



the lowlands reader

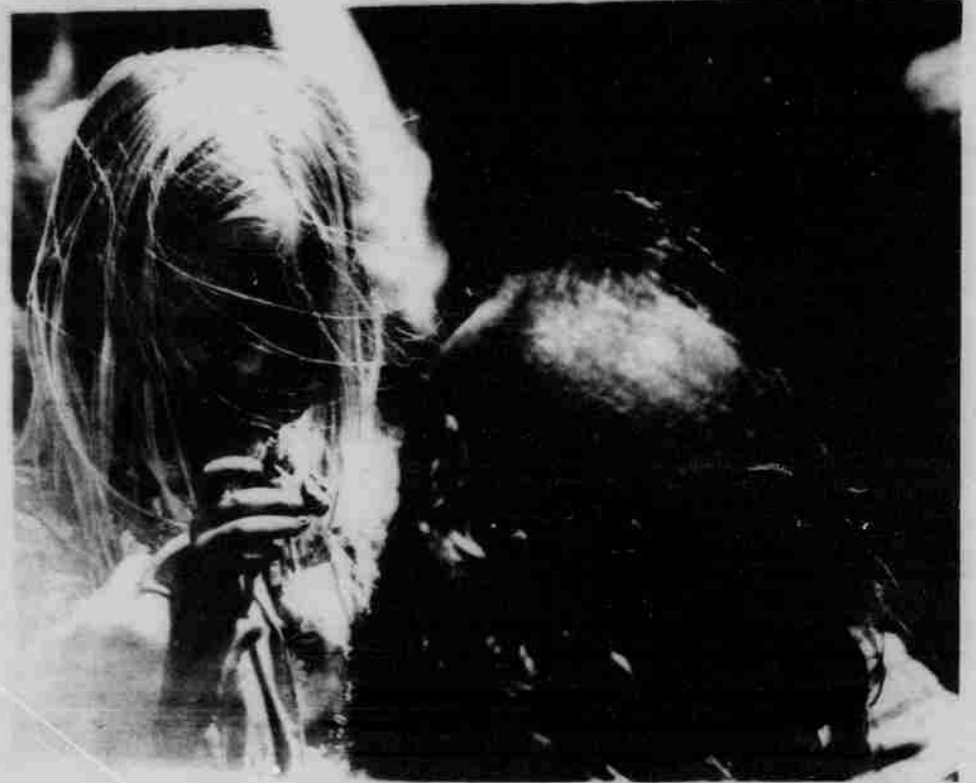
As South Dakota farmscape
changes into exotic
Picasso prints on a
patchwork tradition,
I dream of the hundreds
of gowns I would sew
for Aphrodite

the midnight 1949 Chevrolet pick-up
gave you and me a county fair ride
to the Platte River
to your secret oasis
the wheat and corn fields
rasped a breezy blues
in the background
in the prairie
through your *vin du pays* glasses
our heads dazzled
with the intoxicating grape rays
of an expiring sun
of running out beams
upon the touch
of the Platte River current
we became water kites
we became water clouds
in an aqueous sky
drifting and pulled
to the whims of a spirit water father
it was more than the river
more than its summer satiated waters
flowing about us

Thanks
To Russ Cole



it was a return
of our unborn being
then as the cool dark gusts
squeezed our arms and legs
with their raw embraces
we ran to the county ride truck
and drove home
in a generator warmed silence



The Camera Eye (two)

*With Apologies
to John Dos Passos*

It was winter the way winter used to be then with
the trees and grass so that when it snowed it hung on
the branches and the leaves and mother and father in
the early evening would be peacefully silent and
smiling and then sonny down from the stairs would
say how it had snowed and I on her lap would go to
the window to remember the branches covered white
instead of frozen with dying.

And grma and grpa at Christmas dinner with the
toys now opened and stored for a day or two in
separate corners of the big room and the toys not half
of what the opening the wrapped surprises below
the tree were. And then father to work in a day or
two and the holiday was over except that we played
in the snow making the older sad and happy to see
the snow mared and the children playing until school
again and sonny and roger with studying and I sitting
learning to paint, tie my shoes and later to write
stories of organ grinders with starving monkeys.

And then spring and the night grma and grpa were
in the other big room with father and mother and we
were upstairs because something was happening
which we could not hear. It must have been those bad
words which they were saying which we were not to
hear that we could not hear upstairs and I sneaking
down the steps and listening at the big doors until
they opened and no one noticed except mother who
held me and I said loud so father and mother and
grma and grpa could hear (sonny and roger upstairs
could not hear, they were upstairs) why doesn't
everyone kiss and be happy now. And then even after
they looked at me mother put me down and said
quietly go back upstairs and then no one at all
noticed me again.

And summer on the leaves and the trees and not
more stories and tying shoes but asleep on mothers
lap hoping they could not hear because of the noise
of the old car until many days later the door opened
and they said this is grma Alan and I said how if grma
was in Lincoln and father and mother just laughed
and were peacefully silent holding hands while they
talked to this grma while sonny and roger and me just
played in the trees and leaves.

Photos by Russ Cole and Mike Theiler
Short Story by Alan Boye
Poems by Lucy Kerchberger