

AMERICA

For so long you were naive,
a girl with everything to offer
reading love and fortune
like a map on your bed.

America, where is art deco?
Don't you remember?
I took you to New York and Paris.
O the sheen your silk blouse threw back
when our goodbyes blew like light
down the hallway of the past!

Why are these sheets so grey?
And how did we end up in Cleveland
watching the news and reruns?
Who pinched the sugared rose

From the birthday cake?
America, I wanted to tell you
that the true eye of the earth
is water. Now these truths gloat
like the upturned belly of a fish.

And where is our history?
All that remains are the names of cars:
Fairlane, Impala, Ventura —
empty, superfluous gestures
reminiscent of a virtue lost.

The romance of this country
is commerce, the blush
on your cheeks is gone,
and now you're a manikin
who against the new sun
sketches a gesture of pardon.

MARK IRWIN



KALYNN

REAGONOMICS?

AN ACTOR, WITHIN HIS CRAFT, IS AN ARTIST.
THE PLAYER CREATES VERSIMILITUDE — DIRECTS AND PRODUCES IT.
THE SORRY TRUTH IS CANVAS AND BALSAM WOOD.
THE SPECTATOR RELAXES AND ENJOYS THE ILLUSION:
BUT, REFLECTING UPON THE FAKERY —
WALKS OUT BEFORE THE CONCLUSION.

KATHLEEN STEVENS

POLITICAL SONG

Ready as weeds, corruption conspires
to catch us halfway between hall and stair
where smug little promises follow like choirs
and odors of compromise perfume the air.

Already tomorrow arrives like a truck
whose tires are flat, whose fuel pump is shot.
We're calling pure women without any luck;
we're stuck with the stock fund we shouldn't have bought.

October will blacken, November will crow,
leaving our mobsters murdered in bed
until the plea bargain descends as a low
pressure system addressed from the cops to the Feds.

When fashion returns with the gnawing of spring
and morals have changed to the whim of designers,
we'll look in the closets and not find a thing,
resign our commissions, ship out on a liner.

WILLIAM LOGAN

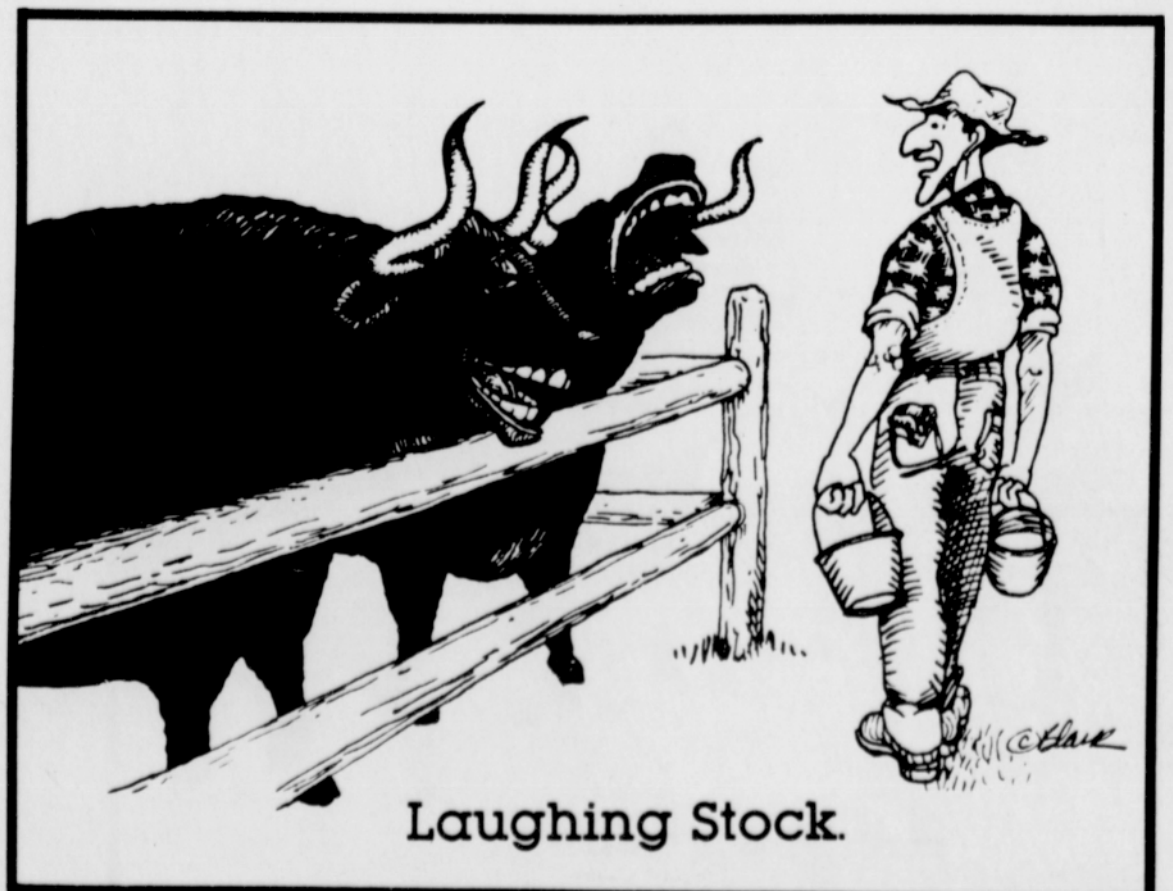
FROGS ON THE ROAD

After two days of rain
the frogs are on the move,
searching for mates
and good egg-laying pools.
The road
lies in the way.
My headlights catch the smooth white bellies
of those crushed by kids in their 4X4s,
who swerve to hit them and keep count;
and those smashed by their fathers,
coming home from the swing-shift,
too tired to care.

It's a quick death as tires crunch over:
an explosion of light and then
the darkness.
Frog legs for crows in the morning.
Some, back legs pasted to the pavement,
try to drag themselves toward
the cacophonous chorus of croaking beyond the road.
Then the next car comes.

"Well," you can say,
"it's a short life for frogs anyway."
I drive slow though
and dodge
as many as I can.

JAMES DOTT



JIM BLAIR

Laughing Stock.