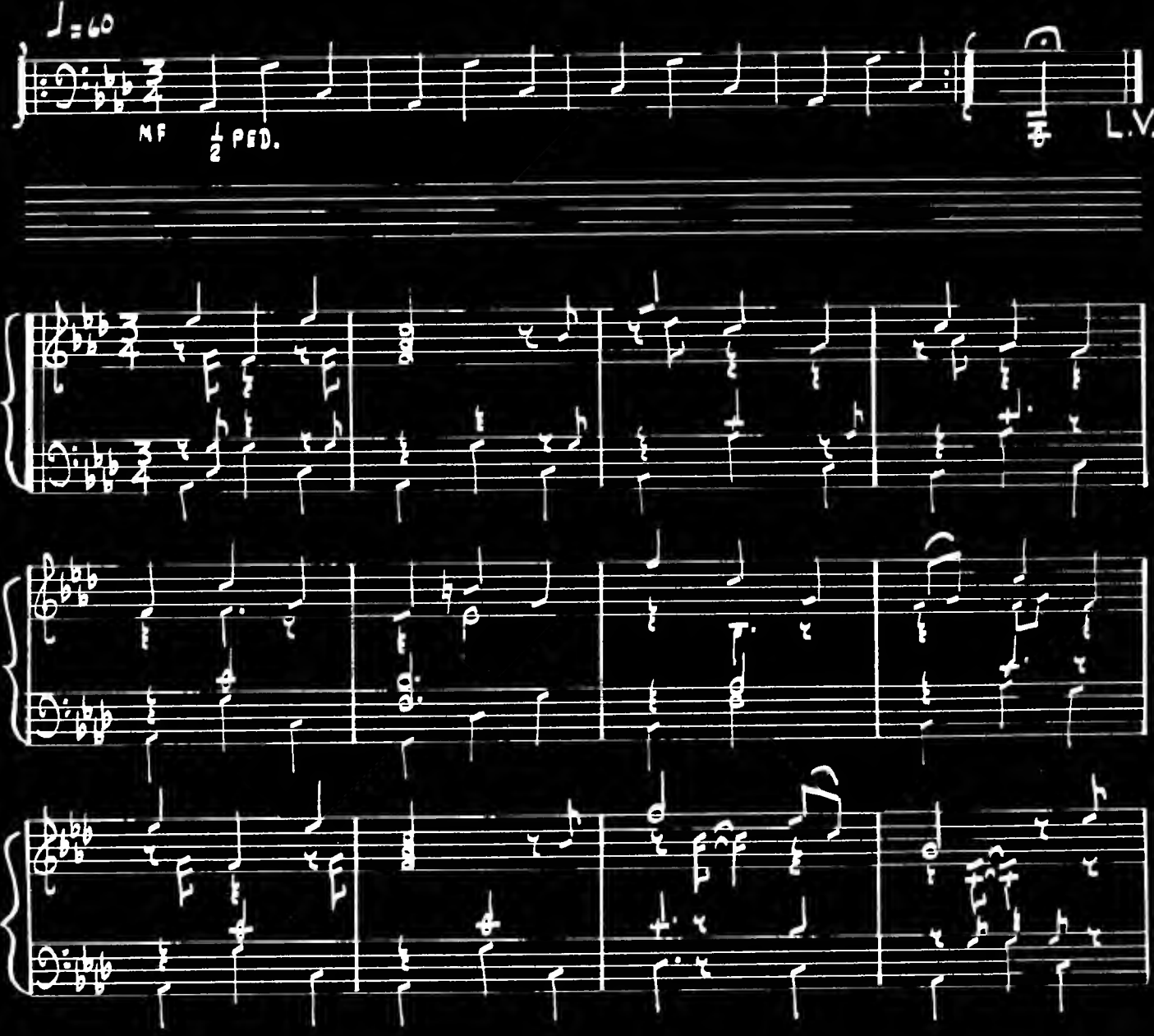
I

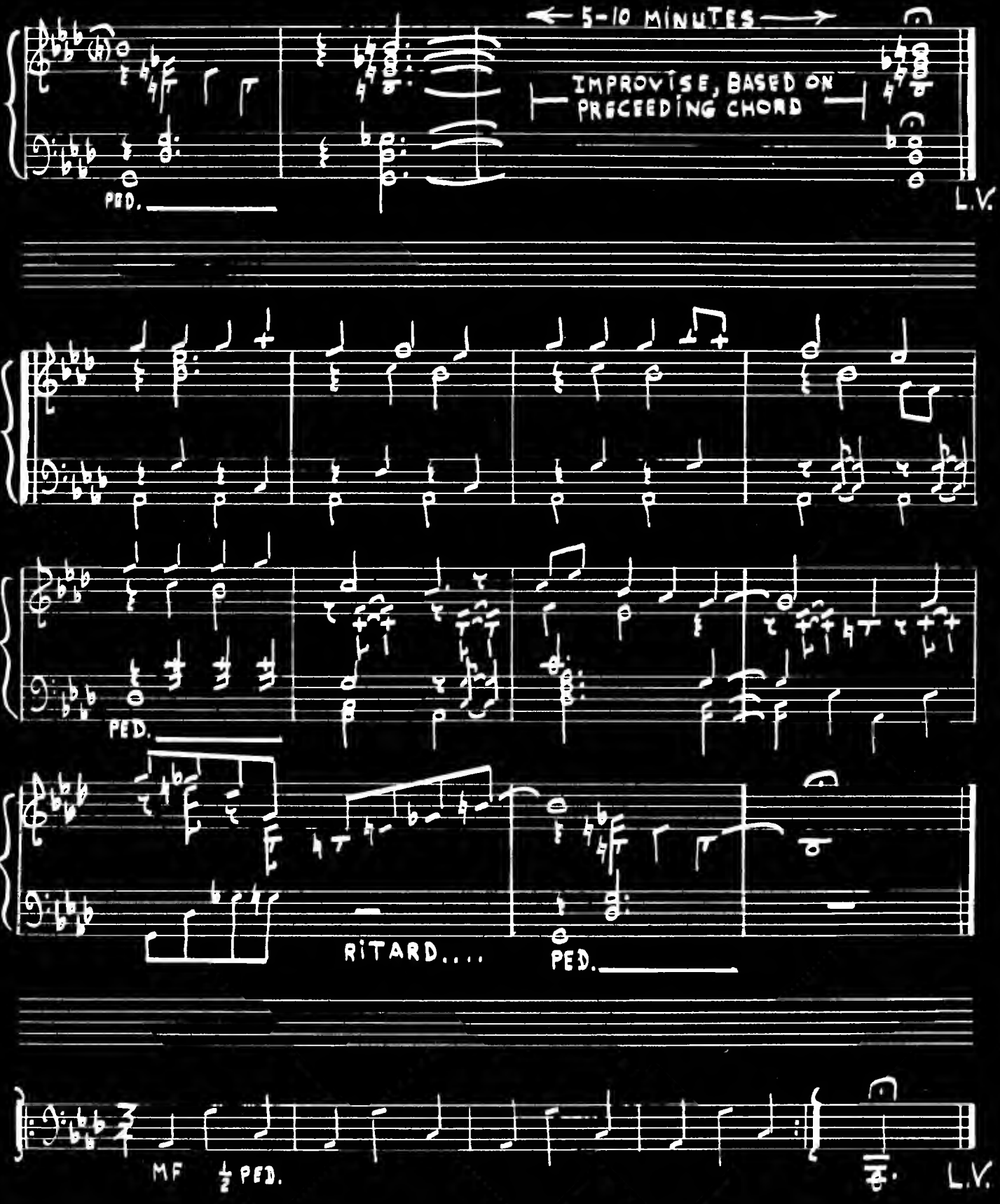


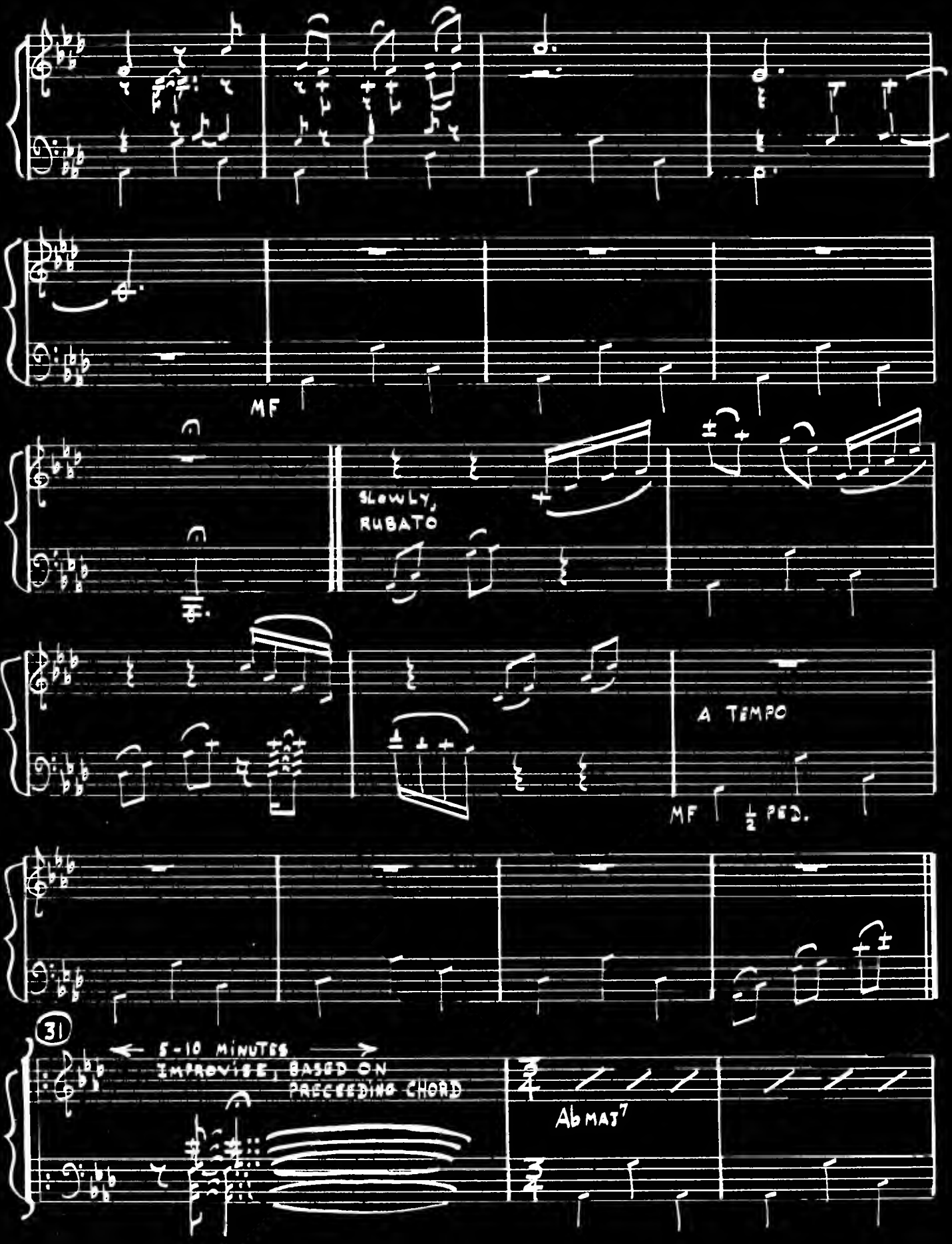
"Cloine dreams, lips pressed against my heart"

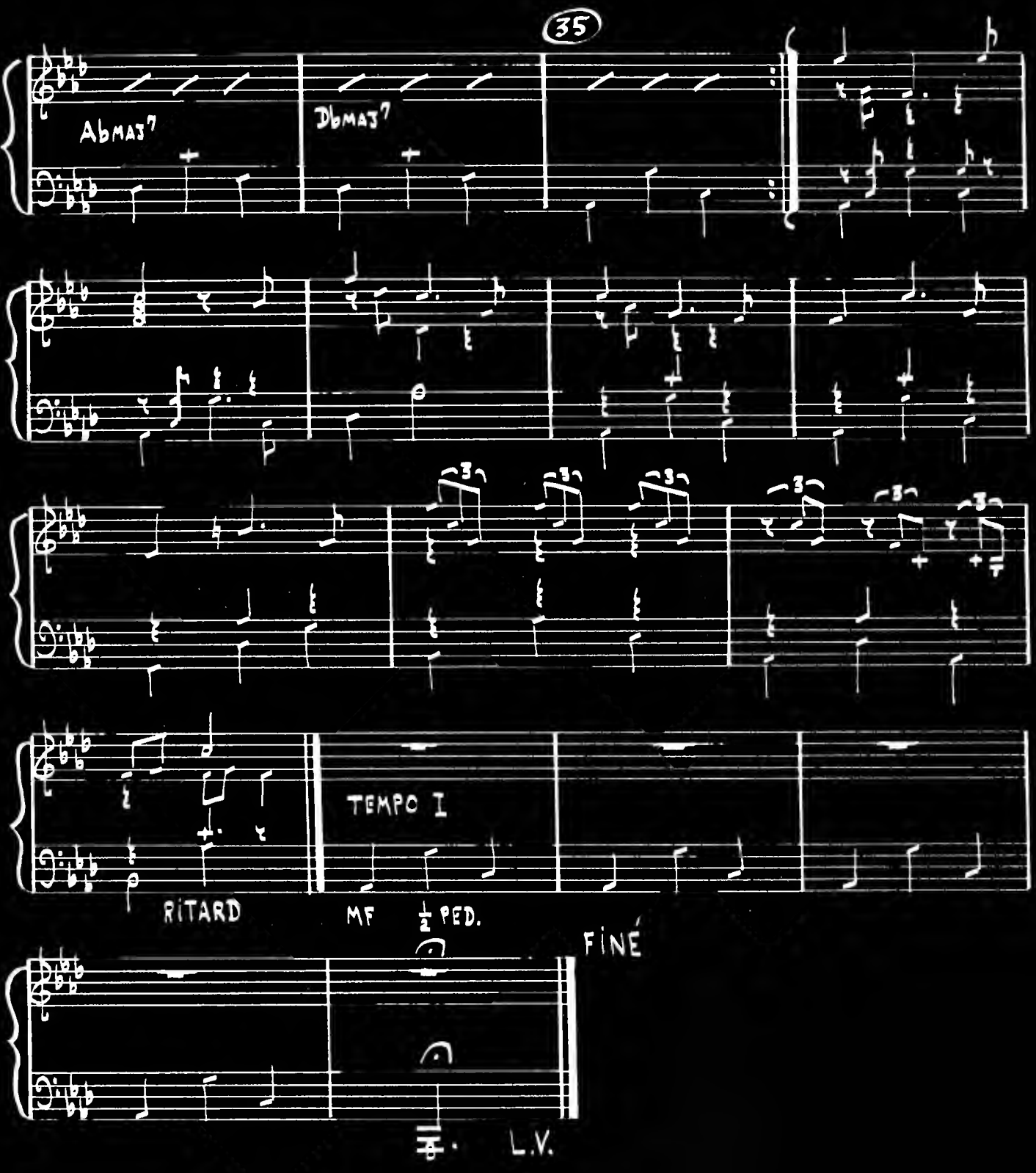
Jean Toomer, from Evening Song.

II




← 5-10 MINUTES →
IMPROVISE, BASED ON PRECEEDING CHORD
PED.
L.V.
PED.
RITARD....
PED.
MF
½ PED.
L.V.


MF
SLOWLY,
RUBATO
A TEMPO
MF
½ PED.
31
← 5-10 MINUTES →
IMPROVISE, BASED ON
PRECEEDING CHORD
Ab MAJ7


AbMAJ7
DbMAJ7
TEMPO I
RITARD
MF
½ PED.
FINÉ
L.V.

LITERATURE

SONIA

by Janet Rausa

Sonia Sanchez is one of the most talented, imaginative, and gifted writers of this era. She is an essayist, a playwright, a novelist, as well as a poet. Her works have been published in many periodicals and anthologies throughout the country. Of her many publications, the books, **We the BaddDD People, It's a New Day, The Adventures of Fathead, Smallhead, and Squarehead,** and **A Blue Book For a Blue Black Magical Woman;** the short story, **After Saturday Night Comes Sunday;** and the plays, **Sister Sonji,** and **The Bronx is Next,** are more well known.

Ms. Sanchez is a graduate of Hunter College and received her doctorate degree in Humanities from Wilberforce University in 1972. Since she graduated, Ms. Sanchez has been instrumental in setting up Black Studies programs across the country. She helped establish the Black Studies program at San Francisco State College where the first Black Studies courses were made available in this country. She has taught classes in Black English, the Black Woman, and many other courses at Rutgers University, University of Pittsburgh, City College in New York, the University of Pennsylvania, Amherst College, and is presently teaching at Temple University.

Like many other writers, when asked how and when she started writing, Ms. Sanchez said she had been writing since she was a child. Because she stuttered when she was young, she started to write in order to communicate effectively with other people. She knew that people wouldn't necessarily wait for her to say what she wanted to say; therefore, she started to write down messages that she thought were important to get across to people. She grew accustomed to writing down her thoughts and feelings, and much of her ability to convey those feelings through poetry has stemmed from those early years.

As far as her greatest source of information is concerned, there are many. One of Ms. Sanchez's main reasons for writing is to "tell people what is happening to them," and what "has happened to them." She said that she has been inspired by those people who have gone before her and have tried to achieve similar goals in their writing. Ms. Sanchez also said that she has been inspired by such poets as Margret Walker and Gwendolyn

SANCHEZ

Photograph by Debbie Lee

Brooks whose goals have been to tell the truth about life and make people aware of themselves and their condition, and to show the beauty of the Black face. She has read many works by these and other poets and has tried to capture their tradition of writing.

Another major source of inspiration in her writing is children. According to Ms. Sanchez, "children are so receptive to poetry and truth." They are uninhibited and free from the social pressures which are placed upon them in the adult world. They have no fears and reservations about life and death, therefore they can believe and accept the true feelings and emotions that are present in much of today's poetry. Many of her children's stories and poems are written for her own children, as well as for other children that she has met and grown close to.

When asked if there was any relationship between the Nation of Islam and her poetry, Ms. Sanchez stated that every Black person writing today has had a relationship to the Nation of Islam. In the 50's, Elijah Muhammad told his people that they were Black and they didn't respond to him. Blacks didn't want to be told that they were Black because at that time, Black was considered dirty and not nice. Their feeling of self worth was lessened by being called Black. It wasn't until the arrival of Malcolm to the Nation of Islam that their feeling of self worth came full circle. Malcolm stood up and told the Black people that they were Black, and people started to listen to him. He was a young, vibrant speaker, and the people in the Nation started to say, 'maybe we are Black.' Malcolm made Blacks understand their history and the things that had happened to them in this country. This was very important for the progress and growth of the Black people as a whole. "At this level," Ms. Sanchez states, "every writer that says, 'I'm a Black writer,' has had that relationship with Malcolm and the Nation of Islam." He/she had been inspired to tell the Black people that they **are** Black and show them what it means to be Black in this country.

Ms. Sanchez has found a variety of poetic techniques useful in her writing. She had read a lot of poets and gotten many techniques from the way those poets write. Like most other poets, Ms. Sanchez uses such techniques as imagery and alliteration to create a certain feeling or mood in her poetry. She has written almost every form of poetry imaginable; from the sonnet down to the ballad and the haiku form. Such things as Black english, Black dialect, unusual punctuation, slashes, and small letters are often used to stimulate a certain feeling or reaction from the poetry. She also makes use of musical notations and rhythm. In many of her poems, there are notations to clap hands, sing, or chant certain words or phrases. Ms. Sanchez stated that she uses every "element she

knows; colors, water, sun, and the sea." Everything she sees and feels when writing, she incorporates into her poetry.

Ms. Sanchez was once quoted as saying she writes song poems. When asked to comment on what she meant by that, she stated that she heard music when she wrote many of her poems. For many years she heard the music and was tempted to sing her poems, but she never dared to. At a reading not too long ago, Ms. Sanchez took the chance and sung part of a poem. It worked. A new life and feeling was given to her poetry. From that point on, the singing, chanting, clapping, stuttering, and tapping were considered an important part of her poetry. Special notations for music and sound effects were essential to fully understand and feel her poetry.

Rhythm is especially important in her children's stories. Ms. Sanchez stated that there is a lot of rhythm and movement behind her children's "stuff." "You can hear clapping in the background and it's like a song." The rhythm creates a feeling of lightheartedness and playfulness which coincides with the whole idea of children and childhood.

When asked about the possibility of writing an autobiography, Ms. Sanchez's main comment was, "I'm too young to write one." She feels that not enough has happened to her at this point in her life to write an autobiography now. Ms. Sanchez stated that the best time to write an autobiography is when "you've reached that point in your lifetime when you tie up all that has happened to you and you can let people know how you've found yourself in the world." She stated that she needed more time to find herself.

As for the possible structure and writing of an autobiography when the time comes, Ms. Sanchez said that she would probably wait to a point in her life when she could see exactly what her life has meant. Then, with the help of a diary that she has kept for years, she would start from her early childhood and explain how she got to that point in her lifetime.

Some people feel that the meaning of a poem changes when it is read aloud by the author as opposed to being read silently by the reader. When asked how she felt about that, Ms. Sanchez said she didn't agree. The 'feeling' gotten from the poem may change because of the different emphasis put on different words by the author, but the meaning of the poem remains the same. Ms. Sanchez feels that there is a private relationship between the reader and the poet during a reading that creates the meaning and feeling of a poem. She feels that it is important for a reader to listen to a poet's reading and then go back and read the poem him/herself remembering the way it was read by the poet. By doing so, the reader gets his own feeling from the poem as well as the writer's, and combined, the reader gets a 'total' feeling. Ms. Sanchez feels that there can be a variety of feelings gotten from just one piece of poetry. There is no one 'way' to understand a poem or one 'feeling' gotten from a poem, that is more important than any other. It is the combined emotion which creates the meaning of a poem.

According to Ms. Sanchez, "Poetry is universal." It is something that people all over the world can read and enjoy. No matter what shape, form, or language poetry is found in, it leaves the reader with a certain feeling and emotion that is known the world round. Although every individual who reads poetry gets a very individualistic feeling from it based on their own past experiences, there is an overall warm and gentle feeling that remains in the hearts and souls of everyone. Poems written by Sonia Sanchez are no different. The deep feeling of warmth and love remains whenever one listens to her read her poems aloud, or reads them in their own silence.

THE CASE OF LIZ YOUNG AND KENNY CHIN

LAW

by Debbie Lee

Elizabeth Young and Kenneth R. Chin, who is currently an Environmental Health major at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, were taken into custody by the Secret Service on October 4, 1975. The news headlines flashed that the Secret Service had aborted a suspected assassination plot against Emperor Hirohito of Japan. At that time, Emperor Hirohito was making a historical first visit to the United States.

After making international news with this arrest of the Chinese-American couple, the Secret Service quietly handed them over to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms for prosecution. The Secret Service had found no evidence to support and charge them with any kind of violation.

The Government first placed Liz on trial alone. The charges were for conspiracy and transport of a firearm illegally into New York from California (this firearm was the alleged potential danger to the Emperor.) Liz was acquitted of the conspiracy charge. There was a hung jury on the second charge because the jurors could not come to an agreement on the illogical interpretation of the residence clause of the Federal Gun Control Act of 1968 given them by the Judge.

The government then decided to place Liz and Kenny on trial together, for literally the same charges that were placed on Liz during the first trial. This time, the jury was prompted to interpret the term residence (from the residence clause of the Federal Gun Control Act of 1968), as equated to domicile by the Chief Judge Mishler. This automatically rules out one of the exceptions to the Gun Control Act: a person may transport a firearm across state lines if he has dual residency. With the Chief Judge Mishler's new interpretation, this clause no longer held in that court since a person may only have one domicile. At this second trial, the jury found Liz guilty of illegal transport of a firearm. They found Kenny guilty of both conspiracy and the illegal transport of the same firearm.

Both Liz and Kenny (licensed hunters) claim not guilty of violating the Federal Gun Control Act. Liz had bought the rifle with legal identifications while in residence in California. Liz was moving from one state of residence to another when she brought the gun along with the rest of her belongings to New York from California. The Gun Control Act makes the exception of transporting one's personal firearm when moving from one state to another.

According to an interview with Liz, "The whole thing was what they called selective investigation and prosecution. The fact that I have bought a rifle, I guess, gave them the excuse for the original arrest. Actually, the Federal Gun Control Act has rarely been enforced. This law was basically enacted to regulate commercial trade of firearms across state lines. In fact, about three months ago, there was a feature article in New York Magazine called 'Nice People Who Owned Guns.' There was a picture of this woman who was saying that she went to Arizona and bought a gun which she brought back to New York with her. She didn't know that there were any laws. Yet, nobody arrested her. They pursued this law vigorously as their justification for their original action against us."

It seems that at the time of Emperor Hirohito's visit to the U.S., the Secret Service was under tremendous pressure because of the attempts on President Ford's life by Lynette Fromme and Sara Jane Moore. Once the Secret Service had arrested Liz and Kenny to so called prevent an assassination plot on Hirohito's life, they could not free them even though there were no evidence to support the charges. More headlines would be made to question the Secret Service's ability to do their job.

The question still remains as to why the Secret Service picked Liz and Kenny as their Scapegoats. Liz offers some possible explanations, *"Both Kenny and I were very active in the Chinatown community, especially me, having been the first woman director of a youth program in Chinatown. Both Kenny and I have been actively working in the health field. We helped to organize the first Chinatown health fair in 1971. . . , We were very vocal, that made us good targets. People who stand out are easy targets, this doesn't mean people shouldn't stand out and they shouldn't try to change things."*

"The only thing I can think of, is they (Secret Service) are trying to make an example of us, I think that

by arresting us, they were trying to subdue and discourage the kind of community activities and organizing that was happening in the Asian-American communities, something which is very new. So by arresting two of the most active local organizers and workers in Chinatown, I think the Secret Service thought that they may be able to discourage other people from getting involved."

From being involved in this case, Liz has learned that, *"We are still minorities in the eyes of the legal systems and judges. We were colored people. It was a hard reality we faced, but I have learned from it. This was a lesson I can share, in terms of the legal system, you have to have a big name or lots of money, or you are of the white middle class. Otherwise, you don't have a chance unless you fight for it, unless you make sure and are prepared to deal with what will happen to you."*

What happened to Liz and Kenny is not unique in terms of the Asian-American Community of the United States. Other cases such as the arrest of the Tam brothers of Boston a couple of years ago can be cited where the law picked to arrest the non-whites involved in an incident, rather than the white-Americans.

Historically, Asian-Americans, though an integral part of American society, have been used as scapegoats in times of mass hysteria. Such outrageous acts are exemplified by the mass round up of Japanese-American citizens along the West Coast during World War II. They chose to encamp the Japanese-Americans who were never involved in any subversive activities rather than the German- or Italian-Americans who were known to be involved in activities against the Allied forces.

This case involving Liz and Kenny showed not only the racist attitudes still rampant in the legal system, but also its sexist attitudes.

"A sexist attitude was used to reinforce the prosecution's arguments. Also, it was a strategy used by the judge to discredit my lawyer who happens to be a woman. In the first trial, the Judge's attitude was not as hostile even though he did say things like, 'You're just like my wife, you don't listen'. But in the second trial, he was obviously hostile towards her by constantly doing things to make her look bad and incompetent. The attitude was, what is a woman doing in a court of law, and of course, it reflected upon me as a defendant. At one point, he made a snide remark, 'What's a nice lady plumber who happens to be a hunter doing with a smoke bomb in her blouse.' (Actually a hunting flare for lost hunters.)"

Photograph by Edward Cohen

"The whole sexism was on the basic assumption that women don't buy guns, women don't hunt. The judge kept saying that it didn't matter if I was a hunter, he left it up to the jury's own assumptions that women don't buy guns because women don't use guns."

"This gets into my right to have property, because the gun in question was in my name. I had purchased it and I had moved it when I came back to New York. Yet, the judge was able to tell the jury that they could infer joint possession by the fact that Kenny and I lived together. Even though the gun was in my name, the assumption was that I must have 'done it' (bought it) for Kenny because women just don't act on their own behalf, so Kenny had to be the mastermind since women don't buy guns on their own. . . "

"Another thing was the residence issue. The fact is that I am a very mobile person, having lived in many places. The judge took away my defense by refusing to allow my father to testify in my

behalf about how I went back to California to stay this time. Once this defense was disallowed in the second trial, the jury thought I was just taking a pleasure trip to California as opposed to what it really was. They thought that I was still hooked up to Kenny."

It was through the use of such sexist attitude that the government got away with holding a second trial in which both Liz and Kenny were convicted with violating the Federal Gun Control Act.

Although both Liz and Kenny were given three years probation instead of imprisonment or a fine, their names are forever smeared as convicted felons in the eyes of society. Both have gained public support everywhere. But the Supreme Court has refused to review their case, even though the solicitor general had declared that there was no evidence to support Kenny's conviction.

After almost two and a half years of hard work trying to clear their names Liz and Kenny are still far from seeing such a miracle, in face of the court's unwillingness to review their case. *"So far,"* Liz puts it, *"Our lives are in limbo, we haven't been able to plan anything long range. . . "*

"I am just beginning to learn how devastating the effect on my health has been from the case, the tension and the pressure. I have developed an irregular heartbeat. I have just completed a whole series of cardiac tests. . . I feel strongly that it has been the trial. . . "I have to slow down, because if I don't take care of it. . . , it may have a deleterious effect on my health."

So now, both Liz and Kenny will be slowing down their efforts to clear their names, however they will continue to fight, for their rights and other Asian-Americans, rights as citizens of this country.

For more information about the case, please contact:

Young/Chin Legal Aid Committee
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Special thanks to our dear Professor; Nelson, without you it wouldn't have been the same.

Love,
Drum . . .


REV. MARTIN LUTHER
KING. JR.
1929 — 1968
FREE AT LAST. FREE AT LAST.
THANK GOD ALMIGHTY
I'M FREE AT LAST.