

POETRY CORNER

The earth I claim for you
with controlled strength.
'The sea batters the cliff
and it recedes further.
Unborn poems come washing up
and take their places
as fragile bones on the shore...
A jawbone bleached white
talks of lost animals.

Rampant creation splayed.

by Susan Fleming

The body still hungers
in a secret place
when the sun crawls down
from the mountain.

Two beasts muscle their desire in a frenzy.

The children singing
follow the old drunkard
into the street
begging for pennies.

We all beg and many times the skin is shed.

It is all quite new;
the sound of flesh
grating flesh
and being eaten.

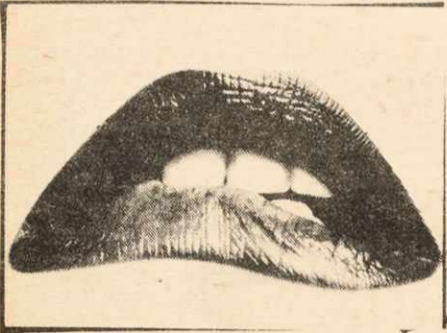
We arise a whole animal pasturing the soul.
Susan Fleming



The Tzar of Siberia

by Lucian Dobbs

The tzar worked in a salt mine
& dreamt of world within which
all persons worked (or played & were free)
subserviant to his omnipotence. . .
Actually he was a cynic & a poet
& dreamt of a perfect, utopian existence
where beautiful, exotic women loved him
& he them artfully & with the sour
vanity of lassitude & indulgent fragrances
of lips & hips & thighs & breast & buttock. . .
His feelings were sublimated into hard work
tho which was good for Siberia
& because he was such a hard worker
he became King of the people. . .



SCIENCE and SOCIAL CONTROL

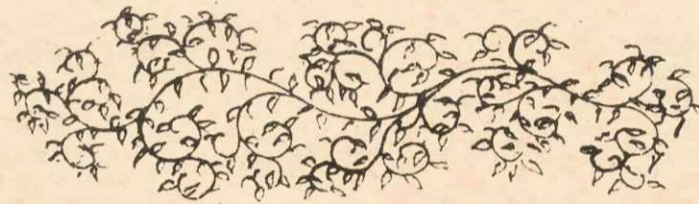
sleep with me, he suggested
putting his feet up on his desk
I've been to China
sleep with me
serve the man who serves the people.

We have taken the woman
and set her upon the forest floor
buried in moss, needles, leaves and twigs.
Earth germinating.
The rings of the tree
start with spiralled, inmost circle.
The core will rot.
How the soon the legacy of the dead
comes back to strangle.

Surrounded like this for generations
she awakens to a search
Branches close after her
like fingers locking together
like fingers locking together.
Streams leading to open water are camouflaged.
Sound cannot travel
through the tangled vegetation.

Once she starts on the path
there is no turning back.

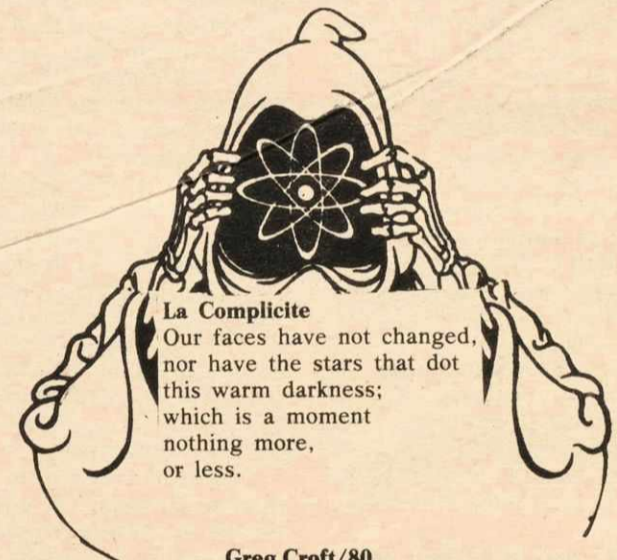
by Susan Fleming



The Yale Professor

—Mary Mackey

I met a man who had been to China
he was a communist, he said,
I talked with Chairman Mao, he said,
I went, he said, to serve the people
Science for the People
Science for Everyone
(he was a professor
at Yale
his research involved implanting electrodes
in the human brain
to control
human emotions
he was a Yale professor
tenured
divorced
with four mistresses
all graduate students
he was a Yale professor
funded by the CIA.)



La Complicite

Our faces have not changed,
nor have the stars that dot
this warm darkness;
which is a moment
nothing more,
or less.

Greg Croft/80

Lock up your cheese, it's booming in Rat Town

by Gisèle Marie Baxter

Actually, "The Fine Art of Surfacing" was one of the most brilliant records of the past few years. Chilling, frequently comic, cynical and incisive, it described the phoniness and callousness of modern life through images so recognizable that they were all the more effective. The album fulfilled all the promises of the strong, wonderful, earlier song, "Rat Trap", and brought Ireland's finest, the Boomtown Rats, to maturity as a band.

"Mondo Bongo" is the follow-up, and while it is definitely a progression and in many ways also a brilliant record, it does not succeed as superbly as it might have. I always had the feeling before that Bob Geldof, as a writer and a singer, could sympathize even with people he could not condone, because

the situation was so senseless. He is by now laughing from the side of his mouth in a darker humour, when he is not absolutely pessimistic — the compassion has been largely

sacrificed, along with much of the vulnerability. The spectrum is broader, of course — the whole bongo-crazy world is here, it seems, even the declining British Empire — but there are no more relieving moments of fun.

The production (handled by the Rats and Tony Visconti, who did David Bowie's last LP) is excellent, however. The characteristically good ensemble playing and sharp vocal arrangements are here,

with several dagger-bright percussion touches and keyboard runs (these courtesy of John-

nie Fingers). Despite the often oppressively pessimistic atmosphere, this album is frequently a treat to hear; there are some outstanding songs, and even moments when the

old compassion seems to struggle through. In the assertive rocker, "Straight Up", for example, Geldof projects real sympathy for a girl who wants to achieve something so badly, yet finds herself trapped and waiting.

"Don't Talk to Me" is a lively, extremely infectious 1960s-style pop tune, featuring

effective guitar work and vocal harmonies. (But why follow it with "Hurt Hurts", a more vi-

cious exploration of its Elvis Costelloish theme of woman as victimizer?) "Up All Night"

has the most fascinating vocal arrangement on the record — on the chorus, the band sings

lead, while Geldof handles the backup — and neat, icy little piano runs.

Again, "Banana Republic", although it uses a lovely, subtle reggae arrangement, owes its

imagery to Northern Ireland and contains the most incisive lyric on "Mondo Bongo" —

Two songs are really striking: "Mood Mambo" and the first English single, "Banana

Republic". The first is a recitation over Latin-flavoured percussion, with the band occasionally pushing through with the chorus. Geldof's voice stretches and winds, sometimes staccato, sometimes drawling, through the complex

tale of life, love, danger and racial tension. Though set in Latin America, the lyrics seem

to have object lessons for Geldof's native environs.

"the purple and the pin-stripe/mutely shake their heads/a silence shrieking volumes/a violence worse than they condemn". This attack on complacent leaders is vintage Geldof.

Incidentally, the album's capper, "Cheerio", is an excellent joke on the listener.

I must admit that "Mondo Bongo" has its flaws. Yet even if it is not quite so endearing as past works by the Rats, this music still confirms their place as one of the most perceptive and talented bands in operation today.