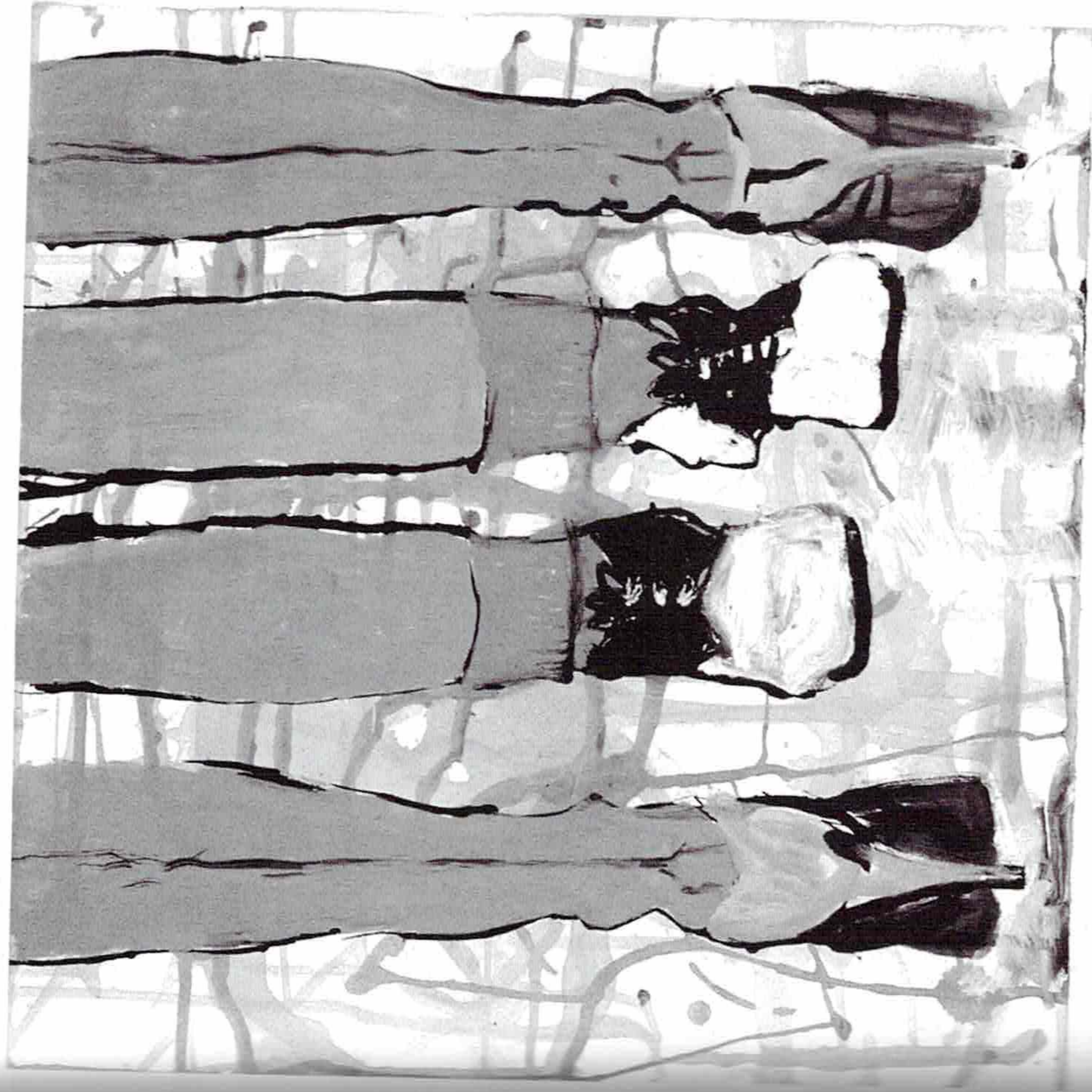


Lake George Arts Project
Literary Review



So after the last whisker of dried grass has disappeared between his yellowy molars, he takes a look around his stall, sidles past the lady with the bridle over her shoulder who's proffering the curry comb, and busts right through the chain across his door, taking off full-tilt down the aisle. By the time he gets out the sliding door, which is open, and before the fence turns him away from the traffic of County Route 203, Max is really booking. He sprays the barn siding with gravel, then rips divots of wet soil out of the soaked field and flings them ten or twelve feet in the air. Two stable girls and his would-be groomer follow him out the door and watch him, stunned, as he windmills toward a scrubby hill at the back of the property. As long as he stays away from the road, there isn't a single boundary for miles.

"Hey, he's got some *trot*," one of the stable girls says admiringly as Max fans his enormous broomlike tail and flits weightlessly along a line of trees. Then he stops and poses, head in the air, making train noises through his nostrils. When he skitters off again, she and I and the other stable hand corner him between a fence and a swamp. Max assesses the situation and decides he's not done yet. He decides to ford the pond, blasting through its footing of stinky mud, and keeps on going. Once around the back field, splattering dirty water in the air, he halts, Cheryl, the stable girl who ran back to the barn for a bucket of grain, sidles up to him and slips a halter over his head. Max walks into the barn like he thinks it's church and he's getting married, but with a moon-like white scrap showing around the edge of his eye as if there were something he wanted to tell.



Nancy Brett, *Trouble*, 1995, ink, gouache and charcoal on paper, 30" x 30"