

Spring 1978

## The Yellow Magazine

Grand Valley State College. Thomas Jefferson College

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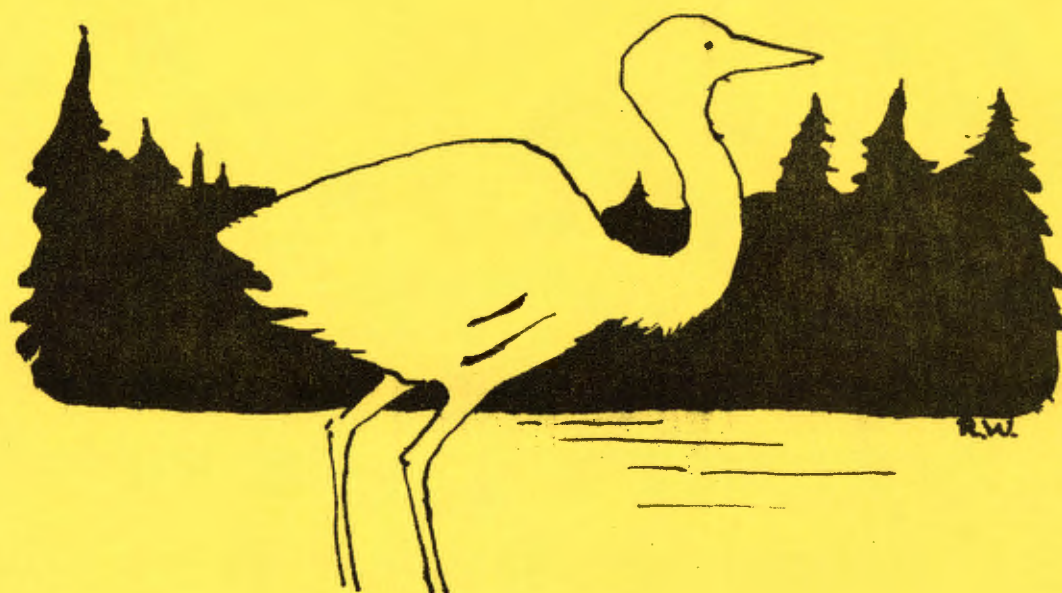
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# the yellow magazine



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This is The Yellow Magazine!

Spring 1978

Issue #6

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Kristie Bulger

Becky Hanson

Illustrations by: Rick Willey, Charlene Preuss, Erica Helm



### Fools' Day

My friends don't imagine me  
at home  
shooting my squirt-gun  
at the bathtub walls  
or in the holes that  
the orthodontist couldn't correct.  
They envision me behind a desk  
writing poetry  
or filing letters.  
Sometimes they see me  
drinking beers, singing songs  
and it seems to shock them.

Karen asked me one day  
what I do after school  
I said  
    "Oh, I hang out"  
and I squirted her in the eye  
with my chartreuse pistol.

Lori Eason

Return to Wonderland  
for Alice

We've seen you before, you little voyeur,  
lingering in rooms you did not own, watching  
from behind doors. Someone should have told  
you that the distances have changed, the routes  
to this place no longer meet at center. Now  
no one here can recall your reasons or would  
lead you thru this hallway. You'll have to go  
back, by scent or trail, back up to 42nd Street  
where cars move in all directions to take you  
home.

OR

what she doesn't  
dream of the  
poem he could  
become opening  
his thighs beneath  
her like paper how  
he might sprawl  
his hand up inside  
her leave fingers  
in her belly all  
autumn she waited for  
something strange the  
right word to turn blood  
into water but the messages  
he brings are all poems  
from another room

Music 2

every man she meets is her lover. every lover she  
kisses has lips like the mouth of her flute. she  
leaves them at daylight, spreading her flesh on the  
lawn to hear what kind of music it makes. when they  
return to their jobs at the bank, jobs at the factory,  
their professorships at the local university the  
lovers can never remember her name. But at home in  
their doorways something long and loud, middle C augmented

Ariel Dawson



DEAD BALLOONS AND DAISIES  
for Adriane Owls

She comes of age prowling  
december streets against the wind  
The branching crystal  
that is Michigan

There are flowers in her bag

Something (perhaps a scarf) flaps  
and tangles her hair Skirts billow  
and collapse to her thighs

Beauty: a fine haze  
round winter's moon To lose sight  
in violet snow  
Dead balloons and daisies  
Embraced in her rooms marking time

Daryl J. Murphy

## Crazy Mountains

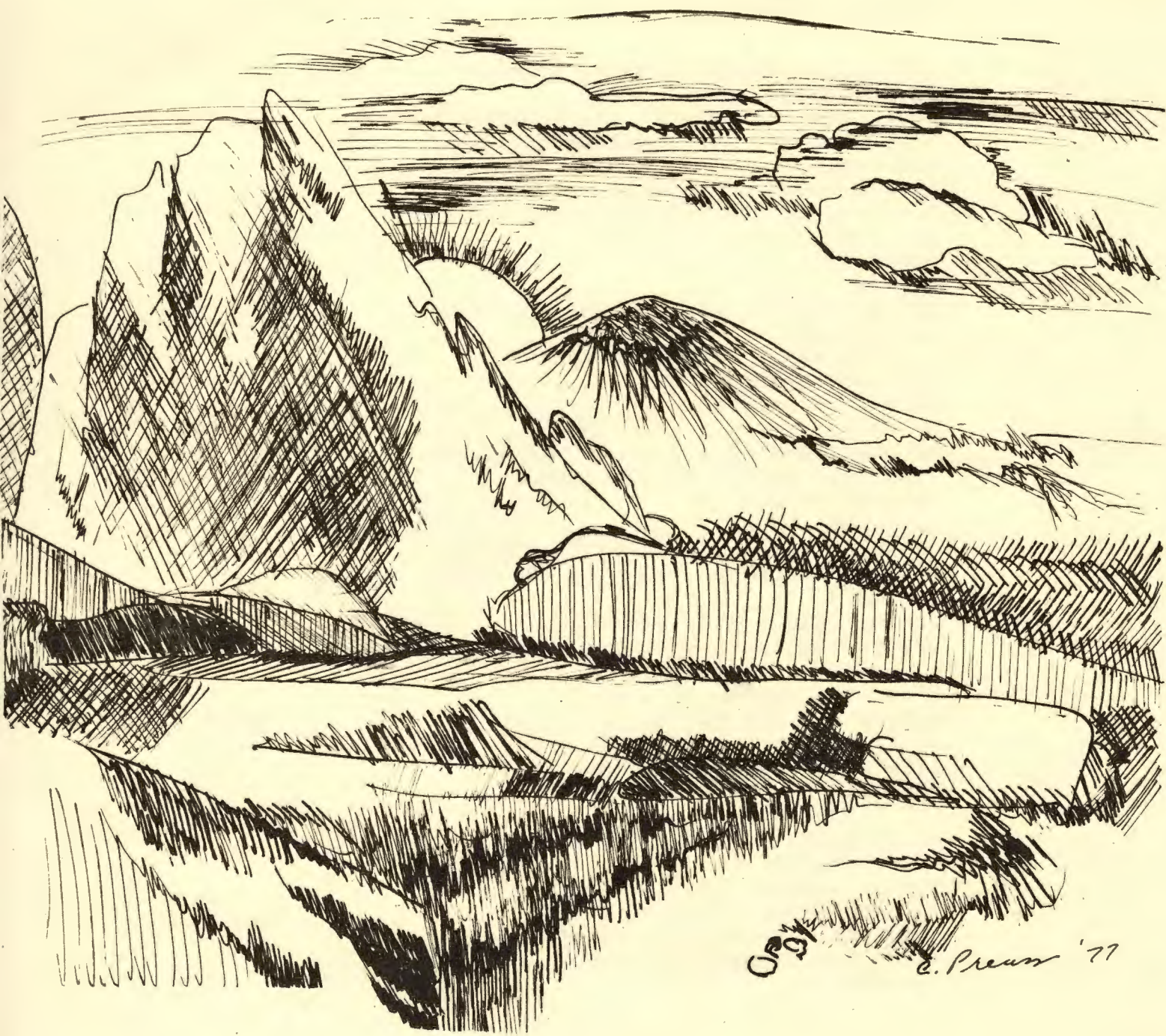
Perhaps it comes from the strain  
of the long winters there,  
when, after months in the snowbound rock  
Nature shrugs one shoulder and turns  
her back  
on the order of things...  
the streams flow up, reaching  
for the snowcap that once  
was home.  
At night  
the mountain howls and whispers  
alternately  
they say, "if you listen  
with an unguarded ear,  
you'll go mad..."

No one lives in the Crazy Mountains  
even that young Montana cowboy  
with rolling eyes  
will warn you.  
He said the Indians used to sit  
at the bottom and stare at the peaks  
for days  
(a "religious meditation")  
never climbing past those first rocks.

After the strain of long  
winters in the city  
after months in the cold  
silence of sighs, falling  
when sirens begin to howl  
and madmen  
whisper in my ear from every  
streetcorner  
I pack away my books  
pull my blood up to my temples  
eyes roll in the back of my head  
bare feet slipping on the  
swaying rock

Dee Glass





0291 E. Press '77



## Worship Series I

Cloud worshippers gather in Michigan.

Our white pigeons, ooh and ahh,  
beat up & away, praising the sky.  
"Ahh, the snowflakes today drift from  
the great mattress tick in the sky  
so comfortably I am drowsy under the weight  
of her temporary propaganda."  
Ganda murmurs, "*let loose,  
let loose, we're all snowflakes  
up here in bed.  
Won't you lie down with us?*"

Cloud worshippers, you see, lead dangerous lives,  
caught up as they are  
in the slow violence of a building storm.  
I have had visions, standing behind the deli counter,  
ice-cream dipper in hand, of being as smooth  
and flat as the parking lot under a late snow.  
Flattened and smoothed out by the approaching front,  
winter twilight blue.

Cloud worshippers - *wild* about their favorites.

Robin and I were halfway up the Rosy Mound trail  
when our hearts jumped. Ships afire offshore!  
The fog, fast as smoke, curled around the pines  
on the edge of the dune cliffs.  
I ate wild grapes in a panic;  
Robin waved her wand of weeds.  
Seeds flew in *all* directions.

Becky Hanson

I.

In ancient times  
womyn danced the heifer dance  
to bring forth rain.  
In bull like costumes  
they circle/grunted/  
pawed the earth.  
Once in a dream  
a herd of bulls  
formed a circle  
on the beach.  
I watched their dance.  
When they were gone  
one bloody head remained  
like Orpheus singing like  
Sappho I carried the head  
away.

II.

For days I cleaned  
the blood from the head  
brushed the hair.  
At night, alone in my bedroom  
I practiced the dance  
circling, staring into the light  
of a candle  
until I fell exhausted  
heart pounding  
nostrils flaring.

III.

I drifted into fitful sleep  
saw myself standing  
feet planted bare breasted  
all around me womyn  
circled/grunted/pawed  
the earth.  
I joined their dance.  
Each one of us  
took a turn in the middle  
performing our own  
intricate steps.  
Arms wrapped  
around each other



chanting/screaming/crying  
our tears and sweat intermingling,  
drenching our bodies.  
I screamed  
lightning cracked  
the sky opened  
like a womyn giving birth  
rain fell over us.

Susan Krause

I  
watch the late summer sky  
white wisps  
hang in mid-air  
and a sultry breeze cools the  
sweat of my body.  
Across the street  
an old woman cuts her  
grass. With every step  
she looks over her left  
shoulder.  
Is she like me  
keeping watch for the  
autumn people and their  
carnival?

Susan Krause

Painting Song

I run my fingers over yr back  
like angels would paint the surface of a planet

If I were painting earth  
it would again be blue  
with water and clouds

I paint you in browns and milk  
like I would paint the surface of a leopard

If I were to paint me  
it would be red and black  
like one of those alabaster eggs in the shop,  
one that we could balance on the floor  
at equinox

Erica Helm Nov. 76



for Meripat

laughter  
comes off your tongue  
like  
green fire  
tingling sweet fingers  
of healing sound.

Jealousy

I watched you together  
the summer sun  
reflecting your joy  
in the water.  
Nothing could have been  
more perfect.

You are a young evergreen  
full of undaunted spirit  
bragging to the world  
I am here  
I am alive  
I am earth's everlasting daughter.

Ellen Smith

Coal Miner's Wife Out For a Walk

-seen in National  
Geographic July 1972  
Appalachia

if i was born this here field  
i'd get me up way early  
and wash my hair all clean  
and just sit cross-legged  
watching the pheasants come to eat  
and when the sun come up  
i'd lay on my back all day  
growing like this green  
if i was born a field.

if i was born this here big rock  
i'd be hard and strong  
getting spit on or kicked  
or getting parts of me broke off  
i'd be real safe inside  
if i was born this here rock.

if i was this old pine here  
i'd be tall enough to see both ways  
out front and back  
i'd see if he was coming home or not tonight.

what i was born is woman  
and got no way of knowing  
if he's ever coming home. no way.  
no he don't know these things in my head  
he ain't no more tall than me. no tree.  
i only got some colored cloth  
and a piece of new scrubbing soap  
no he don't care. he don't see.

billie hoffman (helen)



The first night of April. Home late,  
I walk to the mailbox wishing for messages.  
Moonlight casts my shadow. I am alone  
except for the little cat who follows me,  
the sound of crickets and the cry  
of the kildeers not asleep.  
A taste of wine in my throat. It must be:  
no one wants to be with me tonight.  
Cows groan in the barn, wind reminds me  
how my hair feels. Alone  
with a full heart, the opposites  
struggle within me as I breathe  
the April night. The moon  
is almost full in her circle of mist.  
I kick gravel and return to my kitchen lights.

Barbara O'Mary

I remember how  
when there was  
a full moon  
in a warm cloudless sky  
I would run out  
to the hay field  
and dance  
in the moonlite  
with my shadow

Kristie Bulger



*Erica Helm 77*



## How to Make a Possible Dent in the Face of Loneliness

Everybody should get married!  
We'd drive each other nuts  
of course  
and grow out of it.  
But the point is  
to learn to weep with someone.

Always treasure that person as the one you  
shared your shit with.

Never use the prefix ex  
with the words  
husband or wife

(Ex implies all overness  
or the snuffing out of  
while the words husband and wife  
years later, can have a comforting effect.)

Know that there is somebody out there  
who knows you  
for better or worse.

Get together  
on a regular basis  
for something traditional  
and familiar  
like tax forms  
or haircuts.

Erica Helm May 77

## The Closet Hetero

When he was locked in the bedroom  
she could ignore him  
forget he was there  
and bang at the typewriter  
composing lyrics of painted ladies  
walking city streets,  
bare-breasted mothers  
in backwoods villages,  
sisters downstate  
living in handbuilt shelters.

*It was when her friends came to visit*  
asked if they could open doors  
or borrow the sequined clothes they knew  
were folded in drawers *somewhere*  
It was when she spoke in whispers to guests who never asked  
but followed her example.

She kept him hidden.  
only spoke to him when he came out  
for occasional food or use of the toilet  
It was an adequate arrangement:  
she knew he was there when needed  
which was usually after dark  
or when she felt the menses coming on.

Lori Eason



Bmugdina purchased astral pork at the corner market. He brought it home to the second floor apartment he shares with Ergala who loves him, who pays the rent. She boiled the chop, he baked it and together they set the card table.

Dinner was drunk with wine.

"Halfway down the bottle is middle-C," said Bmugdina. He tapped the bottle with a chopstick and dealt Ergala the six of spades. "Any further from shore is sure ship wreck!"

Ergala raised her eyes and giggled. Candlelight flickered with conversation. "Shi-pwreck...she break. Sure she'd break if you struck her with a chop, if you toppled the bottle, if you were chased 'round the corner by a starr-eyed pig."

Think big. A mountain. All the food or wood you'll need for winter. Recording an album. Bmugdina dealt himself the four of Swords. Sailing to South America. Middle-C is anything you see it to be. Ergala closed her lips around the bottle and said into the green glass until her voice was forced through her nose, "The problem is I think in terms of circular exclamation points."

"I love you," says astral pork, drunken with wine.

Stuart Brown

that night fully clothed  
together on the couch  
we swam from kisses into sleep  
and back again too soon  
our bodies glowed like candles  
dawn at the window  
blue air outside,  
blue air

holly cara 8-77

i will invade your dreams / i will  
be the shadow that follows you  
that disturbs you  
that touches you  
the sky is soft  
you'll lie down  
i will hold you  
you will see me  
we'll move together  
o nimbus ecstasy  
over coffee  
early morning  
the dream will cling to you  
like gossamer  
and you'll remember  
the sweetness

holly cara 11-77







this need

you alone can take my nights apart with me  
watching while I pack them into journals and notebooks  
look, I say, look  
I am turning to stone by daylight  
in the night there are no places I haven't been to  
I am bitten with the need to pour the acid  
back to the plate  
what strangeness has pulled you into it with me  
lashed as we are to the same wild craft?

Margaret Willey

time gone

the seasons have shifted over our heads again  
we lock arms and freeze but still the changes come  
spreading like pale ink on a watery surface  
stirring without sound, the lake darkening  
the color of my hand finally fading back to white

all things have a way of packing up for winter  
the dark nest underground of dust and crumpled leaves  
or the long migration  
an April notebook full of messages and instructions  
dreams flutter and pull to leave the pages  
poised finally for flight at the window  
unrealized  
fading  
singing the hollow song

Margaret Willey



## UNTITLED

Sky breathes sky.  
Sky breathes of me.  
Sky moans with the weight of storm.  
Sighs with the falling of the rain.

Mark Turcotte

## THE DREAM

A ticking of leather  
on flesh    The acrid horse-froth  
dull with blood  
A shadow bent to shovel  
like some death valley stranger  
His spit arcs  
to vivid red    His copper hands  
wade waves of heat and sand  
In this desert  
in pits deep beyond breath  
bones gather    unpackaged  
and generate light

Daryl J. Murphy

Grandpa Richardson (1893-1975)

Your hair didn't really blow away or catch fire,  
my mother said. It was no joke -  
the bad air after a shot took your leg  
like a pheasant's wing. The wife  
claimed more of the farm  
each time she chased cattle.

You begin to hunt with Charlie, blinded  
by barbed wire and an arrow. He retrieves  
as easily as you can see  
the fallen birds.

You ride horses, take pleasure in their boyishness.  
The little girl, warm as spring fields,  
loves them too. The older boy  
always looked into town,  
going with radios away to a city.

You rig a bagswing and sandboat for grandchildren,  
who haul rocks, stay Friday to Sunday.  
You carry the saddle from the cook shack,  
straighten a grip that would let Pet trot,  
"show her who's boss" with a jerk of the reins.

Winter's long, when your body begins to go,  
but the wife has filled your silences for years,  
fixing and scolding.  
Emphysema, arthritis, cancer, colonitis:  
each plants its small flag. She matches you  
with rheumatism and cancer that takes both breasts.

Watching the sun slide past Jack Creek,  
deer in the garden some mornings,  
the neighbors dying or moving to town,  
you never betray the empty cattle yard,  
pig and chicken houses. There are a few sheep  
and corn is up to two and a quarter.

The bad air from '35 drifts back:  
she wants to sell the farm.  
With his leg he can't do chore,  
she says, and who always starts the furnace?  
Grandpa, if you move to town, you'll lose the farm.  
It will make you remember losing your leg.

Watching the weather is *not* more important,  
they say, you're 80 years old.  
Like the horse in the barn all winter,  
your eyes become wild and beaten.  
Mourners will nod in agreement and say  
you didn't suffocate.

Becky Hanson



ashas

erica listen:

our witches' heart  
beats red rhythms  
our breath flutes  
through pelvic bone

\*

secrets spiral up our spine  
explode thru lips & sing  
laughter dangles from our ears  
we are twin  
silver earrings pierced  
in Her ear.

\*

the drum is silent  
the flute shines like a cat  
in our blue mirrors  
we reflect

the hidden moon

\*

knowing that we see  
like a cat knowing  
when in doubt: wash

we bathe each other  
making the water burn  
we melt like wax kittens  
in liquid flame

\*

and now we feed  
on souffle, fresh salad  
& herbs  
the drum is dancing  
we carve words & pass nothing  
across the table  
our wings brush  
we are Her  
feathered hands merging in mid-air  
ruby-throated humming fills our lungs  
yet the bird

is caged beneath ribs.

\*

chinese silk dreams & bamboo flute  
subtle drumming of our breath  
as we sneak into sleep  
our bodies form an ancient  
hieroglyph:

two wimmin face each other  
causing prisms to ignite  
burn all their clothing

we fear being/this naked

\*

oh erica

listen:

She beats the bare congas  
until Her hands split open  
bleed red feathers  
She breathes the glass flute  
until moons fill with music  
and we feel  
our pulsing heart bewitched -

yes there is risk  
of blinding  
naked we are so beautiful  
even She blinks

Her tiger's eye.

Ann Filemyr



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