

First Place

Plantings

by Kevin King

*In a courtly gesture the
Japanese maple
bows its crooked trunks, as
we walk with shivering steps
past its palmate leaves.
Waving in the wind
it spreads its leaves, long and lithe,
five greened fingertips.*

*The leaves have yet to turn here
but at the elbows of the branches
pairs of growing seeds
form firey reddened couplets
forming to fall alongside
autumn foliage.*

*She laughs at me, how I love
a little maple tree,
talking endlessly about it.
If she only knew
what potential I see in
its little seeds.
And I felt poised to fall in
reddened pairs of we's.*

Second Place

The Chair

by Eliza Kendrick

*[Office of the Dean of Students,
Salem Female Academy]*

*How many times she called me to that chair...
My body gave the impression of sitting there,
as hard as that wood was, and worn threadbare
as wood can be, as we all heard we were.*

*It was the chair's slick seat, its crescent back
that held my true attention while I eyed
the length of a sick green carpet, piles of junk,
a buried couch, a cluttered desk, work laid aside.*

*Within this proud, imposing mess she'd be—
so pale and scant, but full of heavy truths
and her obligation to unleash them on me.
The chair saved me from shame as best it could.*

*I think how many must have sat there before,
and yet they left none of their heat behind?
But wood remembers shapes, adopts their forms
as they burn into it. And so with mine.*

HIV continued

more excruciating ways to die. Any way you look at it, psychological therapy is always a better option.

Fortunately, this is only the case of an individual. My own belief is that the vast majority of gay men and people with AIDS are not as self-centered as Tony Valenzuela. One only has to look on the same page to find Jose Orta, who is also HIV-posi-

tive, except he has had only one sexual partner in the past year and questions the wisdom of people who are, "...more casual about having unsafe sex" (p.51). Still, the whole situation reminds me of a line from the Morrissey song "Such a little thing makes such a big difference." It goes, "Most people keep their brains between their legs." I'd like to be a little more optimistic, though, and say that some people keep their brains be-

tween their legs. Let's do all we can to be weary of those people.

On a sidenote, I strongly recommend viewing *Savage Nights*, an excellent French film that can be found on reserve at UNC's Undergraduate library. This film deals with many of the same issues discussed in this article in dealing with a bisexual, HIV-positive man, his girlfriend, and his boyfriend. It is a little graphic, so don't say I didn't warn you. λ