

# **THE PROSE POEM: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL**

Volume 2 | 1993

**Paper Women**  
Jean Pierre Vallotton

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

*The Prose Poem: An International Journal* is produced by  
The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress)  
for the Providence College Digital Commons.  
<http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/>

**Jean Pierre Vallotton**

PAPER WOMEN

He has paper loves.

Each on her own sheet is carefully drawn: her profile, unexpected meandering hollows, a supple roundness, secret curves; her peculiar rhythm evoked by pencil strokes, lascivious dance or tender abandon. Her unique perfume, as by magic, rises from the hand that retraces her calculated poses and refusals, her cunning, her languor.

Whether she is born of past memories or of a future dream, to each he bestows the impassioned ardor of an ephemeral night, absolute devotion. For under penalty of perishing from the aftermath of his rapture, he must always, without hesitation, at the first incendiary ray of sun, impassively burn the unspoilt image of his fulfilled love.

From *Pièces brèves en quart de ton*

Translated from the French by **James Vladimir Gill**