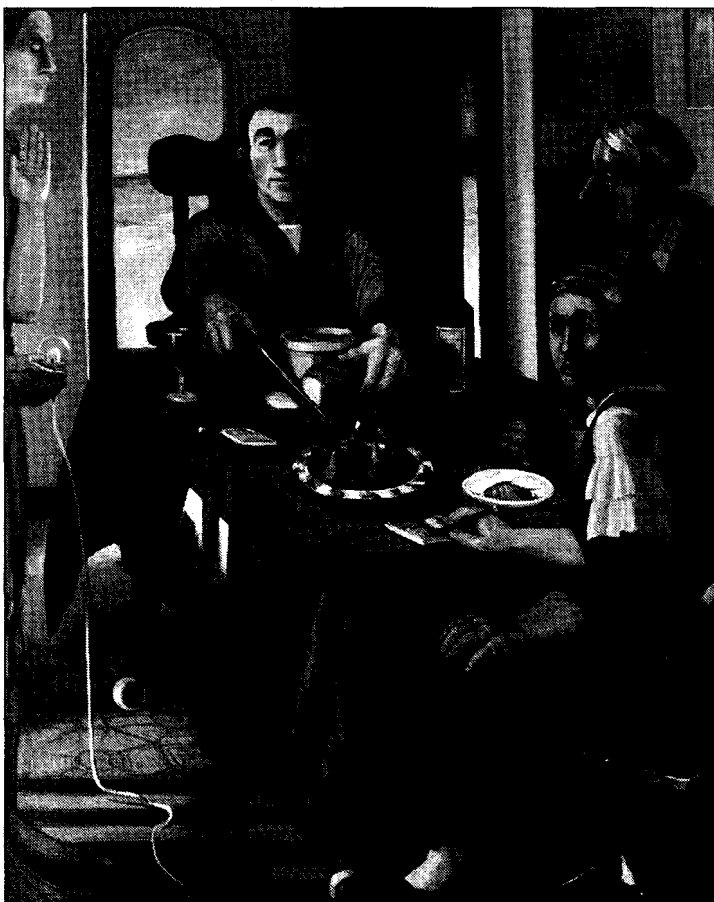


bright sparks born and extinguished. The ones yet to fire their brief white brilliance are her future, the moments yet to unfold. Celia wraps her arms around her knees, watching, knowing that somehow she painted this most beautiful of pictures all by herself.

Like paint, the endless black runs off all the corners of the night, and even though the firefly dots are scattered, she knows they are really all together, connected by something invisible. It is the very thing that makes them so beautiful. She sees it all, and this time feels no urge to connect the dots.

Celia stands up and slips quietly inside the house to awaken her little brother. She needs to show him this vision, this family of light. He has to see it too. If he does, Celia knows that one day both of them really will be connected, sharing and remembering these same moments.

Montana Jones is many kinds of women: bon vivant, raconteur, spinner of yarns, watcher of whales, goatherd, former winner of the Sutton Agricultural Fair Spelling Bee, wayfarer, and frequenter of Tuesday cheap movie nights. She lives on a farm near Kingston, Ontario and looks forward to this summer's first fireflies. Email her at montanajones@yahoo.ca.



Diana Dean, "Self-Portrait with R," 70" x 55", Oil on Canvas, 1972-1999.

DEBORAH SOMMERER

The Blue One, My mother

Medieval folk, I've heard, believed
winged things a metaphor for souls :
butterflies and birds
lighting a silent world with memory.

Twenty years ago,
my round-limbed younger son
wailing on my shoulder,
I saw a Monarch pause.
We three, in that moment, fixed,
on an ancient, rocky hill top
where neither bush nor bird
gave shelter, gave solace.

The Monarch paused,
line-drawn black feet brushing
the sun-beaten stone,
and forsook the stone for my elbow,
and the child quieted,
watching the slow opening and closing
of his wings,
dark orange and black under the relentless sun.
He stayed and stayed
and opened a rift in time.

So that my father, dead so many years,
returned to us,
and I knew it.

So that now,
in a back garden in Toronto,
a pale cornflower butterfly
who clings, fragile, on my kneecap
and will not go,
connects me to Persephone's world
which has always been there,
although for me, before, unpeopled.

Deborah Sommerer's poetry appears earlier in this volume.