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Untitled Photograph

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Why The “Promethean”?

At the start of the semester, I asked some people on campus what they knew about The Promethean. The answers were humbling, ranging from “The what?” to “Is that the newspaper?” Forging fearlessly ahead, I then asked if anyone knew what “Promethean” might mean. Even the members of my staff seemed uncertain. It therefore occurred to me to explain what this word means and why it is an appropriate title for our campus literary magazine.

Webster’s defines “Promethean” as 1. of or suggestive of Prometheus; 2. creative; boldly original.

Definition 2. seems clear enough, but Definition 1. seems to beg the question. So Promethean is suggestive of Prometheus? Great! That’s like saying Rabelaisian is suggestive of Rabelais — not very helpful unless you know the meaning of the original term. Clearly more insight is required.

Prometheus, it turns out, was a Titan — one of the children of Uranus, the ancient Greek personification of heaven, and Gaia, the goddess of the earth. Prometheus stole fire from Mount Olympus, where it had previously been used only by the gods, and gave it to mortals. This was in direct defiance of Zeus, king of the gods, who was really ticked off about it. As punishment, Prometheus was chained to a rock, where every day an eagle tore out his liver, which regrew overnight, so that it could be torn out again. Finally, Prometheus was released by Hercules, another Greek godling who went around doing any number of good deeds of this sort.

So we at The Promethean encourage everyone to seek light and truth, challenge the status quo, and enhance the Concordia campus with their creativity. Many thanks to those who were bold and original enough to submit their work in this issue.

Seattle 1997
(For Ezra & W.H.)

Beneath a flat, grey sky
We dance our dance of come and go
Seldom knowing how or why—
Yet beauty walks among us, too.

Her dark brown hair like her
Inquiring eyes too much to know
With my eye alone. To hold her
Body, to kiss her mouth, and so

To understand a little of love
In a city startled by Spring.
A skyline etched far above
Our ruthless human wandering

Stands empty without her form
To give light, her skin’s scent
To fight rain’s steady stream:
My glancing nerves felt her as she went.

Far away tonight, she will find
Her delicate bed. Perhaps hold
A pillow as she passes into a land
Where we meet as dreams unfold.

In tomorrow’s grey she will be gone,
Gone like a shrunken child’s hope,
Passed over by carnal powers one
After another. And yet we cope

With life’s eternal losses to save
A moment we pray and dream will come
When two meet, joining hands, brave
Beneath a flat, grey sky.

Jeff Koehler

For God hath not given us
the spirit of fear
but of power
and of love—
and of a sound mind.
II Timothy 1:7

calligraphy by Keely Longcor