

Poetry Winner: Anne Gray

SHADOW NIGHT

while learning one summer how to protest
 i lived in a church with overfed mice, four
 germans, a czech and one sicilian
 who crossed the atlantic in overalls
 and arrived smiling. the turks got turned
 back; but pam made it from scotland,
 scraped paint for a week at the foot
 of mount royal and then got lost
 in toronto, looking for goat's milk.
 we practiced for a week being multicultural
 made yogurt and posters
 read back issues of Now
 then people flowed in with sponges
 rolls of paper and spotlights
 we painted our Nagasaki down brunswick avenue
 white silhouettes in wet chalk smears
 dried in the august night
 myself klaus myself pam myself dog
 someone stencilled a dog?
 we laughed
 a man came out angry with a hose
 and the dog disappeared, and half of me,
 like the dead that japanese day

Honourable Mention: Michael Redhill

DINNER ON THE OVERLAND

Salmon with hollandaise or pot roast
 which coast do we face —
 we are trapped.
 The whistle crows triumphant
 through towns — once
 we woke to it,
 sensed those trapped
 on the train — but now
 we are in the throat of it.
 We hear the whistle
 of our own passing and we
 are nowhere, our stomachs
 revolving like compass needles
 towards the dining car. This
 is the currency of our travel,
 enough to make us forget love,
 our real destination.
 Still, we will not fight the blue-eyed
 stewart with his menu; we smile feebly
 when he calls us by our
 first names. He knows
 how to get off a slow-moving train, but
 we are afraid to ask him how.
 We are mesmerized
 by the smell of well-spiced meat
 that follows him, how he glides
 sleek as a cream sauce
 down the aisle, calling
 Dinner dinner . . .

EDUCATION

One night I had a coffee with a man I didn't know, as
 sweepers went late around the tables and garbage pails
 banged. He told me stories of places where he knows God
 doesn't live, where men fish for nickels in subway
 gratings with cheap magnets and scrap like dogs for pizza
 crusts. The faces of New York's people are coming apart,
 he said, and smiled. But Boston, he said, is worse. In
 Boston there is a hotel with many waiters, and mirrored
 walls, and golden stairs, and beyond the stairs there are
 the people of Boston, and between the stairs and the
 people there are bouncers. It's like science fiction, he
 said. But then the McDonalds in Boston is dirty,
 everything is dirty, the tables are dirty, the seats are
 dirty, the hamburgers are dirty too, he said. In New York
 the McDonalds is clean, though the boy behind the
 counter may slit your throat.

Honourable Mention: Kate Reider-Collins

pattern at 22 years

1. sucking in

(a) i am allergic to penicillin;
 i find out when i am five months old,
 in the emergency ward

dark chances, my breath

(b) i play in the poison-ivy patch, leap in the
 pond to grab the sunfish, and lie in the
 shade during August days, sweating
 through unthought-of tonsillitis
 (c) in the alley behind the dance-studio
 a man hurts me

2. my breath

binds two voices

one strains to know the earth isn't flat

the other sinks in a straight line, skimming ruin

(d) from dance classes i learn to move
 with my hips, ribs
 (e) later, i know how to make love
 (f) i fall

3. they rise

(e) i forget how to fall well
 (d) i can feel the space around me
 i jump when anyone touches me

they fall

(c) when i fall in the trent canal i pull
 the deck-chair with me, sinking
 the water comes in my mouth
 i hold on to the chair
 my dad dives, follows and takes me from
 its hand

2. a grasping

(b) i should wear a medic-alert bracelet

1. my breath

hurries

dark chances

(a)

The readings, the mags, the memories

I've just returned from the final Winters College reading of the year. Drinks were on the college's Master, Maurice Elliott, and I figure I'd better write this while I'm still blitzed enough to be sappy and magnanimous. Time's running out.

A couple of years ago the Creative Writing programme was looking a little bleak. Limericks were being penned by winged monkeys in MBA bow-ties. Literary publishing activity had pretty much hit rock bottom on campus. Everyone belonged to the PCs. Cats and Allen Ginsberg effigies were being barbecued in Central Square. It was a difficult time.

One constant for the past eight years, though, has been the weekly Winters Reading Series, produced under the auspices of Maurice Elliott. It's seen rocky times, for sure. There were years when its student organizers didn't manage to get promo posters up until the day of the reading, and even then they were posted only in the washrooms at Tait McKenzie.

This year's series coordinators, Clark Westcott, Cyril Walker and the less visible Mike Kohn managed to assemble a pretty smooth year. Posters were actually around the campus 48 hours before readings, and the readings themselves seem to have drawn the most consistently large and interested audiences in recent memory. Of course, poetry readings being what they are (pretty hit-and-miss), there were days when only the chairs showed up for the free coffee and pemmican. And if the Boy's Club pastor between rival lit-mag editors often became irritating, there was always, this past year, at least a real excitement and sense of

community (as well as the usual back-stabbing that comes with it).

And after each reading, we'd sit patiently through Elliott's extended, cuecardlessly gushing comments on the afternoon's readers. Elliott's leaving his post as Master this year, and we'll never get to find out if he actually made up those eloquent speeches during the reading, or if he spent the entire preceding week scribbling them out. In a final act of office, Elliott has committed next year's college budget to continuing his fine reading series. Having turned down the lead in *The David Niven Story*, he's packing up for Sarnia to lead a biker gang.

A great deal of the success of this past year's reading series is due to the unprecedented publishing activity on campus. *Existere's* Dave Lomax, with the help of fellow editors Janet Broomhead, Nik Katsabas, Kevin Taylor and Kate Reider-Collins (each of whom were present for at least one issue), managed to bring to life the dying joke that magazine had become under previous editors. Of course, *Existere* still contains the obligatory quotient of pretentious poetry and editorial comment, but these people deserve signed Faulkners for actually cranking out four issues of a good-looking magazine. Wisely, they made it more modest in size, and it seems to have some kind of tangible focus now. A great base for next year's editors to take off from.

Relative newcomers to the scene, *Yak* and *Eat Me, Literally* also made an impact on York's lit scene. Like *Existere*, these mags published plenty of cringe-worthy stuff, but both of them strove to be innovative and vital. Michael Redhill and Sarah Cooper

squeezed out two large mag issues and one walk-in issue. If they ease up on the smart-aleck editorial remarks and hone their aesthetics, they'll be well on their way. And hopefully they will again attempt something as adventurous as their walk-in issue. *Eat Me, Literally* editors John Barbisan, C. Richard Gustafson, Tim Archer and pmd Sheridan have produced three bizarre issues, with a fourth due out next week. The magazine's energy and innovation often outdoes its content, but these guys are keeping their 'more respectable' counterparts on their toes. They should probably fire themselves and hire women editors next year, though, lest they drown in phallocentricity. (Is that a word?)

I can't remember the last time there was so much energy and interest among the creative writing community on this campus. It's great. And hopefully next year a few more mags will spring up and the Winters Reading Series will continue to thrive.

Now for some blatant self-interest: Next Saturday (April 16), the Toronto Small Press Book Fair will invade St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. near Spadina, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The York mags will be there, along with about 50 other literary magazines and small presses. And the following Saturday, April 23, the Surrealist Poets Gardening Assoc. will hold a group reading at ARC, 658 Queen St. W., 8 p.m. Brian Dedora, Lillian Necakov, Kevin Connolly and Jim Smith will read. Host is Nick Power. For a measly \$4 you can keep the winged monkeys at bay.

Quick! Get this to the printer before I sober up!

—Stuart Ross