



Nomenclator, 1994

*Seven Scenes From the Painting 'Exhuming the First American Mastodon' by C. W. Peale*

I. Youth with no name cuts out of the frame with an axe.

II. Those who extol a bone on a scroll turn their backs, sanction his escape.

III. Attached to his toe, shackles below the surface hold a neophyte fast who oggles aghast a bone of gold emblazoned with his name.

IV. Three green umbrellas are shown in all. These denote degrees by which a fall (a fall from grace) may be measured as virtual, potential or as actual.

1. the first has been dropped,
2. the second picked up, but not untied.
3. the third has been spread high over head to hide the sky.

v. Nourished by the two syringes shown,

VI. the wheel 'Nomenclator' (better known to the world as The High Priestess) names (i.e. defines) her victims forever.

VII. John Masten has hung so long from a rung he now depends on it as much as from it for such a vantage lends itself to one who proudly claims to be amphibious though actually allergic to the two predicaments to which his ladder leads.