

REENA MITCHELL KATZ

the planets as triggers
of devastating earthquakes

i dreamt you took me to a sweat shop, mommy.
it was 1939
you were just born, i was 36
violently stuffed
into a white pinafore:
our anachronism

there were textiles all around us; every texture
and hue:
they were blank woven pages
waiting to be punched out
just like us, mommy: blank. dirty.

women with strong hands worked there
blonde hair tied back
tight
their fingered machines took out all the yellow
yards
two per worker: yellow yellow
filling the factory, filling the galaxy
pushing like a moving mist
we could taste the sour
long sheets of
lemon drop, daffodil, meringue, banana.
(you told me yellow was always bubbie's fa-
vourite)

they were punching out shapes, those women.
from the cloth with their tools
hand held and brick like
two by two

i saw small shapes fall from the yards and
yellow yards,
mommy
they were stars, mommy.
falling out of the punched yellow
"jude" stars.

we watched the strong hands
making the shapes over and over
turning the remaining cloth
into what will never again be a night sky
magic and grand, universal.

Reena Mitchell Katz is a 20-year-old atheist jewish dyke from Toronto. She is also a family herstory documenter and a violinist.

LISA GRUSHCOW

Fire

there's a woman
in a photograph, i saw
of the warsaw ghetto
uprising. she's standing
by herself, out
from the smouldering ruins
around her
like a phoenix
except
i think that she's about
to be shot. facing her is
a nazi, young, somehow
uncertain
as he looks
over her shoulder
to his superior. she
looks at neither. simply stands
legs apart, bracing
and an empty gun strapped
across her chest. the ghetto
is burning, it's over, the nazi
will almost certainly
kill her, leaving her
facelessjewish face
face down on the stones
and the blood that runs
through her legs
through her chest
will fill in the cracks
the empty gun clattering
as she falls.
but for the moment
of the photograph
the gun across
her chest
the nazi's eyes
uncertain
the sun
standing
still
there's a woman
like a phoenix
rising up.

Lisa Grushcow is a recent graduate of McGill University, and is currently a candidate for a M.Phil. in Theology at Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship.