## Chokecherries

## Anita Tanner

"... though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ..."

Isaiah 1:18

Dark berries abound like full moons; the sight of ripeness in sunstruck orbs puckers your mouth. Tiny stones blackened like clotted blood.

Round wonders borne in spikes, what is sacramental turned blanch-white with blossom. Although the syrup, tart for tasting, holds a bitterness, coloring your lips a deep purple,

all the losses laughed and cried about from buckets of impulsive berries will come back the bits of hate in every love affair, the wonder of paradox in the anxious throat of spring.

ANITA TANNER grew up on a farm in Star Valley, Wyoming, attended BYU where she was awakened to poetry, an interest that she says never wanes. Her poetry has appeared in various periodicals, magazines, and anthologies. She and her husband, Leonard, are the parents of six children and reside in Cortez, Colorado.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

This issue features the work of Utah artist Hal Douglas Himes. A native of Utah, Himes received both his B.A. and his M.F.A. from Brigham Young University and has shown his work widely during the last five years. "We live in a world that is fragmented," says Himes. "We have lost the power of dream and myth. And we are destitute without it." Hime's paintings are filled with symbolic images whose meaning is illusive. He likens his collection of images to the dream bundles Indians carried. This assortment of small objects had deep meaning to an Indian; if the dream bundle was stolen, the Indian would be vulnerable to the enemy.

In his own art, Himes reaches into his "dream bundle" and pulls out images—birds, snakes, goblets, checkerboards, grids, and calligraphy—that most effectively convey his message. He is intrigued with the bird image, because birds can fly above it all, and with grids, made up of black and white rods, which he uses in his work to establish a standard. "You don't ever know where you are on the earth without a standard," he says. "Even to find your position on the earth, you have to look at a very distant object—a star."

The calligraphy in Himes's paintings is meant only as a design device, letters or words that occur to him while he is painting. Once the painting is worked out, they are not important.

When asked what artists have had the greatest influence on his work, Himes said, "It's hard to identify what artists have influenced my work. Probably Paul Klee and Tamayo. But the most influential have been several instructors at BYU—Barsch, Bigney, and Darais."

## ART CREDITS

Cover: "Walpurgis," 22" x 30", oil on paper, 1988

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Artwork provided courtesy of Dolores Chase Gallery, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Walnut Creek, California

