

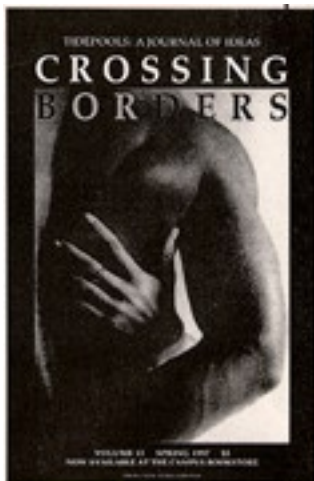
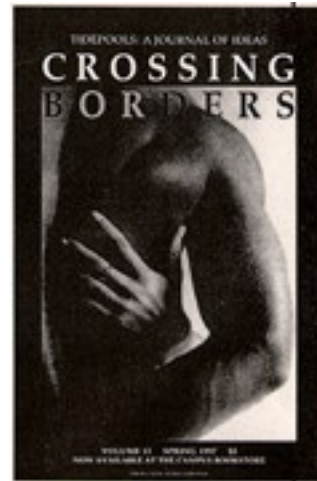
Tidepools : A Journal of Ideas

1998

Crossing Borders II

Caution: Bo(a)rder Crossing

Ballooning over the board, shorts that aren't short in the least swallow the skateboarder's calves until they disappear. One does not say "legging it" in reference to this form of travel, though even the wheels that once gave this sport its distinction seem verging on obsolescence. It's the belly of the board that must be fed now. This fellow skates just enough to launch himself into the air, the board in its own flight somehow following his feet. He comes down centered upon the median handrail, legs still tucked away from view, just two sneakers and a pair of bent arms working the balance until the end of the rail and then another burst and an injury-defying leap onto the next rail cascading down the stairs. "They need a sign here!" I exclaim, scurrying to get out of the way.



There is an art to border crossing. We cross borders to defy what has been defined as impossible, perhaps because we fear that in settling with the possible we are limiting ourselves, like geese which can be imprisoned by a simple chalk line drawn about them. What lines circumscribe us? What are we capable of? A heroic flight awaits us and yet we stop shy of raw transgression because that, more often than not, yields broken limbs. Be bold, be bold, be not too bold! For the youthful ambition and energy that are so vividly seen in the jump, there is yet a requisite wisdom to border crossing--an art to be

mastered. Balance and timing and a feel for the activity itself seem important. Being in touch.

We would do well to learn about border crossing from poets and storytellers and visual artists. They can take us beyond the full stop of our period, the rigidity of our thesis, the postcard we wish to snap. They use media as familiar to us as a rusty skateboard, but engineer new flights, exploiting the underside of language and vision. In this anthology artists demonstrate the craft that enables them to make that heroic leap into the border space.

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