

PIECEWORK

A Magazine of Poetry by Women



Carol Hamilton

Fall 1988

Red Dirt Press, Inc., is the result of the vision of eight women who wanted to provide more publication opportunities for women. The publication of this magazine of women's poetry, aptly named **PIECEWORK**, which draws on all the images of women's work that is done "by the piece," is dedicated to all the women who write poetry, sometimes in spite of their lives and families.

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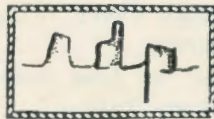
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Fall 1988

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Typesetting and Layout: Marian Hulsey
Camera and Stripping: Eloise Dycus and Martha Hayes
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UCO Women's Research & BGLTQ+ Center
100 N. University Dr
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(Cover photo by Marian Hulsey)

POETRY CONTESTS

Poetry Contest for Young Women

Ages 14-18

Any Subject, Any Style Poems

First Prize: \$20

Second Prize: \$10

Three Honors Awards

All winners will be published in the Spring '89 **PIECEWORK**

ENTRY FEE: \$2 (1-3 poems per contestant)

All entries must be typed

Keep your original, entries will not be returned (no SASE)

All entries must be unpublished when submitted

Include cover sheet with your name, address, phone number,
school, name of each poem submitted

****DEADLINE: All entries must be postmarked by Feb. 1, 1989****

Poetry Contest for Women

Any Subject, Any Style Poems

First Prize: \$35

Second Prize: \$20

Five Honors Awards

All winners will be published in the Spring '89 **PIECEWORK**

ENTRY FEE: \$3 (1-3 poems per contestant)

All entries must be typed

Keep your original, entries will not be returned (no SASE)

All entries must be unpublished when submitted

Include cover sheet with your name, address, phone number,
names of poems submitted

****DEADLINE: All entries must be postmarked by Feb. 1, 1989****

Send to: Poetry Contest, **PIECEWORK**

P.O. Box 60693

Oklahoma City, OK 73146

Featured Artist - Carol Hamilton

The poet featured in this issue is Carol Hamilton, who was the poetry judge for our PIECEWORK adult poetry contest last spring. We were looking for an experienced, often published, well recognized poet and teacher for this task, and we found all of these attributes and more in Carol. We found graciousness, devotion to the arts and a willingness to use her valuable time to help other artists.

Carol is a native Oklahoman, though she has lived in Connecticut, Scotland, New York, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana and Arkansas. She is a graduate of Phillips University (BA) and Central State University (MA), and teaches humanities in a public school for gifted children, as well as being a traveling teacher of Spanish. She was chosen Teacher of the year for Mid-Del schools in 1982.

Many children know her as the author of THE DAWN SEEKERS, which received excellent reviews from children, adults and other writers of children's books. She has published approximately 1400 poems, short stories and articles in periodicals, including THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, CHRISTIAN CENTURY, ARIZONA QUARTERLY, UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR REVIEW, NEWSART, HUMPTY DUMPTY, GREENSBORO REVIEW, LYRIC, SOUTH DAKOTA REVIEW, CALIFORNIA REVIEW, STONE COUNTRY, VISIONS, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF DISCUSSION REVIEW, and many others in the U.S., India, Australia, England and Canada. She won first prize in short story at the Indiana University Writer's Conference, first prize for novel in the 1982 OWPI contest, and numerous awards for poetry, short story and children's works.

Carol, like many of the women we publish in PIECEWORK, wears many hats: she is wife (married to Jeff Hamilton of the Oklahoma legislature), mother, grandmother, teacher and artist. She also shares her civic and social consciousness by serving on several civic and state boards.

In spite of Carol's busy and involved daily schedule, she always takes some time to write and, PIECEWORK wants to add, time to help other artists and to promote artistic endeavors. The editors want to thank Carol for submitting her work to PIECEWORK, where she has published four poems, for judging our contest and for being a powerful influence and inspiration in our community. It is with pride and pleasure that we publish six of her new poems in this "Featured Artist" section.

MIRROR IMAGE

The turkey vulture taps
his claws across tin roof,
stops to admire the sound,
is challenged by a large crow.
Others ride air currents
off the dry mountains,
wheel about, ignore
the confrontation.
That pigpen is a good
stopping place, and
from a distance the
vultures blend into
fence posts, sit like
sphinx guarding the
smell of dessication.
Nearby we swirl about,
light in clusters,
and measure out
opportunities without
much thought.

--Carol Hamilton

OPPOSITES

From across the table
I see you
Or rather,
I know you're there
Behind the sports page
And the classifieds.

Your coffee cup rattles
Empty as I feel,
Curls of smoke rise
To hang in mid-air ...
As do my words
Spoken to you.

You'll go your way
I'll go mine,
We'll meet again tonight.
The evening news
Will tell me you're home,
The classifieds
Will tell you ...
I'm gone.

--Marjorie A. Hall
Tahlequah

ON THE RIM OF WINTER

Yellow leaves dot about
in matchstick forests.
Sun gilds the branches
and the grassy hillsides
straw-colored.
Cars move back and forth,
trucks grind against inertia,
and I must strain to hear
the geese squabble.

There is not much color
left in the world, but
the sky is still blue
above despite the draining.
Branches and trunks
of denuded trees absorb
light, suck it down,
clear into their roots,
suck the vitality
out of me, as well.
And on the pond
across the hilly way,
the geese tangle
their voices together
in dismay and complaint.

--Carol Hamilton

THE LOSING PLACE

The world turned strange as pines revolved through space,
A field sprang up where there had been a tree
Across the path to mark the way for me.
I whirled as stars around Polaris race.

But I had learned that forests will confuse
The best laid plans for walks or ordered lives.
My world was tossed as those of Henry's wives
For England's fate. I knew that I could lose.

The woods were deep and stank of moldering breath,
The darker side of nuthatch songs and pine,
And time when I could trust a map's straight line
Was past. I failed the test of shibboleth.

Alone I stuttered, swirled and lost my way.
Your human voice paid passage from that day.

--Carol Hamilton

RITUAL

At river's edge the women used to meet
 To scour the clothes on stones,
Dry and soften diapers in south winds warm and sweet.

With incantations I often raise dead bones,
 Conjure ancestral voices from the earth.
Down wiped-clean lines they speak in undertones.

With hated basket my mother called before my birth,
 Pinioned the laundry against the prairie wind.
With perfect pinning, my mother-in-law knew her worth.

We wash, we fold, we put away, we mend
 And understand the ritual.
Our voices babble there, and yet we comprehend.

--Carol Hamilton

STAYING RED

Neither heat nor rain
staunches the hibiscus,
wrinkled red trumpets
unfurling like scrolls

keeping coming, triumphant rose,
never stopping blooming,
keeping forming buds new borning,
always uncurling, keeping coming:

silk cocoons of beauty, saying red.
Saying it over and over
even as wind lops their heads;
speaking from their black earth bed,

saying red over and over.

--Carolyn Trachta
League City, TX

AUTUMN STIRRINGS

Once more it's time for Nature's stir
Of shades of color and changes of texture.
The leaves copy their scarlets from the
neighborly red birds;
And their browns and golds are mimicked from,
Namely, the marigolds and the mums.
Smooth waxen leaves and grass evolve
Into furrowed frowns of Autumn stirrings.

Like nature, I too am in the Autumn of my seasons.
Changes of directions and choices are evident.
Even though I resist the loss of greenness,
I rejoice in the brilliance of the present.
And the smoothness of my innocence changes
Into the wrinkled brow of My Autumn stirrings.

--Loritta J. Blair
Choctaw

AMBERGOLD AUTUMN

One late October evening
As pumpkin ghosts and tangerine moons
Of Indian summer circled the darkness,
Thoughts of romance snailed my mind,
Across wind-dried leaves
And weathered acorns of yearning.

Within fantasies perennial as phlox,
What I wanted had been growing
For years, taking shape in
Hayfields, where I watched
Like a scarecrow in a strange country,
Others finding contentment I never could.

Another season was passing over me
Without a sound. I discovered
That in forty years desire hadn't left,
Nor tears,
And love wasn't an equal opportunity employer.

In the stillness, I walked lanterned streets
Seeing your shadow along feathery edges
Of rime covering poplars and hickories.
An owl gazed at me, its feathers hanging
Magnificently from its bones
As another ambergold autumn
Halloweened its children.

For at that hour
When the night seemed alive in my arms,
I wanted to touch you,
My olived skin tingling as I moved
Gently closer, memorizing
The shape of your mouth,
The slant of your eyes.

Who am I but the girl
Still hoping half her life
To buy a dream.

--Kathi Hill
Broken Arrow

ENCHANTMENT HEARD

The morning's
Crystal radiance
Carried the
Soft susurraton
Of feather upon feather
Lifted in flight.

--Riner Fitzgerald Moore
Wanette

Where are you, my mother,
who borned me from the secret dark places
of the fecund earth
who welcomed me back each morning and evening
welcomed me into the warm fertile trust
of your earth
oh, my mother,
I have sought you
in the dark silent warmth of earth
and you are not here
for I am become one with this sensuous earth of home
I am become the soil
that feeds the garden
receives the rain
encourages spring blossoms
that comforts the falling leaves of October
and welcomes their dying home
holding them close beneath the snow.
No longer the golden blossom of your daytime sky
I am become the humus,
the earth,
oh, my mother,
'tis I who finally shall welcome you home.

--Ann East
Bokoshe

A HUMAN RING

I hear our teeth chatter as we come up for air.
Still standing in water up to our chins
and staying submerged as much as we can,
we're dwarfed by the maples that arch over us.

Water drips in shivers down our stork legs
and collects in the hollowed places of rocks.
"It's not bad once you're used to it."
"There are warm spots where you've been."
We slice the green-black cataract
and move in wonder towards the underwater cave.

We swim until our veins stand blue.
Your lips, black tulips against your skin.
Our webbed fingertoed cleave the thickness,
reaching a black so cold it bites us back
as our bodies balloon beneath us.

--Linda Nowlin
Wichita, KS

AUTUMN

The hum, hum, hum of the cotton gin
Announces autumn is here again.
The smoky haze hangs over the hills,
As the farmers start their sorghum mills.

The farm hands gather corn's golden ears,
In thanks to God whom each reveres.
The doleful dirge down in the thicket
Is the chirp of a lonely cricket.

The defiant cry of the blue jay
As he flies across the land today
Gives forewarning of the winter's chills,
When blankets of snow cover the hills.

That brooding moodiness in the air
Creates a depressive atmosphere
That portends the coming of short days
When the winter storms supplant fall haze.

--Stella Fain Hansford
Coweta

OF AUTUMN

Glimmering perceptions
stilled
softer than twilight,
dim recollections,
in darkness,
or daylight visions.
You in cold winter mist,
Your soft blue shirt
a holiday gift,
my silver bracelets
carved in ivory stone
holding a flowered lace fan
Your Victorian lady,
with long brown hair,
captured in a photograph,
gold edged frame.
You beside me
behind the glass,
touching you in dreams,
in life,
more substance than shadow
words swirled,
rainbow design
time passing
like leaves in Autumn
warmth of amber
brown and orange.

--Susan Breedlove
Okmulgee

When days are dark and dreary
And you're feeling sorta blue
Just grab a mop and pail
And find some housework you can do
Sort the good things from the bad
As thoughts flash through your mind
And you may be surprised
At the blessings you will find
Just keep on mopping all the while
Cleaning dirt and daily grime
And you may find that you have also
Cleaned the corners of your mind
Busy hands and happy hearts
Oft travel hand in hand
And leave behind when they have passed
Lasting footprints in life's sand.

--Edna Strasner
Boise City

THE SHINING

Sunlight glints across the dark wood
that I just waxed; the mirrors gleam,
the bathrooms shine, the windows sparkle,
the vacuum cleaner roars, the clock ticks
away the time spent at mundane tasks;
but my mind soars with words and images,
fragments of tiny slivers, fitting together,
forming the nucleus of an embryonic poem,
filling my soul like the sweetness of music,
removing the cobwebs and making my life shine.

--Barbara Thrash
Texhoma

SCHOOL

The thing that made us different
Were the nuns in long black robes
And high white crowns.
Sister Mary Charles and Sister Mary Philomena
And "Praise be Jesus Christ, Good Morning,"
Sister Mary Stanislaus.
We still did math, studied history,
And learned grammar,
But didn't know the meaning of parochial.

We raced all over our holy half acre at recess,
Playing chicken, knocking everybody down
As hard and quickly as we knew how.
Once we discovered Tom and Elizabeth in the clothes closet.
And later, found them in the church vestibule,
Giving us all a lesson in sins of the flesh,
One of the cardinal sins we were sure.

On Thursday we always went to the cool recesses
Of the church and confessed to Almighty God,
And Father Michael, all of our sins, great and small.
And made sure we always meant it.
For as many days as we could.

Early Friday morning, every Friday morning,
The Father who resided in the parish house
Taught us religion.
We learned about the martyred Macabees,
The golden ark of God's covenant,
And a whole string of holy people and saints
Before and after Christ.
We learned of fear and death,
Guilt and love,
And of the tragic difference
Between ignorance and knowledge.

-Margaret Hrencher
Perkins

OKIE'S FIRST MUSIC TEACHER

For years Okie tried to teach herself how to play "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" on a battered violin that had first been her sister's, then hers for six months in the sixth grade. The violin then hid in the attic for years, before it became a part of Okie's mom's art-deco collage collecting dust in the hall.

Twenty years passed and now the instrument had a broken bridge and just one string, but Okie wanted only this violin, this link with the rollick of childhood.

She had it refurbished, learned the strings had been strung backwards for her southpaw sister. No wonder Okie never got first chair.

At thirty-three

there was more than words Okie wanted to read.

She spent seventeen dollars on Suzuki's album and book, couldn't remember a thing it said, except to be a good musician, the Japanese master claimed one, first, must be a good man.

She listened until the record was so scratched it skipped, practiced daily, as if she could find her way back to God by playing the perfect song, or having the perfect climax, or smoking the best dope. She almost went crazy, striving, trying to define good, ever searching, even knowing she, as the Glancer, illuminated light from within.

She kept the violin in an old, dusty,
coffin-like case, until she turned forty
and the crisis came. She re-opened
the casket to begin the familiar refrain.
She carried this carved wood everywhere,
hoping it would rub-off like a Mozart
concerto on a Stradivarius.
She back-packed through Europe
with her weapon in her hand, thinking she could protect
herself by playing open "E's."
Further East, in Greece
she carried the violin down to the Matala Beach.
Now, Okie believed in karma and predestination,
and just at that exact moment she was thinking
it's time for a good teacher ... a good man.

She rubbed sand
out of her third eye and a vision
of a hippie approached with long braids,
rotten teeth, hiking boots, cut-offs,
and no resin for his bow.
This unexpected mystic
could make his fiddle sing, and by the time
the sun had set somewhere in the Libyan Sea,
this transient farmer from Idaho
had taught Okie "Ol' Suzanna," and was falling
in love with her, as if she could return the love
of a man with ingrown fingernails and fangs.
Too dark now to sit in wet sand,
her teacher downs three orders of french fries,
grins and seduces, with catsup in his beard.

He lived in a cave,
had a plastic table-cloth for a door,
a black star of David and a red Satan
painted on stone walls. They sat on a soiled mattress,
and ate lime-green ice-cream. Okie thought, ain't it
funny how life often resembled her wildest dreams.
Legends tell that before flower children
from the sixties came, these caves had been occupied
by early Christian Crusaders, then Nazi soldiers,
proving again, to Okie life is bigger than it seems.
A full moon was out now, and
Okie wanted a new song ... but,
Greg's fingers were fast on the fret,
and Okie didn't stick around to learn
"Au Clair de la Luna"!

--Kathianne Osburn
Oklahoma City

PROPHETIC PREDICTION

I shall sleep well tonight.
Every loose end there was
is tied up now, completely
and neatly.

I will not spend my energy
Playing some counting game;
Instead, I'll place my head
in the contour of my pillow,
and before some new unfinished
business presents itself, with
work diminished --

I shall be sleeping well tonight.

--Oneta M. Whitlock
Altus

EMPATHY

Towering, spreading old oak tree--
Semi-sphere, domed umbrella ...
 My retreat,
 Apart from the bigger world,
Within the sanctuary of those wide-spread arms
That hug,
Yet leave me space.

Alone there, I feel loved.
It is my retreat.
Cool, protected, enclosed
Like embryo within a womb ...
Sounds of wind, of birds calls,
Muted.
The heartbeat of my oak keeps rhythm
With my own.

That was so long ago,
And I a little girl back on the farm ...

Now,
Driving out the dirt road,
Winding past the old windmill,
Heartbeat fast,
I catch a glimpse--
And stop.

My oak stands,
Lifeless limbs dangle.
I stand and stare,
And I feel hollow.

--Wilma Goodman
El Reno

DISRUPTION

Last year, after the fire,
door bell chimes replaced
with a cheap, rasping buzzer.

A woman alone,
hates that buzzer at night,
Feels fear first of all,
fear of invasion of privacy.

The deep push of the circle--
a sound bringing shivers, goosebumps.
She expects no one, no date, no plans--
so why this scream in the dark?
Damn it, she wouldn't be living alone
if she wanted intrusion,
now would she?

She answers to Charlie, her gay friend;
Later, the young "down-the-street-aways" fellow
pushed long and hard--buzz, blast, buzz.
Charlie and "whosis" found each other
mutually interesting--left arm in arm.
A big hole in the private hours.
Can't be mended now!

--Carolyn Hayes
San Antonio, TX

WITHIN THE RABBIT'S EYE

Tonight my brother drove 100 miles to visit.
Of course it's business, Harley-shopping
in the dead of winter. He refuses anything
new.

AT SEVEN HE SHOT A SICK RABBIT
STANDING TARGET-LIKE, FROZEN WITH SOME DISEASE.

Riding highways, snow-soaked, come spring,
feeling every bump in his spine, struggling
with his freedom, living for open spaces,
meadow air tugging at the side of his face.

HE TOOK IT EASILY, SLUNG IT OVER HIS BACK.

And we visit uncomfortably with the silence of old lovers
until boredom and suffering drive us out to look for color.
He buys ties, fluorescent pink for me
orange for himself.

AND GUTTED IT OUTSIDE MY BEDROOM WITH HIS BOWIE.

Happy with our ties, we bar-hop.
At one place we eat free pizza and watch reruns of
Monday night football. Cheers for distant people
we don't know and don't care to. But there isn't the music
we'd hoped, and the dancing later, too slow.

PARALYZED EYES, LOCKED OUT WITH A LIFE SENTENCE,
CRYING, SNOW FALLING, HIS HANDS RED WITH WARM BLOOD.

Remote, sitting in a separate light, we try
to be happy for each other. You tell me it is the past
that stings, more than smoke, in this crappy little bar. The words
we want, we never learned.

HIS EYES RED WITH TEARS MORE THAN SORRY.

In this bar, brother, with the same eyes I saw you had
at seven. But there is nothing to tell us we are free, nothing
to forgive. Really.

--Linda Nowlin
Wichita, KS

SCRAPEBOOK

We played as kids
In brown-clay gullies;
Steep-sided, sharp-edged
Against the fall sky.

Commando raids and sneak attacks
Were our forte.
The hard out-of-breath run;
Mocking the scenes on the tube
With make-believe blood.

Mom's voice calling us at dusk
Drifted across the empty
Field-sized lots;
The corpses were resurrected
To run home for supper.

--J. Leigh Perry
Moore

CHAINS

On the same night
I put on my Christ-chains
 those my near-ghost grandmother
 held up to me
my brother went down in a gang fight
 he, arrested
 the others, free
leaving him broken-jawed, with bonds
 of hatred
 for authority.

Was it that night, or one so like it
 as to make
 no difference
my too-young sister began her baby
 joining her
 stranger-man
her forced matrimony, the child
 dragging
 weighing her down
drowning her in stagnant life.

The baby's chains, forged in white-hot heat
 his parents' love
 his parents' hate
his guilt hammered into him
 by anger
 fear
bound him forever.

On nights like those there is little to do
no money
no time for anything
but adding links
to
links
to
chains.

--Betty Barrett
Yukon

LADY LOVES THE BLUES

she holds to great sorrow
defines it in verse
disguising in metaphor a consuming depression.

she hides from herself
an abundance of empathy
while she waits for the wind

as it moves the earth
soul wind, flares of the sun
she is venus, fragmented by a glow on lunar morning.

she is focused on the moment
driven towards the future.
open to the light

a student goddess,
too sensitive to slander
hearing the crowd but never the applause.

--Lisa Schwartz-Amos
Nashville, TN

OLIVER'S THEME

There's more to it
than the three square-cut
rooms upstairs
where you share peanut
butter and hair
dye and more, the rooms
of smoking cloves and left-out skins
of hard salami and nightclothes--
like the buckled LPs we bought
way back in Haight-Ashbury,
now grooving against the mesh of the screen
doors at the top of the stairs.
Top of the stairs, cedar loveseat,
beanbagged planks
where you sag together, sharing
more than a cup of licorice
schnapps, the stairs
where she promises you
she'll introduce me
to the ground, if I ever come
around to ask what's up.
She knows there's more
up the sleeves of those
old records than pressed
potleaf and spot
lyrics. That I might know
by my heart that vinyl,
those sheets, and the rasp of eucalyptus
in their voices when they stretch
Australian branches from your pillow
to the porch. She and I, we share
that, too, like our green
eyes and wishbones.

--Ruth Tobias
Los Angeles, CA

FAMILY TREE

At nineteen, my grandmother danced a quadrille
with a merchant more than twice her age. Impressed by
his good manners and the jingling coins in his pockets,
she accepted his proposal of marriage under
a pumpkin moon. At a country dance, my mother's
orange colored hair caught my father's eye
as they do-si-doed and allemained right in time
to his clicking heels and joyous whoops.
At a Halloween dance, a boy taught me the Lindy Hop.
When the music stopped, we stood beside a jack-o-lantern.
He kissed me and I tasted Sen Sen.
Our granddaughter, prettiest of all, living or dead,
is enamoured ob a boy with a pumpkin for a head.

--Maurine Smith
Tahlequah

THE TRAVELER

Womenfolk belong in the kitchen,
ain't got no need to roam,
Grandpa decreed. True, Grandma
never really wanted to leave,

she loved her Ozarks home,
but once in a while her foot
would itch, and she'd rock
a little faster
as she sat and stitched,

needle flashing through loops
of embroidery thread
with numbers and exotic names,

No. 35 Paris Blue,
No. 12 Persian Pink,
and her favorite,
No. 57 Chinese Red.

--Billie Marsh
Tulsa

PASSERBY

There she stands, rejected
Weary, old house
A forgotten mistress
spurned by her lovers
Blank, staring eyes, beneath
eyebrows of rusted guttering
Her twisted stoop making
an unpainted sneer.
The tottering chimney--her rakish hat
seemingly doffed to me
Each time I pass

Brambled gardens send forth
A faint scent of roses
I pause at the sagging gate
my thoughts poke inquisitive fingers
into her past
longing to know her secrets--
Is she sad? Lonely, as I?
The only sound is a blue-jay's ribald
chatter
I hasten homeward along the dusty road.

--Myrtle Burks
Oklahoma City

PRO-CREATION

Oh, yes, let's
devil up these eggs

enrich their futures
tint them red

toss away the caution
watch them grow up

moisten down the hourglass
and make the sand stop ...

I dream I hatched six children
and I bore them in a cartou

as soon as I delivered
I was slender as a siren

my brood dropped in so quickly
that I couldn't name them all

my mom gave me her Gold Card
and said, "Here, go shop for fall." ...

there's more than meets the couch
in my misfit imagination:

I may not be Right-to-Life
but I am right-on Pro-Creation.

--Emma Mayer
New York City, NY

GOODBYE TO A FRIEND

These losses come again and again,
and the telling makes me dull.
I no longer awake to the tone,
a call I turn from accepting.
I know now and have long that
losses are marked off at the five
and supper comes at six.

Cynicism spears my goodbyes.
I know they are deaths,
although we speak of letters, visits,
and remembering one another.
Days in and days out are
what matter, and they
never last. Leaves dust,
skin thins and lets vessels
swell through and my pain
must pump out loss' toll
so you can see.

But the regularity
of separation
makes it as familiar
as my face in the mirror,
and as surprising each
time. I am not like
Narcissus, innocent
of self knowledge.
I only glance at my
moments when you are gone.
I turn my back. The purpose
of pain escapes me.

--Carol Hamilton

UNTITLED

**Larkspurs
A Live Monet
Against the stockade fence.
Its pastel beauty warms my heart
All day.**

**--Mary Clay
Oklahoma City**

AFTER FORTY

Ounces and pounds
Don't say tons
No butter
For the buns

Pinch an inch
Squeeze a bunch
Water with lettuce
For lunch

Spinning scales
Heavy tippers
Celulite thighs
Broken zippers

Control top panty hose
In place
But she has such
A pretty face!

--Marjorie A. Hall
Tahlequah

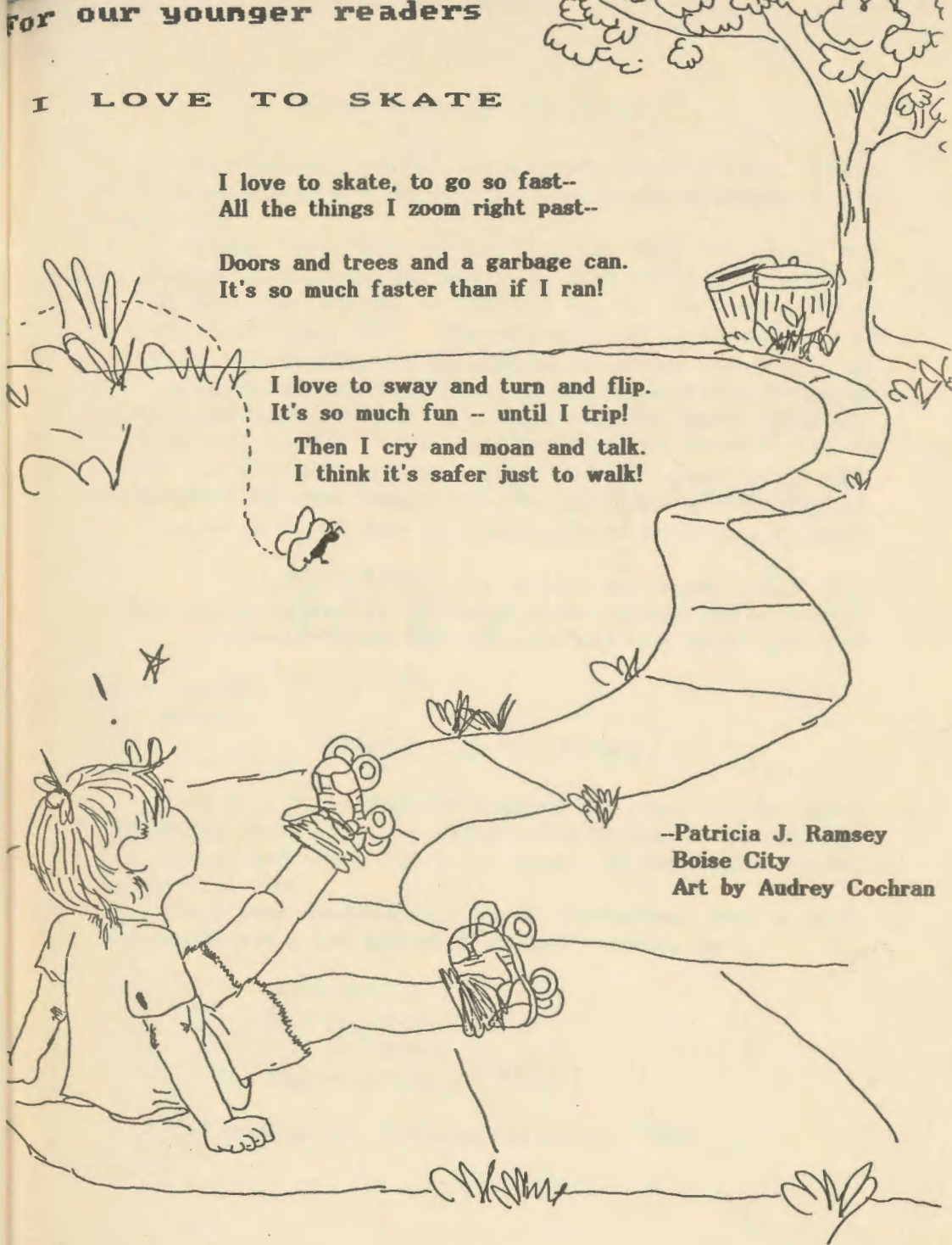
I LOVE TO SKATE

I love to skate, to go so fast--
All the things I zoom right past--

Doors and trees and a garbage can.
It's so much faster than if I ran!

I love to sway and turn and flip.
It's so much fun -- until I trip!
Then I cry and moan and talk.
I think it's safer just to walk!

—Patricia J. Ramsey
Boise City
Art by Audrey Cochran



INSIDE-OUT MILLIE

Silly Millie ate her dinner standing on her head.
It should have filled her belly, but it filled her nose instead,
And after dinner, Sneezing Mil climbed in her tub for bed.

Silly Millie washed her laundry in a drinking pail,
And watched for ducks inside her bedroom. Said she, "Without fail
They fly somewhere for the winter. I wish they'd go by rail."

Silly Millie cleaned her kitchen with a garden hose,
Then hung her laundry upside down with clothespins in her toes.
Why Silly Millie acts this way, I'm sure nobody knows.

--Sharon E. Martin
Cushing

The Issue is Hair

The American novelist Edith Wharton said in 1900, "Genius is of small use to a woman who does not know how to do her own hair."

Women have been in battles with hair, its sexual and political significance, for centuries. Hair makes statements for and about us, and we are looking for the statements women make about their hair. The editors want to do an issue of poems, photographs and line drawings on hair.

If you have work, send it. If you don't, here's an idea to work with: how do you see hair--yours, the blonde goddess' hair, Veronica Lake's dip, Clairol's creations, anyone's--how do you see it?

Send all your "hair pieces" by February 15, 1989, to:

"Hair"
PIECEWORK
P.O. Box 60693
Oklahoma City, OK 73146

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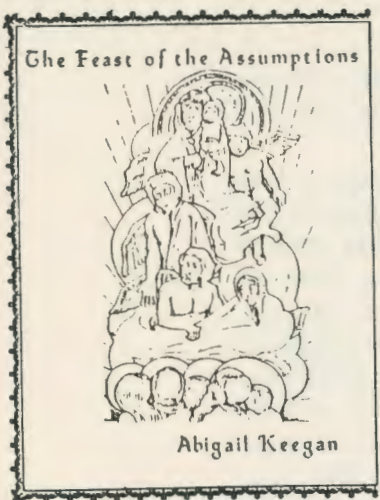
Send your double-spaced typed submissions, with a short biography and a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

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Red Dirt Press, Inc.
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The deadline for submissions is May 1, 1989.

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SUBMISSION DEADLINES: November 15 for Winter issue; February 15 for Spring issue; May 15 for Summer issue; August 15 for Fall issue.

SUBMISSION POLICY: PIECEWORK accepts submissions of poetry by women, particularly from Oklahoma and the south central region. Payment is in one contributor's copy, with Red Dirt Press, Inc., retaining first rights only. Simultaneous submissions are acceptable, but please inform us of this. Submissions should be typed and accompanied by a brief biographical statement of the poet, and a SASE. We will report within three months.

PIECEWORK is also accepting submissions of art work and photographs, especially seasonal to be used as covers for the quarterlies. Send black and white photographs or black ink line drawings to PIECEWORK, Red Dirt Press, Inc., P.O. Box 60693, Oklahoma City, OK 73146, by the submission dates above. Payment is in one contributor's copy. Please enclose a SASE.



PIECEWORK

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"I salute PIECEWORK for publishing so many fine women poets in the region. So many new voices! It is one more proof that the best writers these days appear in the little magazines. Bravo to the editors and to the poets!"

May Sarton



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