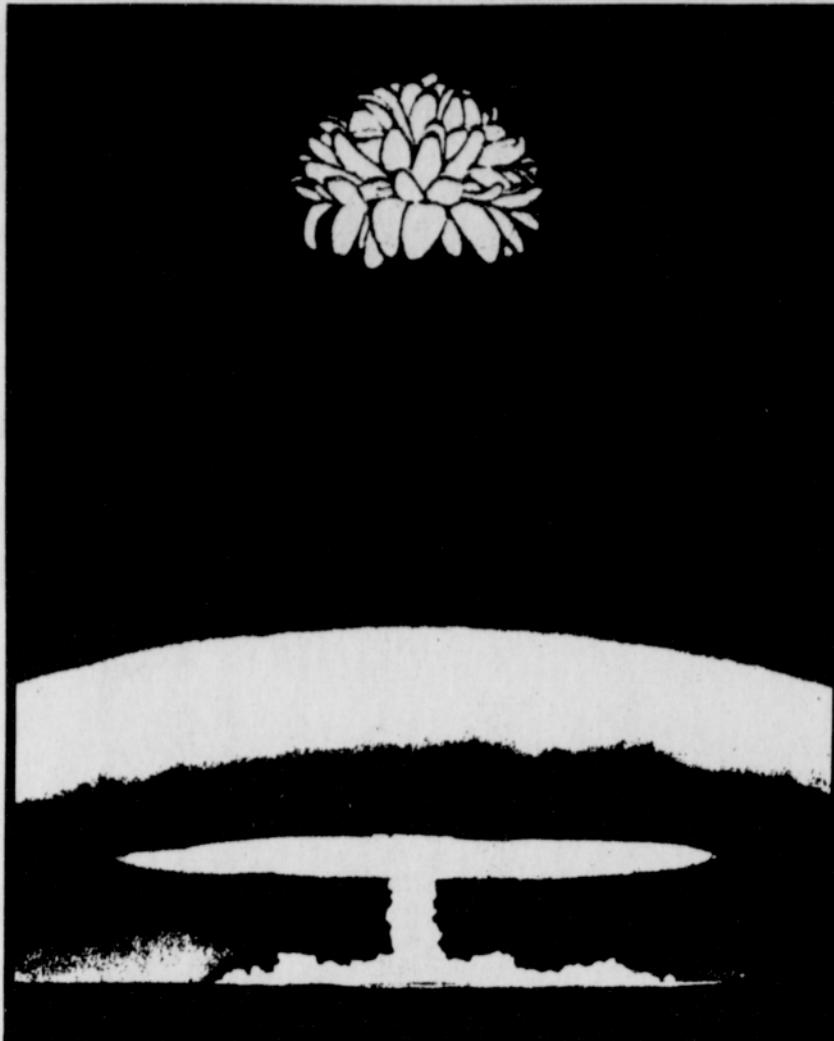


## AS THE DEATH TRAIN APPROACHES

Blackness covers  
The vision of the blind  
White is the color of Death  
The train/a mechanical snake  
Which can carry  
So much  
So efficiently  
Was used in Europe  
Some 40 years back  
To transport human  
Cargo for slaughter  
Even my real living  
Grandparents  
Were passengers  
And slaughtered  
Yes I am talking  
About the trains  
To Auschwitz and those places  
I am talking about  
Death risen up  
Out of the muck  
Of the warped human soul  
Stinking of Death  
And still  
Farm folk who  
Stood by the track  
Turned their eyes  
Upward for guidance  
And still  
Let that train pass  
I am talking  
Of horror  
Already congealed  
Forgotten in the form  
Of cliché  
More vivid, that,  
Nonetheless  
Than this slick  
Blind horror  
That carries  
Not only one people  
But all people  
Not long ago grandparents  
But you, yourself,  
Me, mine,  
The dove and also the tiger  
And all of our futures  
Blinded in final  
White light  
Now camouflaged  
Like some romantic vision  
Of rainbow  
So twisted minds  
Of our political leaders  
— Whom we ourselves  
Have permitted to lead  
Us forward into black —  
I am speaking clearly now  
I use straight language  
Not allegory  
We do not have time  
To hide our fears  
Behind disguises  
This train of Death  
Roars over our land now  
At this moment  
Somewhere between Texas  
And Washington State  
Soon will pass here  
Carrying Death  
In the form of  
Nuclear warheads  
And death unrivaled  
Always wins  
And the horror it carries  
Inside its slick surface  
Just behind the slick faces  
Of human engineers  
Rivals the horror  
Of Auschwitz  
Imagine —  
An Auschwitz all over  
The Globe  
And you yourself  
(Not some distant  
Descendant)  
And your daughter  
And your son  
And all whom you ever dared  
Care for are the victims  
And yourself Blindfolded  
And myself Blindfolded  
I stand before you  
One human being  
I call you to witness  
The train as it passes  
Tear off your Blinder  
(I will tear off my Blinder)  
There is power behind  
Our eyes

JOAN DOBBIE

Steven Fisher



## THE SEASON OF SHADOWS

— an open letter to the President  
for Hiroshima Day:

You wouldn't listen to the voices  
of millions of your constituents  
calling for a halt to the ceaseless construction  
of ever more destructive armaments,  
protesting the misappropriation of billions  
for Star Wars and chemical weapons  
while thousands of your fellow citizens  
in every American city and hamlet  
are homeless and hungry.

You refused to heed the outcries  
of the hapless victims of your terrorists —  
the Nicaraguan Contras,  
or to concern yourself with the agony  
of Salvadoran farm families  
who are daily attacked by American planes  
bearing cargoes of napalm and phosphorus.

So on August 5th, we who love life  
and seek its affirmation in peace  
with liberty and justice for all —  
instead of only for those able  
to pay the price,  
will become shadows...  
wherever you go that day, and in days to come,  
you will encounter us,  
large and small, shades stretched on walls,  
sidewalks, roadways and doorsteps.

When you traverse the streets of Washington,  
or travel to Camp David or California,  
the silent presence of our shadows  
will remind you of the fiery end  
that awaits us all down the road  
that you, elected leader  
of the most powerful nation on earth,  
insist upon traveling.

(With appreciation to my friends  
of the Shadow Project)

MARY JANE BREWSTER

## THE MUSIC IN THE SILOS

Cylindrical arks  
sit and steam,  
locked away  
from the rain.  
Electrons race  
through their tubular  
superstructure.  
Men and women  
have put death  
in these, and also  
money  
and what money can't  
buy: music,  
braces for teeth,  
geography text books,  
a vacuum cleaner  
for subway stops.  
The arks carry  
seeds,  
convalescent  
sun rooms, and  
paint. Nothing alive  
is within, however,  
no crow or dove  
can leave to  
find  
firm ground  
and return.  
There is no known way  
to open the arks  
to remove  
the possibilities  
they hold.  
And once they are lofted  
onto the  
waters  
all that can be  
unloaded  
from them  
is  
death.

TOM WAYMAN

## HISTORY LESSON

Class,  
I must apologize  
for the film we are about to see.  
If you would like to be excused,  
I will give you a pass to the library.  
If you have a weak stomach,  
you may wish to be excused.  
(I cannot be held responsible for any  
sudden loss of innocence.)  
I cannot be held responsible  
after the rain, or when the skin slips  
off like a glove, or when you see  
the person without a mouth.

You will be responsible for anything I write  
on the blackboard:

50,000 dead instantly,  
within 10 miles of center.  
100,000 died later,  
within 50 miles of center.  
Today's bombs: 200,000 X Hiroshima,  
Nagasaki.

(And you will be held responsible  
for the knowledge.)

GERRY FOOTE

## PAPER CRANES

Radiated into the consciousness of thousands  
August 6 will be remembered.  
The atomic agony of Hiroshima staged in silent stillness of  
burned flesh and radiation puking and hairless nakedness.  
The incredible heat that burned friends into concrete walls,  
also photographed shirts  
onto backs, chests and stomachs.  
In quiet hunger and thirst the desperate survivors  
could not count their dead.  
And, yes, there were no apologies.

The United States sent scientists, engineers,  
to assess and measure the damage.  
American grandchildren have not forgotten that our government  
ended the war and saved thousands of lives.  
In our inherited guilt, we, too, have seen  
the arbitrary callousness.  
And our Japanese brothers cannot forget their opportunity  
for firsthand observation,  
the chance to study the atomic particle as it eats,  
still insidiously,  
into the bones and skin and hearts of the survivors  
as they fold paper cranes.

KAY HILGENBERG