A political art—let it be treacherous: men + women together. It won't last; hasn't even shape.

But'd make you think
spread at your feet
like a magic carpet.

For now you're too misty & too much like a bunch of dumb flowers or the incidents in their wake.
EDITOR'S NOTES

In late 1995 I gave up smoking, which put an immediate, temporary end to my writing. I couldn't write and not... but neither could I do absolutely nothing. A couple of smoke-free weeks into it, I took up cartooning, which I had abandoned ten years earlier after having been fired as "house cartoonist" for the SF Weekly. For ten years I hadn't, out of bitterness, drawn a single panel, nor paid any attention to the world of comics. I became an obscure coterie poet. I moved to Minneapolis and published small-press books by all my friends, books with titles like Possible Floor and And/Or and: Or and Or. I became a minor hero for a handful of completist librarians.

It didn't take long, once I was able to admit to myself what I had abandoned, before becoming nostalgic about the days when I would sit in the Chatanooga on Haight Street and spend hours sketching comics and reading Lynda Barry, Matt Groening, Gary Panter, Bill Griffith, Mark Beyer, et al. I began to make occasional trips to Dreamhaven, Comic Book College and other stores that trafficked in underground comics. It's no exaggeration to admit that nothing could have prepared me for what I discovered.

Sometime in the early 90s, the comics industry as a whole experienced a major boom. Not only had sales gone through the roof for the two major publishers, D.C. and Marvel, but there was now a plethora of independent and self-publishing ventures—prominently displayed as though there was actually an audience for this stuff. More impressive than the exponential increase in non-superhero comics was the work itself. Julie Doucet's Dirty Plotte was a revelation, for the jagged, black-heavy art as much as for her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Not even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Note even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Not even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Not even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Not even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Not even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies). Not even the Freak Brothers were as nakedly abject, as human, as her raw feminist stance (panel after panel of cartoon Julie severing men's penises from their bodies).
clinchers, in 1996, were Daniel Clowes’ *Eightball* (especially the serialized “Like a Velvet Glove Cast in Iron”) and Chris Ware’s *Acme Novelty Library* (in particular the Beckett-like “Jimmy Corrigan, Smartest Boy on Earth”). Fortunately, both are popular enough that I don’t have to attempt to describe them.

It’s now the summer of 2001, some five years later. The comics boom is over (the curious reader can check back issues of *The Comics Journal* ca. 1995-99 to follow the rise of Diamond Distribution and the simultaneous demise of every other comics distributor). But every week I discover something new. Last week it was a number of self-published titles: John Pham’s *Epoxy*, Jessica Abel’s *Trazo de Tina*, Tony Consiglio’s *Double Cross*, Matt Madden’s *Asf Pasan los Dias* and Kurt Wolfgang’s *Low Jinx*. And, despite the supposed comics slump, “graphic novels” and book-length collections of non-mainstream comics artists are being published at an impressive rate.

All this said, the present volume is not, and had no intention of being, any kind of overview of the “current state” of comics—which the reader can readily find in anthologies from Top Shelf, Drawn & Quarterly, The Small Press Expo, Stripburger, Blab and elsewhere. What it *is* is a collection of comics, collaborative pieces, and comics-inspired writing and performance-documents arriving out of and negotiating a variety of disparate contexts. It’s a kind of “proof” of the impact the language and milieu of sequential art, both recent and historical, has had on so many of us—as well as a document of the extent to which “high-brow” art forms, concerns, strategies and techniques have seeped “down” into the realm of comics. It’s a conversation between diverse forms.

I had originally set out to comment on specific pieces in this collection. But it finally seems superfluous, especially given how many of the artists have supplied process notes along with their work. I do want to thank Jena Osman, Juliana Spahr and Janet Zweig—the *Chain “J” Girls*—for putting all of these artists in dialogue with each other. I’m hardly an authority on matters of aesthetics, but still . . . I don’t think there’s anything more generative, even & especially in the realm of the arts, than conversation.

—Gary Sullivan

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WAKING UP "OH YEAH"

A TOUCH LIKE A TUB WITH COLD FEET

YOU DON'T IMAGINE: HAIR GROWING LONGER

LETTERS WE COULD HAVE SMITTEN

AND THOSE WE CHOOSE TO POUR OUT

TRIMMING OFF INCHES OF NURSERY WALLPAPER

SUBSEQUENT ISSUES YELLOW SNIPS THE SAME 4 A.M.

ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER INSUFFICIENTLY
After Hans Memling

Artist has solicited an opinion

Manson devotee carves an X on her forehead

Pomfleur n.(Fren.)
Eve

Mayan priest runs thorny vine through hole in his tongue, a sacred rite

Hippie licks toad which secretes psychedelic substance on its skin

Your typical Spam-loving Brit
HOLLY BITTNER
from Hemispheres

CAST

1. Played by: Corpus Callosum, the nagging Muse
2. Played by: Yours Truly
3. Played by: Cerebellum (herself)
4. Played by: The Chasers
5. Played by: our friend, The Narrator
6. Played by: The Newspaper

... Take it away...
Like most stories, our heroes start out slow. But if they are not heroes, who(are) they? One thing’s for sure, they won’t be stopping to ask directions. And if there isn’t a story?

It is the worst time of day. It is night. Somehow we got where we ended up here. The moon is slinking through the tree-holes without anyone’s permission. The age old questions are hiding in the bushes. The picnic refused to hold itself without us. Let’s go find the way out, it must be missing.

Meanwhile back on the drawing board the sun was just beginning to set. Her blondeness drooled like a businessman but no one could track it, even if they could stop to pick it up. It hardened on his fingers and then got unstuck, slipped through the cracks without stopping to promote itself. Now shimmering with bald responsibilities, Cerebellum sped through the forest on a white motive with wings, once the manipulation was crossed. They went out in search of her with the mightiest of inconveniences.

And who are you, might I ask? Oh yes, the page as "never blank", even when your imagination runs away from you . . . If I've lost control, is all that's left this movie of my mind? All I can say is, it better be good or I'm packing it in.
Our lunches are still packed yet the attack of strangers is an even bigger bear of promise. The flashlight has failed us. Who will help us now if not our selves? Certainly not that owl.

A woman's house is her home so long as no one else lives there. That's the main thing. The walls, as it happens, may be any color she likes. Remember, girls, don't open your door to strangers, especially if they're short or bear fruit.

Unfortunately, the brambles razed her elaborate skirtings. She felt the strange winds roughing up her covenant. Daunted only by expectation, she ran into the brave shelter of insecurity and locked the deduction behind her. Inside this obedience a sweet lust for content rumbled in her morale. She looked around for something to incorporate. Instead she couched her longing in a green sophism. Softly then she sank into subjectivity.

Oh what will I do now that rent's past due? Tell me, what should I do?!!
Alas, a noise! Roused riotously thus from the land of nod, Cerebellum rose to answer the subjugation. But just as soon as she complied, her cortex adhered like velcro to the viscous shadow of trust and tore off her substance. Shocked at the dimness of her double exposure, she let out a mitered screen. Behind it the corpuscles were growing more excited as they tried to break down the membrane. The wooden ego strained under the influence of desire as Cerebellum shrank with consternation. Oh, sensation!

NO!! They sneaked in quietly, without invitation, and without preparation for the feast that lay before them, curled up on her side.

The striptease is one of the bastions of modern male culture, and the scariest feat I've ever tried to accomplish. But was it only the money I was after? Oh well, what does my therapist know?

Excuse us, you are beautiful. But where is the rest of you? We hope you don't mind our interruption. The guards were already let down. Do with us what you wish. We don't even know how we got here. That forest was a lame device, anyway.

Were you there when they fell up my mortality? Once upon a time when time was memory, in the theatre, at the play on words. That, of course, was when there were still newspapers, and before I was me.

April 17, xxxx

Hailed as poet, philosopher, and cultural critic, newcomer is tearing down the panels of America's "funnies". In the weekly adventures of the beautiful and tragic superheroine Cerebellum, the voyeuristic reader is recruited as an active character in a romp through the mythic wilderness of the mind. Your morning coffee won't be half as invigorating as the wake-up call this ingenious strip serves up. Is this the end of comic representation as we know it, or the beginning of a revenge of the meanest underdog, the thinking man? The answer is as close as Section D. Love it, live it, or leave it, but please—don't tack it on your cubicle wall.
CHIECTOPHER BOUCHER

Apartment

THIS STORY HAS WINDOWS YOU CAN LOOK THROUGH, FRIENDSHIP PANELS THAT HAVE TURNED FROM NOTEBOOK LINE DRAWINGS INTO WAX.

I KNEW A LADY ON THE FOURTH FLOOR WHO WAS OLDER THAN ME AND HAD A PORCUPINE FACE. I HELPED HER CARRY A PICTURE SO SHE INVITED ME UP EVERYTHING IN HER APARTMENT WAS ON FIRE. EVEN HER HAIR, I MEAN—IT WAS BLACK BUT THE ENDS WERE ORANGE.

THAT WOMAN? SHE HAD RIVERS IN HER FACE, AND SOMETIMES THE DAMS WOULD LET LOOSE FOR NO REASON, AND HER WALLS WOULD START TO SHAKE. SO I SPENT SOME TIME WITH HER IN HER FLAMING PAD, TALKING THINGS OVER.

LIKE THE LADY ON FLOOR FOUR, HER WALLS WERE BLARING PICTURES ON THE WALLS. ALL OF THEM DEPICTED US. SHE WOULD HOLD THEM UP TO ME, WITH A CIGARETTE DROOPING FROM HER MOUTH. "LOOK," SHE'D SAY. "IT SAYS RIGHT HERE WHAT WILL HAPPEN."

THE HEAD OFF THIS BODY IS THAT LATER, IN THAT WOMAN'S HOUSE, SHE PUT DOWN HER CIGARETTE AND OPENED HER LEGS AND RED BIRDS FLEW FROM BETWEEN THEM, STRAIGHT FOR THE MANIKIN WINDOWS.

I WAS LIVING IN THE GIANT MIND APARTMENT WITH MY DAD IN THE LINE DRAWINGS, HE HAS A MOUNTAINSIDE FOR A BROW.

I HAD OTHER FRIENDS THERE TOO—FRIENDS THAT WOULD PUT ME ON THEIR SHOULDERS AND CARRY ME THROUGH TOWN, POURING GAS INTO MY BELLY AND THEN WATCHING ME BREATHE FIRE. I WAS A 30-PIECE ORCHESTRA, A SILVER-RINGED PLANET.

WE WERE ALL BEING SHOWN THINGS. SOME DAYS I WOULD DRAG MY FRIENDS WITH THEIR MUSCLES OVER, AND WE WOULD THROW ROCKS THROUGH THE MIND APARTMENT'S WINDOWS AS PRANKS, JUST TO APPEASE THE ACID WITHIN.

WE STOPPED WHEN WE SAW MY DAD IN THE WINDOW. YOU CAN STILL SEE THE DRAWING OF IT. THE LINE THAT IS HIS HANDS MERGES WITH THE STEERING WHEEL, A RAINBOW, FINGER-SHAPED ARC.

LATE 1980S—I WAS A YOUNG CASE AND I NEEDED WASHINGTONS SO I TOOK A JOB DELIVERING FOR A COMPANY. THEY GAVE ME A FOLDING MAP IN MY HANDS IT HARDLY WEIGHED ANYTHING. I TOLD THEM, "THIS IS THE MOST THOUGHTFUL GIFT I'VE EVER RECEIVED!"

SOME DAYS I WOULD DUMP WHAT I WAS CARRYING ALTOGETHER—DOCUMENTS, PLANS, DRAFTINGS. I'D STOP, MURPHY IT, BURN IT, LET IT GRAIN THERE IN THE SUN, AND JUST GET BACK IN MY HYUNDAI AND DRIVE THROUGH TOWN.

SOMETIMES THE DAMS WOULD LET LOOSE FOR NO REASON, AND HER WALLS WOULD START TO SHAKE. SO I SPENT SOME TIME WITH HER IN HER FLAMING PAD, TALKING THINGS OVER.

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IN A SECOND NOW—THE MORNING IS COMPLAINING IN MY EAR AND THERE'S A CHILD ON THE GROUND HERE THAT WON'T LET GO OF MY LEG.

I WOULD HAVE LOVED TO DRAW THAT, BUT IT WAS A BABY IN A WAR—I COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN THE CURVE OF THOSE WINGS DOWN IF YOU HAD PAID ME A MILLION TRILLION DOLLARS.

BUT IT WAS JUST A STEERING WHEEL THAT MY BROTHER TED BOUTED ONTO A WALL IN THE APARTMENT; DAD LIKED TO GRIP IT WHEN THE COLORS CHANGED, IT MADE HIM FEEL GREEN TO SIT AT THE WHEEL AND PRETEND TO DRIVE AWAY.

THE ONLY PLACE YOU EVER WENT WITH THAT THING, THOUGH, WAS HOME—BACK TO THE BUILDING WITH THE HUM.

WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT NOW, THE CHAINS INSIDE ME START TO CURL, AND ALL MY PRISONERS LEAP OVER THE WALLS AND INTO THE OPEN FIELDS, AND THEY ARE RUNNING, AND I KNOW THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE IT.

THE CLASS OF '47

BY ROBERT CREELEY

AND JOE BRAINARD
I AM WRITING THIS CLASS REPORT ON THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR WEDDING, AND KNOW THAT I HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY FORTUNATE IN HAVING A MARVELOUS HELPMATE AND A MAGNIFICENT PARTNER FOR THESE TWENTY YEARS.

WHEN I BEGAN COMMUTING BETWEEN CHICAGO AND TOKYO IN 1970, I MOVED JANET AND THE KIDS TO HONOLULU FOR A YEAR OF SUNSHINE AND FUN FOR THEM, AND A DELIGHTFUL STOPOVER ENROUTE FOR ME. UNFORTUNATELY, MY EXTENDED ABSENCE LED TO A BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNICATIONS, AND, AS OF THIS WRITING, WE ARE REGRETFULLY IN THE PROCESS OF DISENTANGLEMENT.
TRAVELS: EXTENSIVE.
HOBBIES: GOLF, SAILING
AND SWIMMING.
WAR RECORD: HONORABLE
DISCHARGE

"TWENTY-FIVE YEARS," YOU SAY? IMPOSSIBLE! THE
SUN IS SLANTING ACROSS THE CHARLES AND
THE CRIES OF MEN POURING INTO THE QUAD
OF ELIOT DISTURB MY REVERIE WITHIN G-33
OR WAS IT LONG AGO?

AFTER YEARS OF WAITING FOR
A HEARING IN MANHATTAN'S
CROWDED COURTS, I WROTE
THE MATTER OFF. ON THE
DAY I SIGNED AN UNSATIS-
FACTORY SETTLEMENT, THE
LIGHTS WENT OUT IN NEW
YORK CITY.

IT WASN'T HARVARD'S FAULT.
IT WASN'T MY FAULT. IT
WASN'T EVEN THE NAVY'S
FAULT.

"TWENTY-FIVE YEARS," YOU SAY? IMPOSSIBLE! THE
SUN IS SLANTING ACROSS THE CHARLES AND
THE CRIES OF MEN POURING INTO THE QUAD
OF ELIOT DISTURB MY REVERIE WITHIN G-33
OR WAS IT LONG AGO?

OPium HAS BECOME
THE RELIGION OF
THE MASSES.

IT HAS BEEN NEARLY 25
YEARS SINCE THAT SUNNY
DAY WHEN GENERAL GEORGE
C. MARSHALL STOOD IN HAR-
VARD YARD TO LAUNCH THE
HISTORIC PLAN WHICH WAS
TO BEAR HIS NAME AND
SAVE THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM
IN EUROPE. FEW QUARTER-
CENTURIES IN HISTORY HAVE
BEEN SO EXCITING, TROUBLED,
CHANGING, DISCOURAGING
AND HOPEFUL.
IT CAN NOW BE SAFELY CONCLUDED THAT HARVARD HAS HAD THE INNER STRENGTH AND RESILIENCY TO SURVIVE THE ONSLAUGHT OF THIS NEW BARBARISM.

IT IS FUN, FRIGHTENING, FANCIFUL AND POSSIBLY FRUITFUL TO THINK BACK OVER ALMOST THIRTY YEARS.

MY THIRST FOR EXCITEMENT WAS QUENCHED BY WINNING A NATIONAL AUTO SALES CONTEST, THE PRIZE FOR WHICH WAS A TRIP TO MEXICO.

FINALLY, IMPRESSING THEM (OR TRYING TO) WITH THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF 'HANGING IN THERE', AND CONTINUING TO STRIVE FOR AN INTELLIGENT APPROACH IN ALL MATTERS, AS OPPOSED TO SETTLING FOR A RABID OVERSIMPLIFIED ATTITUDE OF EMOTIONAL RESISTANCE.
HUNGRY MIKE

THE LEADER OF THE CLIQUE, NAMED CROCKER, TOLD A LITTLE GUY NAMED SHORTY HE WAS PLANNING TO ROB HIM.

SHORTY WAS SMALL, ONLY SEVENTEEN, AND WAS FACING LIFE PLUS SOME MORE TIME BECAUSE HE WAS SO WEAK AND EASY TO MANIPULATE.

HE WAS NOT VERY SMART AND WAS EASY TO MANIPULATE BECAUSE HE WAS SO STRESSED OUT ABOUT HIS CRIMES.

CROCKER TOLD SHORTY THAT HUNGRY MIKE WAS GOING TO ROB HIM.

IT WASN'T TRUE. HUNGRY MIKE HAD HUNGRY BECAUSE HE ALWAYS CRAVED SUGAR WHEN HE WASN'T FEEDING.

HUNGRY MIKE WROTE A LETTER TO SHORTY AND SENT IT IN A TOILET BRUSH.

MINE WAS A REAL COOL GUY, HE WAS ABOUT 30, AND DIDN'T MESS WITH ANYONE.

HE WAS MARRIED, BUT HE WASN'T MARRIED TO ANYONE.

SHOROY WENT IN THERE WITH A PLASTIC TOILET BRUSH AND STARTED BEATING ON MIKE'S HEAD.

MINE WAS ASLEEP IN HIS CELL.

HUNGRY MIKE WROTE UP WITH A HOOKER BEATING HIM ON THE HEAD WITH A TOILET BRUSH.

HE WAS MAD AS HELL. OF COURSE, HE WASN'T HURT AT ALL.
AFTER LOCKDOWN, SHOOTY 'CAUGHT OUT' WHICH MEANS HE'S CHANGED HIS REGISTRATION TO A DIFFERENT CELL-BLOCK IN THE HALL.

MIKE CAUGHT HIM IN THE HALL A WHILE LATER AND BEAT HIM UP ILL.

WHEN MIKE DIDN'T STRAIGHTEN DON OUT, DON GOT BOLD.

EARLY IN THE MORNING WHEN THEY UPLIFTED ALL THE CELL DOORS, DON RAN INTO MIKE'S CELL AND CHALLENGED HIM.

LATER, MIKE AND I END UP IN THE SAME CELL-BLOCK AGAIN. ON THE TOP FLOOR THIS TIME, WHICH ISN'T FURTHER THAN SEVENTEEN STORIES HIGH AND ALL THE MEN CRYLS INSTEAD OF TWO.

THERE WAS ANOTHER FOOL IN THERE WITH US, NAMED DON. HE HAD LIP PLUS FORTY.

MIKE BEAT MIKE AS SO PAIN THAT HE SHOULDN'T EVEN NEW WHERE THE HOLE IN HIS LIP WAS WHERE A MOUTH WENT THROUGH. IT WAS SO FUNNY.

MIKE CAUGHT OUT BECAUSE HE JUST DOESN'T WANT ANY MORE TROUBLE.

DON WAS PICKING A FIGHT WITH MIKE FOR NO REASON.

DON THOUGHT MIKE WAS WEAK, MAYBE BECAUSE MIKE WAS A CRACKHEAD.

THAT WAS TWICE THAT MIKE HAD HAD PEOPLE HURT HIM AS SLEEP WHEN HE WAS SLEEPING. AND MIKE DIDN'T MESS WITH ANYBODY.

HE WAS REALLY THE config. MR. HOGG TOLD HIM THE MOST REASONABLE WAY OF INTERACTING.
...the veil of allegory...

...advisable before passing to....

...notwithstanding the prejudices of their panegyrists.

...tongue, very far from the...

...imitate, as well as is possible for me...

-Athen, so celebrated later...
"Melbourne Thoughts" is an ongoing fotonovela concerning the thoughts of various cities on various subjects. The imagery is photos from around Melbourne taken by me or downloaded from live webcams at Citysearch.com.au. The words are from The Golden Verses of Pythagoras by Fabre d'Olivet in the 1916 Nayan Louise Redfield translation.

ELIZABETH CASTAGNA & EDWIN TORRES

Sputtered Sod

The body will break what the body wants a doodle scrawled from its creature

A body breaks down so a mind can take over and if scarcely exercised will want

barely concealed mind One as tall as one
The fingers of misplaced hands are
guardians off a higher mind as a lantern
inna sea of yellow pads SkWaters of
postit Squarcles Tuxedo poles against

the Arctic injury that hangs from my
ceiling. Another opening waits for art

surely loses one before a chance to be one
Scatterday I'm calling you what you used to be

a weekaday whisprrell wild and free
Float my hangline
Glide along this tidy wash

Verbal engines soak this bod inside

As tidy as unwanted drooladay
a boy of bod
Come sommaday stand my
legs
A cloak of what's beneath this brain
my friend I've a field of lonesome rain
daring to o
ak
my scattered spades

sputtered

seeds

This is a poem which became a story told by the doodles that inspired it. Elizabeth is a painter that works with a language of shape and gesture. I wanted to see how drawing would create writing—what images emerge from the concrete abstract. Using her sketches done on yellow Post-Its, letting shapes imply stories, letting stories influence new shapes, allowing time for a dialogue to grow. The poem became a story, of sorts, and a world for text & image emerged in the page design—typography as contained and free as doodles on a square of paper.

—Edwin Torres
daddy's far, soon he will be as big as a microbe

s/he would answer delighted quite drunk with this tabula to model. it seemed like sculpturing.

hours passed, suddenly a small thing in the conversation made them exchange roles

i must be well again so that i don't pass it to grandpa
he's really ill at the hospital
yes the child
the others . . . s/he
prisoner saw wasted
time and stolen
sunny runways

what a gliding down neurons
blow of shame hitting selfishness.
fountain of kindness against
a wall of bumps on which thinking
never finished to rebound

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now
s/he drinks the child’s words
and images, each of its questions
allows to reach a new
land a new angle. the child’s
emerging islands have flexible
forms which s/he feels unfolding
with the answers s/he gives

49

how does understanding
of the world shape
consciousness?
how does consciousness of the world shape understanding?

a run of matryoshkas before/after interlocked on solar trails the interaction strengthens language where a double of oneself would only be monotonous. spasm

of benevolence on spherules in reflection which prints itself random announces ravishrout your head at one end and yourself at the other. slope

of sloping humans from whom a thursday slants: i ask why i do what i do

so many possibilities to fail it is a miracle milky of constant learning. sea-horse expressing emotions in a vectorial time which accelerated takes away the others who also make us

but i clean the fly and again it observes again we are making

crossed by flux diabolus metamorphic complexifying excavating music shoe tale

We have been collaborating since 1985 with the art-group Das Synthetische Mischesgewebe created in Berlin by the electroacoustic musician Guido Hübner. Usually Isabelle Chemin makes the pictures, I do the texts; it is more like reacting to each other's art than "illustrating." Here she did the whole comic, I translated the balloons and wrote a poem as counterpoint at the end.

—Jean-René Lassalle
Me and my brothers were mean and dirty, we listened to metal and stole everything our grubby little paws touched. We used words like "F*ck," (which we didn't know what it meant, still don't)—riding down bridge on board pushing shopping cart, kid inside with bat, another on bike riding handlebars—and used our middle fingers like it was going out of style.
My aunt who still had us ensnared in her mindtrap as the cute innocent children who's mother dressed them funny, didn't treat us as the devious miscreants we expected to be treated by grownups, instead she still bought us toys and candy, which we pretended to hate, but in the end, omon it was toys and candy. we were fucking kids.

On her last day in L.A. she left me a cheap generic blue light special kid's bike from mungumerry wards, as a parting gift. The beast was purple and grey with flourescent purple electricity flames on the side.

Once down the block, and of course all the other fucking kids in the neighborhood knew, and I was to be forever branded, "Flaming Dixon," "Dixon Whinefire," "Purple Rain," and a number of other variation combining the 3. my AUNt she was a good woman, and it wasn't that I didn't appreciate the gesture. But after that first launch the beast would go into the section of the garage, with the pogohall,create of twisted, broken, melted action figures, and accessories, collect dust and cobwebs never to be seen again.

FAG!
I had gone through my first semester of school already, in Oakland, and was back home in L.A. for Xmas break. But back at school my apartment was 15 blocks from campus, which was not far enough for me to take a bus, already 3 tickets for not wearing a helmet on a moped that didn't work anyways, and art school students don't drive or even have licences, so I had no rides. All the late nights defacing public property, made the mornings harsh. All the elements were against me, and I had been late for every single one of my morning classes. Fearing any drops from my classes, I decided to score some type of wheels while I was down at home. I was barely making rent (which was $80 clams a head). 9 people in a 3 bedroom house, people were putting beds in the hallway and shit! Stealing bread and gourmet cheese from the Safeway, Selling stolen art supplies and art history books for Half price to pay the tuition. So a car or any type of motorized vehicle was out. These new skinny ass skateboards all the kids were skating these days were unappealing, they had no character, it was all flashy tricks and flips like a bunch of monkeys.

College
fucking
sucked.

so I opened the paint-chipped garage door hoping to find anything. And there was the beast just as I left it 6 or 7 years ago, just as ugly now as it had been back then. It needed a little air in the tires, and I needed a little exercise, it was a little rusted and moldy, but so was I.

plus I was an art school student, so I was sarcastic, bitter, and ironic and shit, and everyone would think I was being cool or clever and funny (which I was) riding that beast around Campus. But the wounds of childhood were still with me, and I wasn't gonna live through another, 'Flaming Dixon,' revival.

I wrapped some duct tapes around the bars (to give it that Mad Maxx industrial look) and spraypainted it black.

The break went by quick, and I returned to Oakland with my bike tied to the top of my friends car.
To my surprise, the joys of Childhood bike riding returned to me. Not only did I make it to all my classes on time. I rode all the fucking time.

I explored the whole bay area on that fucking beast. I rode across the Bay bridge, I chased rainbows to the end, to the pote of gold. I popped wheelies and endo's, went for midnight bike rides across town with my whole crew. I even got attacked by three black highschool girls, while I was waiting for the light, that shit was one to write home about must've put 1000 miles on that fucking thing. I even missed a spot of the purple flame while I was blacking it out on accident. You can see something there but you can't tell what it is. It was just like this abstract spot that only I understood, and "Flaming Dixon," was back for better.

One uneventful Saturday afternoon, while I was stealing frozen fish down my pants for dinner.

the bike is gone.
Halfway through my Junior year, almost a year from the incident, I spotted my beloved beast near a Korean BBQ and Karaoke joint in Berkeley.

There were a few changes made, like the fact that it was now painted silver, and the handlebar grips were different. The rough texture was probably from the torn off duct tape and layers of paint. I was absolutely stunned.

It was like winning the goddamned lottery. A chance like this only comes once maybe twice in a person's life. A chance to confront your victimizer. You gotta understand. At this time, I was working for some Rap artists on a local Hip hop label, and was making enough to cover rent, tuition, and a shitty car. I didn’t need the beast anymore, but it wasn’t about that. It was about principle. I understood stealing, I was a crook too. But you never steal from friends or family, and you never ever steal a man’s ride, especially if it was a cheap fucking ride like the Purple rain beast. I f your gonna steal a bike at least go for a schwinn or someshit. When I steal I steal Brand name.

I wear you.

I eat the gourmet shit, I listen and watch the high definition shit. Actually to be totally honest.

lying face up on the sidewalk, my crotch is starting to melt and the stink of catfish is overwhelming.
I had spent most of the morning hiding in the bushes near Amoeba records, just for fun, you know to like scare people shit. And one dumbass frat boy thought I was mugging him, begged me not to take his walkman and CD. He just bought it, wasn’t planning on it, but of course I did. It was a cranberry, and I wanted to kill myself, but the radio option on it was cool and it was all I had, so I put it in and ended up rocking out to

Anyway my point is, it’s not worth it getting caught over the stupid shit, and you always get caught over the stupid shit.

Why’d this idiot steal a bike that was worth less than the look? Who knows, people are fucking weird. I was getting jumpy, doing backflips n shit! I was taking sick pleasure in it all. I imagine this is like finding out where the people who egged your house or keyed your car live.

Oh Man I was gonna kill this mother fucker!

There was absolutely no doubt in my mind that this was my bike.
I didn't allow any doubt in my classroom. I hate DOUBT and all his trouble making friends like INDECISION. I fought the bastards and blew them away with a shotgun. And I could already feel tiny liquid mores of their absence trying to bore into my defenses. Hey, someone else in this world could've bought the same type and model as you! You think your like this special person that has his own custom bike?!

Now I was all worked up and tense and sometimes when I get all excited and have nervous energy like that, I feel like I'm gonna shit my pants, sorta like a dog I guess.

Right now I had about 2 minutes to get to a toilet before the drop. I had to weigh the consequences. Risk losing the opportunity to confront the bike thief, or walk home in heavy state. I did the next best thing. I wrote scary note on a napkin and put it on the seat, and made a baseline for the shutter at the Keroeks, where some old guy was Beltin out the Sinatra.

Dear Bike Thief,

This is the bike my aunty bought me. You deserve everything that's about to come your way. I suggest you unlock the bike and run away as fast as you can. I am waiting & watching. AND I CAN WAIT & WATCH FOR EVER. Just unlock it and walk away. It's a Shitty Bike. I'll probably never ride it again. That's not what this is about. It's about principle. Flaming Piss.
I wiped quick and ran outside. The bike was still there but the note was gone, so I left another one. I brought my tent and camped out on the roof of the Korean BBQ joint the smell was driving me crazy, it made me hungry and my mouth watered all the time.

And 5 days had already passed on the rooftop, and it had started sprinkling.

But I seemed to miss them every time. Did they find this entertaining, was this just a game to them, I was going mad with bloodlust. I was starting to put together my list of:

- the shopkeepers son,
- the boy scout with a guitar,
- the one black kid who never rode with his friends after school.

I went to the Hardware store and bought the most expensive an.

heavy mallet for 67 dollars, I took it to work and had it gold plated, it did not leave my hands. I did stupid things to the bike like paint it pink with green dots, and stickers of my new favorite band the Cranberries. I guess I could've added my own lock. Or even taken the bike apart and back together, or even break the maglock with my my VW bug wheel jack (the smallest car jack that would fit into a mag lock) but like I wrote in the note it wasn't really about the bike, it was about principle. And I wanted to bring pain to this rat bastard. I was obsessed, this was one thing I'd see through to the end show this fucker what time it was. It was my last for life it gave me purpose. I had left 4 more notes that pretty much all said the same thing in creative different ways I'm gonna...
at that precise moment, god answered my prayers. as i saw the bastard quickly undoing the lock and start to run with the bike, as the rain started coming down hard. i quickly ran down the back and followed them in my car.
REY CHOW
from Larry Feign, Ethnographer of a “Lifestyle”: Political Cartoons from Hong Kong

Hong Kong is often called the “Pearl of the Orient”... an apt description, considering that a pearl is actually a precious jewel that started out as a tiny irritating piece of grit. Soon to be acquired by China, where traditionally pearls are crushed and eaten to treat women’s ailments. Meanwhile, Hong Kong is a gem of a place to love, live in and laugh at!
—Larry Feign, Aiccyaaa, Not Again!

As in the case of all transitions involving politically repressive regimes, the approach of 1 July 1997 (the date on which the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong will be handed over to the People's Republic of China [PRC]) has become an occasion for a considerable amount of anxiety over speech. What can be said and how to say it are increasingly sensitive, because political matters. Many would argue, of course, that within the PRC these days, there is actually much more “freedom” to say what one likes—that even the traditionally taboo subject of sex, for instance, can now be openly discussed on radio and television programs—and that it is only in regard to certain topics that one is supposed to keep quiet. But these turn out to be precisely the topics that matter: human rights, legal representation, issues concerning non-Han Chinese minorities, political prisoners, and the bankruptcy of the officially sponsored versions of socialism. In the context of pre-1997 Hong Kong, what is remarkable and alarming is often not the explicit instructions from Beijing as to what must or must not be said but rather the speediness and opportunism with which sections of the local media are responding to the anticipated or imagined disapproval of Chinese authorities. The readiness of self-censorship among citizens is the clearest sign that a political regime is effective—in this case, long before it assumes actual power.
A good example of such self-censorship is the *South China Morning Post*’s termination, in 1995, of its preeminent cartoonist, Larry Feign. For an extended period, beginning in 1986, Feign has been the author of *Lily Wong*, a continuing series based on an imagined Hong Kong Chinese family. Lily Wong was first serialized in the *Hong Kong Standard* and then, beginning in December 1987, in the *South China Morning Post*. Feign’s series is centered around Lily, a beautiful and courageous young woman who speaks fluent English as well as Cantonese, and who has worked on and off as a secretary in different organizations, including the “Department of Prevarication and Obfuscation” in the Hong Kong Government. Her boyfriend, Stuart Wright, is an American graphic designer who has been working for a Hong Kong advertising agency called “Pinchbeck Public Relations.” Eventually, Ms. Wong gets her Mr. Wright and the two are married. Though Stuart is deeply in love with his wife, he does not exactly get along with his in-laws, who include Lily’s non-English-speaking parents and her good-for-nothing brother, Rudy. The Wong family also has many relatives in the P.R.C., whom they visit from time to time. At one point, the entire family emigrates to the United States, but then Stuart and Lily,
Figure 3

Feigning homesick, return to Hong Kong shortly afterward. By the time the comic strip was discontinued, Lily and Stuart are parents of a cute baby daughter. According to Feign’s father, David Feign, the South China Morning Post, even though one of the most profitable newspapers in the world, claimed that the firing of Larry Feign was “a cost-saving measure," while “subsequent events proved that it was politically motivated." 2

The contours of the circumstances of Feign’s termination are perhaps too obvious to anyone paying attention to the events in Hong Kong and China. As Martin Lee, the chairman of the Democratic Party of Hong Kong, points out in a letter to the South China Morning Post that the newspaper never printed, this is certainly a case of the suppression of journalistic freedom, indeed of humor itself: “Cartoonists are journalists too," Lee writes, “and although humour is not a freedom expressly guaranteed by the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law, political cartoons are clearly a form of expression and as such should be protected as any other form of speech . . . [T]he jettisoning of Mr. Feign’s daily comic strip raises the question of whether we in Hong Kong will have ‘one country, two systems’—but no sense of humour.” 3

Although Lee has pertinently cast the controversy over
Feign's work in terms of the freedom of speech—in this case, the defensibility of journalistic expression—in a society ruled by law, one question remains crucial from the perspective of the politics of representation. This is the question of cultural form (rather than that of speech—as-expression or speech—as-right), and it is the one I will explore in this essay: What is it in Feign's work that has aroused such anxiety among his former employers? What kind of "speech" can a cartoonist make that may be deemed so disturbing as to warrant censorship even before the official date of Hong Kong's "return" to China?

For those who know something about events in Hong Kong in recent years, the most outstanding feature of Feign's work is his ability to draw (on) the most banal moments of everyday life. In order to create humor in the midst of banality, Feign specializes in methods that, on first reading, are simply absurd mimetic of widely used conventions. For instance, to those who can read, what is more common than a dictionary or a glossary? Yet under Feign's pen, the dictionary/glossary as a cultural form becomes an economical means of conveying critical insights whose complexity is best
captured in a compact mode, within the time frame of a single page. Operating with the assumption that everything under the sun can be classified and explained (complete with illustrations and indications of Cantonese pronunciation and part of speech), the dictionaries/glossaries—or shall we say Feigned dictionaries/glossaries—of Aiieeyaaa! and Aiieeyaaa Not Again! are not mere repositories of the details of Hong Kong customs, habits, prejudices, and verbal peculiarities; they also reveal, through their condensed snapshots, the conventional logic of the “classifying” and “explanatory” mode bursting at its seams, barely able to keep under control the fantastical features and cantankerous creatures of Hong Kong daily life. And yet at the same time, despite the random, bizarre arrangement (of a group of Cantonese expressions in the arbitrary sequence of the English alphabet), these features and creatures are nonetheless poignantly recognizable and realistic. (See Figures 1-7).

Likewise, Feign's work is unique in its fearless use of stereotypes—the gwailo (literally “ghost man,” meaning foreigner or Westerner) who falls in love with an Oriental belle; the father-in-law who hates everyone and everything that isn't Chinese; the relatives on the mainland who are bottomless pits for gifts; the brother-in-law who, when he tries to make a living at all, tries to do it by fraud; the British “expats” who dismiss the locals with habitual racist remarks; the Chinese communist officials who are autocratic, ignorant, and corrupt; the U.S. customers who react with self-righteous indignation to rumored injustice in another country, only to abandon such indignation expediently when it conflicts with their own consumerist interests.

Since its establishment in 1949 as a political state offering significant alternatives to the governments of the West, the People’s Republic of China, too, has been regularly deploying stereotypes for its own purposes of political control and management. For necessary ideological reasons, foreign enemies such as Great Britain and the United States were, from the beginning, depicted as ugly “imperialists,” but what is much more remarkable is the manner in which stereotypes effected a reorganization of Chinese society from within as well. During the Cultural Revolution, this was achieved in part through the systemic vilification of “incorrect” classes, such as “landlords” and “reactionary intellectuals” (to give two of the most outstanding examples), who would be forced to march in public wearing dunce caps and other humiliating labels before they were, often, executed. What such theatrical displays demonstrated was that positive glorification alone (of workers, peasants, and soldiers, for instance) was not enough to shake up a society; for a cohesive reorganization to take shape, the boundaries of that society had to be strategically enforced by negative acts, by repeated rituals of exorcism.

To return to the situation of Hong Kong, it is not difficult to see that, as the “jubilant” return of Hong Kong to China approaches, stereotypes are the most common ingredient of political speech in pre-1997 days. Abundantly found in official rhetoric, stereotypes are often invoked as part of a nationalistic narrative. For instance, we are constantly reminded of the demonic British imperialists who imposed the sale of opium on China and robbed China of Hong Kong over 150 years ago (in recent years, there have been large-scale film, television, and publishing projects commemorating once again these historic incidents), of the now pitiful, now suspect colonized half-wits that Hong Kong people have been reduced to since then, and finally of the righteous image of a mother country who is opening her arms to a prodigal child long led astray by the enemy.

It is in the context of this political situation—a political situation in which Hong Kong has always already been thoroughly and irrevocably stereotyped—that the modes of representation deployed in Feign’s cartoons become fascinating. By duplicating and thus parodying this political situation in exaggerated and reductive shapes, Feign’s work calls attention to the situation precisely as it is—a manipulative and exploitative speech. At the same time, by revealing that the political state, too, is no more than a user of stereotypes, Feign brings to light the fact that stereotypes are not so much about subjective cognitive processes as about power and competition: the injuries, violence, and aggression commonly attributed to stereotypes are not so much the intrinsic qualities of stereotypes themselves as they are the effects of those in power who must, in order to stamp out competition and
preserve their own monopoly, forbid others the privilege of stereotyping.

Technically, how does Feign construct stereotypes and their effects? To answer this question, it is necessary to discuss the function of images in his texts. First, as in the case of all cartoon strips, the images in Feign’s work are narratively significant: they help to move the stories along. It is, however, important to note that the images are not merely “illustrations” of stories or words whose meanings are already understood. Rather, the images function as a kind of excess precisely because of their graphic nature. By simulating gestures, facial expressions, body movements, and other identifiable traits, the images bring to the dialogues a physical dimension, resulting in a visually and epistemologically pronounced effect of transgression whose power is significantly, nonverbal.

Take the stereotype of the PRC official, for instance (see Figure 7). It is when the dwarfish, stubby figure of the PRC official-in-uniform with his shit-eating grin (which is reminiscent of that other cartoon fat cat, Garfield) is juxtaposed with his platitudinous words—words that must have been repeated a thousand times—that the effect of absurdity becomes palpable. The vacuous quality of the words and the concrete quality of the graphicization combine to produce an arresting medium of incongruities. If, by its sterility and its formulaicness, the stereotype is a kind of dead body, this dead body is now beaming with life. In this fearless and deliberate play with boundaries, which is not the hackneyed sentimental “border crossing” talk that we encounter so often in contemporary cultural studies but rather a lethal confounding of cliché and creativity, petrifaction and expressivity, death and life, Feign offers one of his most memorable portraits—the thoroughly dehumanized party cadre, a half-machine, half-animal automaton regularly brimming over with preposterous, preprocessed prognostications.

If a sense of the ridiculous is already strongly present in Feign’s verbal texts, it is his pictures, in their defiant, uninhibited physicality, that allow that sense of the ridiculous to emerge fully from the words. Strictly speaking, then, the stereotype in Feign’s cartoons is constructed in this peculiar intersection between the verbal and the visual. By giving the ridiculous words a loaded graphic imprint, the images mark them as postures, turn them into denaturalized signs, and subject them to a critical reading. We may even go so far as to say that Feign’s images are his way of impersonating those he mocks—for the sake of annihilating them from within with that healthiest of anarchistic explosives, laughter. Through his comic visual narratives, we witness the production of an iconography that is simultaneously the production of iconoclasm: at the same time that they bring human figures to life, Feign’s cartoons subvert any idealization of the human image as such in an antirealism that is both aesthetic and political in its implications. Unlike those of official rhetoric, the pictures of Feign’s cartoons are images without aura, without a false
sense of dignity and importance. In their dehumanized forms, they serve rather as sites of sacrilege, of a profane smashing of the stereotypical, hypocritical sanctification of politics and human relations that is the daily fare of the political state.

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1. Wildly successful, the cartoons have also been republished in a number of anthologies, including Aieeyaaa! (1986; reprint, Hong Kong: Hambalan Press, 1995), Aieeyaaa, Not Again! (1987; reprint Hong Kong: Hambalan Press, 1995); The World of Lily Wong (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1988), Quotations from Lily Wong (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1989); The Adventures of Superlily (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1989); Postcards from Lily Wong (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1990), Execute Yourself Tonight!, coauthored with Nury Vittachi (Hong Kong: Hambalan Press, 1993), Banned in Hong Kong, foreword by Martin Lee (Hong Kong: Hambalan Press, 1995), and Aieeyaaa! I'm Pregnant (Hong Kong: Hambalan Press, 1996). Lily Wong is currently a syndicated strip in the New Straits Times (Malaysia) and in the Independent (Britain).

All reproductions from Lily Wong in this essay are made with the generous permission of Larry Feign and are taken from Aieeyaaa!, Aieeyaaa, Not Again!, Execute Yourself Tonight!, and Banned in Hong Kong. Readers interested in seeing more of Feign's work may contact him at GPO Box 6086, Hong Kong or look up the Lily Wong website at http://www.asiaonline.net/lilywong.

2. David Feign, letter published in the original section “Letters to the Times,” Los Angeles Times, 14 July 1996. See Larry Feign, Banned in Hong Kong, for a detailed account of the circumstances leading up to the discontinuation of his strip.

Saints get dramatically conveyed up the ladder of logic perhaps by despair but they don’t feel that.

the perimeter closing in seams, then sternum, the inverted reflection

Things we grandly know are phenomena of the very chancy world that makes its own meaning bound to prevailing tendencies perceptible as things.
Our "Predella" is based on the predellas that play so important a role in late 13th and early 14th century Siennese painting, and our first discussions were inspired in particular by Duccio's Maestà (completed in 1311). The term predella originally referred to the stair leading up to an altarpiece, then to the platform on which the altarpiece was placed, and finally to the set of small paintings set sometimes beneath and sometimes beside and beneath a central painting of the Madonna, of Christ, or of a particular saint. The predella depicts episodes from the life of the central figure, and characteristically the different episodes are juxtaposed without regard to chronology—the point being that a saint's life is eternal, and therefore her visions, miracles, periods of bewilderment (we imagined our "saint" as subject to bewilderment), martyrdom (we rejected martyrdom for our saint), death, etc. occur simultaneously and always. They also seem to occur under pressure from the world's cruelty; but nonetheless, as we see it, a proper saint does not reject the world. Our predella is intended as an entirely secular depiction of natural and unnatural incidents out of which a non-narrative ethics (the substance of which we leave to the individual viewer/reader to determine) might develop. Our first conversations about our "Predella" took place as we were finishing The Lake in October, 1999, and a number of conversations followed. Actual work began in October, 2000; it is currently still a work-in-progress. We are both contributing text and visual material to the work. The "Predella," when it is complete, will consist of 64 panels bound into a book in such a way that no panel will stand alone and individual panels can be juxtaposed.
I didn't know exactly what she meant, but I wanted to talk.

'When an existentialist works up a trick as original as this one, he sometimes copyrights it to keep other existentialists from imitating it.'
“The Structure of the Post” is a ten page image/text piece dealing with (ex out) love, life, and critical theory. In the four pages chosen here, I have sketched the images and written the text... except for the appropriate appropriation of a chunk from Laura Mulvey’s “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” and a few utterances from “Differance” by Jacques Derrida.

When I sat down on a chair and looked at what I had created, a sudden anxiety crossed my mind: was it worth creating? It helped, though, to view it in a certain way. Sometimes a day may seem ghastly in bits and places with too much sun coming down from the sky and when there is no use for household rubbish and when we acquire a weirdly exacting sense of things and when things seem worse than useless and when the way to approach such a thing is that it doesn’t therefore really matter and this brings us around again to the paradox of the basket of rubbish because we at least recognize that we are surrounded by things and this compels us to experience a constriction of the construction of wheighage and a deformation of sensibility so we guess, the way to approach a poetic faux pas such as all of this is not to begin as if it were a lexicon disentangling the rubbish but to attend to the way in which it compels itself to be digested and if we truly look at the egg shells, cores, and bits of paper, we see that the arrangement is always never alike, is always never symmetrical, and is always always far more complicated than inspection of the raw materials would lead one to suppose possible. The instructions to purpose in bits and places are as follows: Mix the remaining rubbish together and shuffle it well. Deal it all out, starting with the person on your left. Some people may receive more rubbish than others; this doesn’t matter. With the rubbish in your mind, you have begun your investigation because you know that if you hold the rubbish it can’t be in the hiding-place. On the descriptive level, you have the double perspective of the structure and the phenomena to which it is related. In going up the ladders and down the chutes you will learn by the pictures the rewards and consequences of naughty deeds and good ones. Regardless of the number of people, bring out all the rubbish and place it together in a spot out of sight of any viewer. Once you’ve entered the location, you may, and should, make a suggestion in order to learn what opinions your neighbors hold. The rubbish appears to be one of the most clearly known of human phenomena. Unobscured by any aura of secrecy and mystery, its character and nature stand in no need of subtle and complicated exploration. This is, of course, no mere coincidence of odds and ends. You may, if you wish, make a suggestion and an accusation at the same time. The utter simplicity of the solution appears to recommend it. Imitation is an inexhaustible source of delight, as is proved by the fact that
though the things themselves may be unpleasant to look at, we
delight nevertheless in experiencing the most pleasant represen-
tation of them. Thus, it is easy to see why the relation of each
odd or end to the whole context is crucial, and why the effective
and essential structure has to do with the complexity of the
attitudes achieved. After entering one of the locations, you may
make only one suggestion. To make another, you must wait until
you are in a different location or reenter the location you most
recently left. To enjoy the essence you need not think of any of
these things. But if anyone should ask you seriously if it
represents a bit of life, you should have to point to the need, that
is, for the context in which life takes place.
Scott McCloud says comics are sequential art. These aren't sequential, except in that the captions are responses to the cartoons. Martin and I were feeling inconsequential the day we made these. We'd moved to Las Vegas and were living in a pre-furnished "junior-1-bedroom," a studio with one window and a half-wall halfway down the center of the room. Every four minutes daily till 11 p.m. we heard screams from the MGM Grand outdoor rollercoaster. Despite the ruthless sunshine outside, our studio got only a single shaft of sunlight every day at 4 p.m. For exercise we'd walk to the Strip at night, look in the shops, maybe watch some fireworks or a fountain show (Bellagio was opening up). Martin made the drawings—little extra windows—and I wrote the captions.

When will our population reach 1 billion or be larger than that of China? While our birthrate has declined, immigration has soared, resulting in rapid population increase, increases the if, if the present rate of immigration continues, our population will double if in doubly 40/40 years. It has been said that it has, because it is, there is a labor shortage, and immigration is a necessity for business. If this is true, then our maybe-tru-economic is growing too rapidly. Doubly rapid grows as export computer executives import many imported technicians because they claim if not enough imports are trained here as in somewhere here, why can't our country train them here? One can be tolerant but still object to having a subjective neighborhood subjected to, overwhelmed by recent arrivals. They have dominated some neighborhoods, where those who were born here feel they are the aliens like the aliens, objected objects. I am no bigot, but resent recently being squeezed out of a neighborhood the squeeze where I was born. The last English-speaking person, I was to leave at last. These new arrivals where I once lived before had lots of cash to buy up real real-estate realities. I don't know about business needs, but I do know how our citizens feel and what they want and don't want.

Ruth R. Davis

11.07.00
overwhelmed by recent events that I know where I was born. The city I lived had lots of cash. These new arrivals who once lived here but not enough are trained to be bought up real estate. I do know how to buy real estate. It has been a labor shortage. We are the aliens These new arrivals who once lived here in these new arrivals to buy up real estate. I do know how to buy up real estate. I know that there is a woman here. One of the aliens. I am not always able to tolerate this for my own satisfaction guaranteed sensual table shampoo until we can all present ourselves to the world in our completeness, as fully and beautifully as we see ourselves naked in our bedrooms, we are not free.

Merle Woo, “Letter to Ma”
BRENT CUNNINGHAM
from The Connectives

1. As in a chemical river, there appeared within Katya a correspondence that was YURI. She had no avenue to the transcendence which, to YURI, was no transcendence at all.

2. For Katya every impression is preordained from the first breath. Reading is the exit breath where your own thoughts mass at the door. YURI mistakes his understanding for the seeds of a city.

3. She was but a scarf to him, but then she didn’t know she was, and it was all the same to her. He restricted his sense of guilt so far that being itself agreed to occupy him.

JANE DALRYMPE-HOLLO & ANNEWALDMAN

Having seen some recent drawings & paintings by the artist in her studio (in Boulder) which brought some playful, almost athletic “figures” into play, I brought Jane Dalrymple-Hollo’s attention to the cartoon eidolon proposed by Chain. “Go Figure” was a good fit. She cannibalized a bit of the prosier text with happy permission & added figures—numbers & letters—to enhance the maniacal thrust of the piece which I originally conceived of as a performance—which it obviously still is, in these pages.

—Anne Waldman
absolve like words for a sorrow.

Figure the jig is up, 88 92 a fraction of itself as "go" as "figure" metabolically distanced, 5556% one last laugh from her neuron, the reruns 01

Then sweet-doubt manias the no-brain dictums

And counting roustabouts places as in gaming manuals, corporate disappointment if there is such a thing.
Go figure the life of a sugar maple & may it not perish for lack of water.

Go figure its legend, its history before orality, before the landscape groaned.

Go figure for a speech & cluster your wealth on top of.

Figure the jig is up, as 'spor as figurer, a fraction of itself, an eyr, you turned.

Figure it out for yourself as or before you go.
ADAM DEGRAFF
The Gift

—for Chris Ware from whom this story derives

I.

1. Hot summer day. Chaplinesque bungalow by the sea. Moored in front of the bungalow is small wooden boat. A melancholy tune can be heard coming from inside the house.

2. Cut to interior. Now the music is louder. 1st man is shown rifling through a closet with an empty open suitcase behind him. He pauses, turns around and looks at suitcase, rifles in closet again, turns around, with an expression of exasperation, and looks at the suitcase again. He steps out of the closet and in his hand can be seen a stocking cap. He looks at the stocking cap, still exasperated, then the closet and back to the suitcase. He drops the cap into the suitcase and slams the suitcase shut. He looks back at the closet and then slams the closet shut. He walks across the room where a small dog is sitting in front of an old phonograph player, head cocked to one side as if listening intently. The man pauses to look at the dog and then walks over and angrily shuts off the music. The dog turns to stare at the man, bewildered. The man, suitcase in hand, points toward the door. The dog is still confused. The man, impatient, picks up the dog in his free hand and walks toward the door.

2. The dog and suitcase are now in the boat which the man is untying. The dog begins to cry and paces the boat as it is drifting away. The man, hands on hips, waves good-bye, exultant. Hands return to hips as he watches the boat float away. Then he jaunts back to the house whistling a 2nd tune, similar to the one before, though jubilant.

3. Camera recedes dramatically from the house and pans along the water until framing a distant boat. The boat is zoomed in on to reveal the dog crying forlornly. Then it starts to rain, first softly and then much harder. The dog begins to howl. Zoom out to a small boat tossed in a stormy ocean.

4. 1st man is shown in his house in front of the phonograph listening to the 2nd tune. His eyes are shut and he is smiling.

II.

1. Shot of the earth at dusk and the caption, “one week later.”

2. Zoom into the dog in the boat as it approaches the opposite shore. The rain has turned to snow. The dog, shivering and whimpering, pulls the suitcase from the boat onto the shore. Here is a bungalow similar to the first only this one is facing south instead of north and there is smoke coming from the chimney. The dog waits on the doorstep.

3. Cut to exterior of the 1st house.

4. Cut to interior. The 1st man is still listening to the phonograph which suddenly stops. He turns to look at it, shakes it, pauses and then the music starts back up again.

5. Cut to exterior.

6. Cut to interior and the man stands up to go to the window. The music stops. He looks back at the phonograph with a sad look.

7. Cut to exterior.

III.

1. Move to exterior of 2nd house. It is still snowing, but now it is morning. Zoom onto the porch where the dog is still sitting, now frozen stiff. The 2nd man now comes out of his house, stretches, yawns, scratches his butt and then jumps in
surprise. He brings the dog and suitcase into the house and thaws them out in front of the fire.

2. Cut to exterior of 1st house and then interior. The 1st man is shown in front of a table set for two with two candles lit. He is just now blowing out the match and throwing it behind him. The camera pans to the silent phonograph. Then the man walks over and turns it on. It is the 1st tune that is playing now. Then the man walks back to the table, sits down, stares toward the window and listens to the music. He looks back at the phonograph player. Then he puts his head down on the table and weeps.

IV

1. Exterior of 2nd house.

2. Interior. The 2nd man and the dog are sitting by the fire. He looks at the dog perplexed, chin in hand. He stokes the fire. Then he puts his hand to his face as if thinking hard. He gets up and walks to the suitcase. He moves the suitcase away from the dog and looks at it. Then he opens it. A surprised look comes over his face. He puts his hand to his chin and looks back at the dog. He takes the stocking cap out, looks back at the dog, then cap, then dog again, hand still on his chin. He puts the cap on the dog. Then he looks back at the suitcase, then dog, then suitcase. He shuts the suitcase and goes back to sit by the fire with the dog.

3. Exterior of 2nd house.

4. Exterior of 1st house.

5. Interior of 1st house. 1st man is smashing the phonograph player. After thrashing it soundly he looks at it. A few sick notes still manage to escape. So he smashes and thrashes it some more. He stares at it and it stays quiet. Then he sits down next to it, holds it in his arms and weeps.

V

1. 1st man is seen picking up a package and putting on his hat. Then he walks out his door and slams it shut behind him.

2. Cut to interior of 2nd house. It is snowing.

3. Cut to interior. The 2nd man is staring out the window. Then he walks over toward the dog. He picks up the dog and sets it on the table. He then walks over to the phonograph and puts it on. He puts on the same happy tune that the 1st man was listening to earlier by himself. Then he sets the dog down in front of the window and has a moment of utter joy.

4. Cut to exterior. The music can be heard from within.

5. Cut to 1st man and package on a boat on a turbulent ocean in the rain. The man looks back and forth frightened, holding his hat onto his head.

6. Shot of the earth and caption, “one week later.”

7. Zoom into man on the boat. It is now snowing. He is near despair when he hears the distant strains of a familiar tune. He excitedly begins paddling toward the music.

8. After mooring the boat the 1st man walks against the wind toward the house. His hat blows off his head and into the sea.

9. Cut to interior of 2nd house. The dog is now sitting on the 2nd man’s lap in front of the fire, stocking cap still on his little head. The man is humming along to the happy tune. They are interrupted by a loud knock on the door. They both turn toward the door in surprise. The 2nd man lets the 1st man in. The 1st man sees the dog and, crying with joy, takes the dog into his arms. Then he shakes the hand of the
2nd man. The 2nd man puts his hand to his lips and looks down. The 1st man, crazy with relief, offers to pay the 2nd man, but the 2nd man refuses. They shake hands again and the 1st man begins to walk away with the dog. But the 2nd man stops him and takes the dog in his arms to say good-bye. It is very sad. Then the second man takes the dog back and walks out the door, holding the dog tight in his arms and crying with joy.

10. The 1st man and the dog get in the boat, but the dog is crying. The man looks at the dog in puzzlement and the dog barks. The 1st man is still puzzled but the dog persists. Zoom out.

11. Cut to interior of 2nd house. The 2nd man is still crying by the fire. Suddenly the 1st man and the dog burst into the door with a gust of wind. The 1st man hands the dog to the 2nd man. The 2nd man looks bewildered, but grateful. The dog looks back at the 1st man, then back to the 2nd and barks. The 2nd man understands and takes the stocking cap off of the dog and gives it to the 1st man. The 1st man, dejected, drags it behind him and walks out the door.

12. The 1st man walks toward the boat and takes out the package. He takes the package and puts it on the doorstep. Then he puts the cap on, gets in the boat and rows away.

13. Exterior of 2nd house the next morning. The 2nd man walks out of the house, stretches, yawns and scratches his butt. Then he looks with surprise at the package lying on the porch step. He takes it into the house, shows it to the dog and then opens it. It is a phonograph record. The 2nd man takes the record now on his player off and puts this one on. It is, of course, the original melancholy tune. The dog stares at the player, then goes to the door, lays down in front of it and whimpers.

This short film treatment is basically a translation of a piece from Chris Ware's perfect comic book series, "The Acme Novelty Library." I think I wrote it because I wanted to get deeper inside of the structure of the piece, the feeling of it, wanted to see it on the big screen (of my mind) and bring it closer to reality (substituting a man and dog for a cat and a mouse) so that I could better understand the capriciousness of love that it represents so well. The differences in the way the comic and the film mirror subjectivity is hard to locate, but I would say that I feel more distant from the film (possibly because of the personal iconic quality of comic books) but also more terrified by it.
In high school, I switched to Juicyfruit and went through seven five-piece packs during my College Board Exams.

For as long as I can remember, Trident sugarless bubble gum has been my brand of choice, (I no longer waste my time on gum that can’t produce bubbles, deeming it some kind of cruel, cruel tease.)

I always have it on me, chewing three pieces at once to produce a decent-sized bubble.

Trident sugarless is picked off the face much easier than sugared gum, yet another bonus, because with bubbles, what blows up must blow down.
But today I learned a lesson, walking alone at sunset by the Mississippi River in New Orleans.

As a bubble I blew flew out of my mouth and landed flush on the red-brick walkway.

You simply can't blow bubbles by the Mississippi.

FIN.

But part of being in history is being his. You can't but gaze retrospectively past an alphabet and still be guerrilla. Whenever we speak subtextually.

Someone stole my socius and someone's gonna pay. The collaborationist front has nothing but situations and everything else is inessential, including the revolution.

Historically, historians have played the most revolutionary part. Poets have been fostered as template-makers. All templates are nostalgic. But they have made contradictory claims.

Cynicism does not have the same relation to foresight as does skepticism. It is worth asking if alphabets can be at repose along a continuum. It's impossible to be inessential together.
The sublime enacts the latent contradiction posed as irony in any mass-action event. That "mass" has been re-invented as so-called "inert" matter does not matter.

It is clear that we have arrived. What's considerably less clear is that here is where we disembark as comrades. Our enabling center drifts to be nearer to our abilities.

A funny thing happened on my way to replace the claims. If vaudevillians all then all the more reason to hack these blithering twerps' variety show. Now or never.

There is no essence "of" a thing; those little words are inessential. They don't 'con' 'junct' or nothing. When they say "get over it," fall under it.

There is no going back. That's why the metaphor was invented. There's nothing nodal about it. There's not even an "it." "It" has had it. See the problem? Forget "it."

Don't kid yourself. There may be no lesson there. The sublime is, historically, predicated on such illusions. Inferior illusions conceal nothing, which is an essential question for us.

Rear-guard, so-called, is a pro-rationing gesture which is fundamentally anti-revolutionary. The conditions constituting "rear" are fiscally impermanent.

At any time and every instant, our each and every move risks becoming current events. It's time the philanthropists behind this anxious mess disclose themselves!
Interested in Situationist notions, dérive and détournement, I began work on a series which I've given the less-than-subtle title Spectacular Quintessences and which performs a détournement of a dérive, and/or vice versa. So, it's a bit of satire, not a farce. The "text" of the original S.I. dérive read, "Le développement même de la société de classes jus'qu'à l'organisation spectaculaire de la non-vie même donc le projet révolutionnaire à devenir visiblement ce qu'il était déjà essentiellement. [The very development of class society to the point of the spectacular organization of non-life leads the revolutionary project to become visibly what it already is essentially]." As with all satire—if I understand correctly—the joke's meant to be deadly. That is not to say that I'm making a claim for efficacy. But, I am attracted to the sorts of writing I see in theorists such as Debord or Deleuze & Guattari, on the one hand, and the work of graphic novelists—writing which unabashedly puts forth wild and sometimes contradictory propositions. Like the Saturday morning cartoons I watched as a kid. I can't help thinking that, if I could die a thousand deaths for my cause, like the coyote (in the Roadrunner), I wouldn't feign fear or despair just before plunging to my fate. That, to me, is a contradiction and points up the inhumanity of propositions, their messengers (who deserved to die), and comic book characters, just as I can't help but "identify" with all three.
These pieces are from a journal I started four years ago. Finding a way to write by hand without thinking too much enabled me to actually do a journal—something I'd never even attempted—and on second thought, I'd be more comfortable calling this a hand-eye project rather than a journal.
thus had gone I to the desert to write a so-called poem/had imagined
I a Mara so somatous or fully incarnate, an 1/solated, desolated
hyper-substantial Mara, a cogito embodied in the nature/anti-nature
of trees so improbable—Joshua, tumbleweeds, forsaken (and
unsalvageable) marginalia
alongside the shoreless (to the untrained eye) oasis of the Salton Sea, through barren vastitudes of Barstow, Desert Hot Springs, Anza-Borrego, had imagined I thus disemboguing that immense cerebral cortex, unloading every wastement of thought/indistinguishable from roadside rubble.

even pecans have a thick corpus callosum.

sitting in a timeless coffee shop (not café), in the most (to the untrained eye) inert, acultural topos, where the disorderly behavior of a white, bleached-haired forty-something waitress might act as a 'creative rupture', generating infinite inspirations full of unforeseen/unforeseeable textual complexities, had I thus intended to scrawl something significant on a napkin, for instance, “She moves in a syntax of her own (un)making.”
presaging writing at a faux marble table, sipping a watered down black/bottomless, nibbling a cholesterol-laden repast, had found I thus 'remarkably' unmotivated ¿to hold fountain pen in droughty hand? disinterested in the odd labor of constructing (thus)self as a 'minor' 'experimental' 'poet'

expected I thus that, due to neural malfunction/ positive ions associated with dry September winds, would I find myself comfortably untroubled by a lack of poetic furor: no idée (as)phyxé, no morbidly sensitive imagination, no sensation of physical or cognitive permeability: an inhibition of all thought processes spreading thus across the corpus callosum, leaving a topoclimactically induced tabula rasa?

even the cortices of small rodentia
thus had voyaged I to the mythos of the uncircumscribable desert with a knapsack, hand-pressed Parisian stationery, ink cartridges, steel-nibbed pen, that freed of trivial preoccupations, detached from the quotidian tumult of the "heteromasculine cityscape"—as if, through an onslaught of dependent clauses, prepositions, adjectives, could I (thus) defer the intentionality-action of that far-from-independent, far-from insubordinate, rhetorical 'I am'—

even walnuts

thus returned I to my northern california home-head, thus crawled I into the booth, the slick red vinyl seat alongside the midnight bottle of Heinz and sticky salt-shaker, the city of intrusive waitresses, the city of writing (only) to defer drinking the awful; self-enclosed, all the while (thus?) vulnerable/ to transcribe a psyche infinitely ambivalent, infinitely metanoic: a "forlorn, desultory psyche"
I, you turn off the dark...
And then on the light

Is in a state of agitation to toss a brick laden with der sentiments...
The triangulation...

That you could produce an actual revolution by shooting a figurehead w/ a blank

I'm trying to read and these elk are banging against the glass

Is naive, takes language literally, simple thing to which his nature leaves him unconscionable...

The fulfillment of desire...

Words: Drew Gardner '00
Ink: Gary Sullivan '01

Drew Gardner & Gary Sullivan
OUT OF MY WAY, YOU WITWITS!

YOU REALLY THINK IT'S YOUR MIND?

THE WIND IS COMING FROM INSIDE...

HEAD, CHEST, INTELLECT, BELLY;
IMAGINATION, CAUSE THE EXPANSION
AND CONTRACTION OF AIR.

THE WHOLE APARTMENT'S STARTING TO FILL WITH BLOOD.

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!

THAT'S WHAT ALL THESE DOTS AND DASHES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE.

I AM A WINDOW AN EEL-CHILD AT PLAY.

I'LL SAVE YOU.

TRY AND DRAIN OUT SOME OF THE B-BLOOD!

YOU'RE FULL OF OWLS!


I HAVE AN AVENGER TO D-DESCRIPTION IN-WANT TO REMAIN IN A STATE OF PASSIVITY, W/O OUT DIMENSION OR QUALITY.

THE BEGINNING OF CORRUPTION THE END OF LIFE.

STEPHEN GIBSON

**Dark Ships**

**Move Thru Ink, To Find Out**

**They Are Full Of Owls...**

**ARC-Light**

**Rampant Letters**

**Soon To Be The Earth And Sea**

**The Storm-Tossed Sea**

**The Resolution**

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Monday morning was routine. Doc was at the bar. Wall Street was doing fine. Doc drank six bourbons and forgot about everything his shrink had insisted he remember. "I remember......"
Replicate the Years

Sit down. Close your eyes.

We are going to replicate the years. Remember us perhaps if you will in your dreams...

CITY of RILKE'S DESIRE

Run with the poets!
The girl from A DIFFERENT WORLD

Was one of the best students in my class. And a cheerleader on the basketball team. Plenty of girls seemed to like me, and I suffered no lack of friends. I suppose I was happy, but deep in my heart, I was looking for something I couldn't name. Until I saw Penny.

She came to our school in the second semester of junior year. For some reason, I took a right in on her. I just knew she was different. She was shy and kept to herself, but she fascinated me. Looking back now, I wish I could have done better by her...

She was one of the best at reading. She was always drawing. Always off in a different world, not paying attention in class.

One day, I got up the nerve to ask her out. She said yes.

Sure!

The story of the girl from A DIFFERENT WORLD:

Walkie, who is the girl you're talking about? Well, her name is Penny. I haven't heard that name before. She's new at school. Mom said I should meet her. Something, something.

This is the first time I'm going out with someone. Okay?

I'm not religious or anything. But going to church makes me feel like I'm not so bad. For cutting school, you know? I try to go to a different denomination every time.

They often have noon services—why do you go to church, right?

Yeah...

I went to a dance. She gave me a smile. You did?

I was a white night. So we decided to take a walk. We walked all the way to the beach, holding hands and not saying much.

I drew during class because I could. Would you play basketball at your desk if you could? I guess I should try more attention...

I'm not stupid! I'm fascinating! You're fascinating!
I didn't see her at school for a few days after that, but she was all I could think of. Hey, Walter! You gonna be at practice today?

You seem kinda spaced out, man! You got something on your mind?

I was falling in love. I wrote her a letter to tell her how I felt.

She started to sob. I thought I had messed her up with my words.

You, you're so sweet... I think I'm falling in love with you.

Walter, I've got to tell you something... It's very hard for me.

You can tell me anything, Penny.

But I didn't understand! I couldn't tell anyone! I'm telling you, Walter?

Her teeth were chattering, she was afraid.

N-n-n-n-n-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o
I didn’t see Penny the next day at school. I was relieved.

Hey Walt... I heard you’re going out with that new girl. What’s her name? Oh yeah... Penny...

No... We went out once or twice. Nothing serious.

She’s weird. She hardly ever comes to school.

Yeah. Ummm... I’m late for class. Call me at home, ok?

She called me this afternoon but I didn’t pick up the phone.

I don’t call her back. I don’t know why. I guess I wasn’t up for it.

Walt. I need to talk to you.

I didn’t see her vulnerable crying form... but I would be replaced with some horrible image of her sufferings... to that pain.

I wondered for a moment about my dad. I wondered about all of them. I wondered about myself. I felt really creepy.

I came back to an empty house. My parents had gone to a party.

I wondered for a moment about my dad. I wondered about all of them. I wondered about myself. I felt really creepy.

I kept seeing visions of Penny in the arms of some guy. Some old guy... and then with me... I was too close. I loved her. I felt like I was going to die. I felt angry. At Penny. I was hurt. I was the victim.

I didn’t call after school as usual. Not that I heard her. I was still in the arms of some guy. Some old guy... and then with me... I was too close. I loved her. I felt like I was going to die. I felt angry. At Penny. I was hurt. I was the victim.

I see her vulnerable crying form... but I would be replaced with some horrible image of her sufferings... to that pain.

I see her in my arms again. I could almost feel her... I see her in my arms again. I could almost feel her...

I went off. I was a good student. A good athlete. I had good grades. There was no reason for Penny’s problem. In my world.
Who made Sally Brown’s teacher sound like a saxophone?

We go back under the covers for another round of boxing in the bruises.

The unintelligible: what in comic form was only elapse to “YES, MA’AM”s became on television a brass instrument.

We turn our backs to one another, an act of trust.

We wawhn-wawhn-wawhn-wawhn-wah the undertow.

We take knives to the sketch of our jaws.

Crosshatch. There is nothing that is not soft here. The answer is arithmetic, “THE NEW MATH,” to sex of mutter, tutor, horn.
The sea has receded a little. Mild layers stack up without panic, like e-mail. Twin frenzied suns watch the ocean sediments settle under Oakville Grocery. Flittery strings tied to the tops of young vines shimmer two versions of the actual: red, white. The curfew vintner walks below, tapping smooth metal vats with a spoon. He asks them the twelve questions: Did you love your life? How 'bout now? Can you recite the table of sunsets? Did the weather wait for you? Did you wait back? When he shook before the world did you shake too? Did you fall in the milky sunshine? Do you hear their gritty theories still? Would you like a drink? Can you live in two directions with the border guards? You’re not answering. Why didn’t you fight more? Didn’t you love being bad?
While the ways that we encounter relations are various

He talks in her voice because he must.

then look for relationships, connections, synchronicities

But does he have to play while we’re trying to talk?

It cannot be a sentence, even if it resembles one, because a sentence never exists by itself

When I write to you you don’t write back and then you do and I don’t reply

Or like people who don’t see themselves Though they stand before each other
But this letter is something like a door even if a false door

So you’re the one who swallowed his tongue!

held as long as possible, i.e. until breath is exhausted

Is it snowing how do wolves howl.

The painting came first then its title
The text appearing in this piece is made up of quotes from the works of Emmanuel Hocquard (translated by Rosmarie Waldrop), Bernadette Mayer, Laura Moriarty, Michael Palmer, Juliana Spahr, Jack Spicer, and Keith Waldrop. Photographs are by Juliette Valery of the Library at Royaumont where some of these texts have been translated.

The International Time Capsule Society estimates that there are approximately 10,000 time capsules worldwide, most of them lost.
Actually, it’s a symptom of modernity, this assumption that the future will be better than the past at all. gregory benford

At Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia, the Crypt of Civilization, a swimming pool transformed into a time capsule and sealed by some kook. Kookier still is the rationale for the date of its projected unveiling. [See the whole story at www.oglethorpe.edu/itscs.htm.] Included in the loot are 640,000 erasable microfilm, a machine to read them, and a wind-powered generator with which to power the machine. You know the future’s going to appreciate how we thought of everything. If the future doesn’t speak English, there’s a crash course just inside the vault.

small fires are galvanizing!
a post-party eyepatch adds a certain dash
stemware is meant to be shattered!
blow’s sermon
sim’s striptease
big red’s green suede evening gloves
passing from arm to arm
cranky’s sword dance
daffy’s scooter ride

slide show?
confetti cannon!
orange plastic fencing?
[yes, but where?] rent pinball?

peramus peanut-fed ham!
334.365.8301

more cheese straws?
rent chafing dish? buy?

hot summer single?
macarena?
white wedding one more time . . .

forget that fruit dip
some sugar thing?

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Look what a fuss is made in newspapers, nowadays, about odds and ends that are come upon—one or two sad beads, or splinters of crockery! Enormously learned theories are based upon them. Then of course there are arrowheads, daggers, and dinged-in skulls; but they give such a fractious, bad-tempered picture of life, I feel they must make one unfair to the vanished races. So I’m looking ahead to when we are a vanished race.

Elizabeth Bowen  THE LITTLE GIRLS
When a youth with super-powers refused to join the Legion, he is suspected of committing a crime, so the Legion tries to track down the lone wolf!

A youthful figure emerges, donned in an executioner's hood, with a wolf's head on its chest.

Inside, the masked lad wraps the vault open with his hands.

The next day, the lad is called to the scene.

Only someone with super-strength could have done this.

These cracks show a super-Karate blow was used first, then he tore it open!
Ferro-Lad, this photog- 
apher was passing 
by & saw the thief! 
He took some 
pictures!

I didn't pass by! This fellow didn't give me 
the photos! Here... 
I don't want them!

Hammond of them is of 
the crook riffling the 
ceiling apart & one of 
his chest emblem.

Meanwhile Lightning- 
Lad & Lightning- 
Lass attend a circus.

Don't bug me, Mr. 
Laugh!

Magnet-Lad... 
aren't the Denarian 
horses lovely, Garth?

Lightning-Lass is all 
arms.

She only asked a 
simple question, no need 
to yell at your twin 
sister!

I'm sorry, Ahla! I'm just 
A little jumpy... it's 
all right?

Let's go!

Look, the camelephants 
are stampeding!

That lad! He is swinging 
on a rope!

He snaps the rope, 
Light Off! He must 
have super-strength!

He's swinging it in 
the camelephants' 
eyes! They stopped 
charging!

Soon... I'm light-Lass! 
This is Magnet- 
Lad & Lightning-Lad.

We are members of 
the Legion of Super- 
Heroes! We can 
use you! How would 
you like to join?

No! I wouldn't 
like to! I'm a 
lone wolf! I like 
the symbol on 
your costume shows! 
And now, goodbye!
Five years, speaks back to shown An imagination consciousness are clenched. and the Lone Wolf stands dead indoctrination looking go-go boot or high heel. The book end pairs of boy/girl Legionnaires stand with hands open, but The Lone Wolf's fists are clenched.

Drawn in black or blue ballpoint pen, magic marker and sometimes shaded with pencil, the comics were done on a variety of paper stocks, mainly sheets scissored wavily from large rolls of thin, industrial stock paper. The first fifty-four undated issues were done as single-sheets, not to cooked, cut roughly to 9" by 12" dimensions. No. 29 was the first in booklet-format. The height-by-width dimensions were half that of the previous.

Fictitious letters columns, inserts of special "posters" profiling characters, and other goodies were occasional added features—as if part of a promotional advertising campaign, but as marketing gimmicks for a product where there was no audience. The archive was boxed away in an attic where it remained unseen for thirty-five years, and at the time of its production it was never shown to anyone, including the child's parents who knew nothing of its existence. It may be a unique record, in its excessiveness, sheer quantity and "obsessiveness," and in the (relatively) articulate testimony it provides for that span of developmental years where childhood bridges across the crucial hurdle of puberty. Set in the future ("In the year 2667,"—like the oldest song "In the year 2525") but addressing us out of a past over three decades lost, a genre basically aimed at children speaks back to us from the syntax of surviving school boy consciousness ("...THIS PHOTOGRAPHER WAS PASSING BY & SAW THE THIEF! "I DIDN'T PASS BY! THIS FELLOW DID!"). I think of it like discovering a nine-year old Henry Darger.

An imagination originally devoted to more "innocent" scenarios (imprisonment, escape, etc.) shows the gradual sociosexual indoctrination of surrounding heteronormative media influences and impenetrable of gender differentiation/desire. This pubescent dilemma is perhaps instantly visible in the iconography of the "Lone Wolf" cover. Symmetrical patterning on their costumes, the Lone Wolf stands dead center between two females on his left and two males on his right (one of the males, Chameleon Boy with conspicuously phallic tusks coming out of his head). The females are distinguished by a sort of white patent leather-looking go-go boot or high heel. The book end pairs of boy/girl Legionnaires stand with hands open, but The Lone Wolf's fists are clenched.

The degree of hardship and pain these heroes face might seem modest (or precociously psychological in its angst): "A YOUNG LAD ACCUSED OF THEFT." No broken bones, no bruised knees, no grade school tommy guns. The menace comes more from language and thinking (the anxieties of being "suspected" or accused), and not from the dangerous, hard-core, concrete "reality" we suppose to be the picturesque field of heroism. The worst violence shown is a kanute chop administered to a door—but no one is injured.

The action of the story line—Lightning Lad out at a circus, a male friend to his right, a female to his left (same left/right female/male structuralism as on the cover), nibbling at a kernel of popcorn held between thumb and index finger (other fingers daintily lifted, as if drinking from a teacup at a tea party)—may suddenly be interrupted at any instant by unmotivated crankiness: "DON'T BUG ME, AYLA!" (just as the interruption itself may in turn be undercut by asterisked explanations: "LIGHTNING LASS IS AYLA RANZZ"). This world of adventure is vulnerable to disruption from below, from a (hormonal) moodiness as expectable and believable a facet of the fantastic landscape as was transportation in "a spinning vehicle." But the quarrelsome exchange ("SHE ONLY ASKED A SIMPLE QUESTION! NO NEED TO YELL AT YOUR TWIN SISTER!" "I'M SORRY, AYLA! I'M JUST A LITTLE JUMPY!") is in turn immediately smoothed over. The spirit of forgiveness prevails: "IT'S ALL RIGHT!" as the twins join hands in reconciliation, like Orestes and Electra. (There were in fact male-female twins in my immediate family, my brother and sister, younger by five years.) When the outbreak of violence springs from deeper levels in a stampede of hybrid circus animals, their marauding is stopped not with stun guns or any harmful retaliation, but with—a light shined in their eyes!

Drawing on some prelapsarian fusion where visual and verbal co-existed side by side, the mode of comic books offered a medium syncretistically both pictorial and textual. Dialogue and language were not yet split off into the either/or of hearing vs. seeing, that great rift which elsewhere leads to the ever-diverging arts of painting and literature, one mute and the other blind.

It is my hope that other editors or curators may join Chain in helping bring to light this peculiar archive.—Lightning Lass does not ask Lone Wolf "Would you like to join?" or "Why would you like to join?" or "When would you like to join?" In another of the 11-year old's oblique phrasings, Lightning Lass asks Lone Wolf "How would you like to join?"
BEN KATCHOR, MICHAEL GORDON, DAVID LANG, JULIA WOLFE, & DAVID KRASNOW

THE CARBON COPY BUILDING

images and libretto by Ben Katchor, music by Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe, interview with Ben Katchor by David Krasnow

scene 1
slide lecture

slow, steady and very restrained
incantatory and introspective
start soft and build slowly

architectural historian
in the fall of nineteen fifty-nine
the Pala-tine

electric guitar
nine-teen

sampler - low organ sound
building

a modest seven story
neu-ter-de-co of-ice

rected on ParkMan-ure-A-ve-nue

six months la-ter

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Warning: Unauthorized reproduction of this publication is prohibited by Federal law, and subject to criminal prosecution
this same developer, a carbon copy structure

twenty blocks away on Rigol Street

sixty-nine years later, both buildings remain standing

the original

the hallways
are the elevators modernized

doors silent

in sad contrast

Palaver building now finds itself in the midst of the bent spoon
distinct
wedged between a
third-run movie theater and a roas-ted nut-house
Each floor has been

sub-di-vided into dozens of small of-fices
the mol-dings are blurred

from hundreds of re-pain-tings
Standing as they do on different sides of town the two buildings are rarely held up for comparison but if one were to look carefully behind the signs and renovations the family re-
semblance would be plain to see an identical twin
gone to seed

Each building has changed hands dozens of times

but few bother to
© 1999 by Ben Katchor

The historian doesn't immediately leave the stage, but continues to change the slide:

Study such things

Thank you and good night

Thank you

The historian doesn't immediately leave the stage, but continues to change the slide:

Thank you and good night

Thank you
Artist Ben Katchor is a pioneer of what's being called the comic novel, though his work is neither comic nor novelistic. His strips aim more for the quick delivery of the short story, and occasionally—as in the title work of his recent collection Julius Knipl, Real-Estate Photographer: The Beauty Supply District—to the novella. He writes and draws "Hotel & Farm" for The Forward, the Jewish weekly, and an unnamed series for the design-and-urbanism Metropolis.

One of the Metropolis strips grew into the libretto and design for an opera, The Carbon Copy Building, which won an Obie award for Best New American Production. The Carbon Copy Building is likely the first comic ever to jump media to opera (though not, certainly, to musical theater: remember Annie); Speigelman himself can't claim the honor. It's the star-crossed story of two seven-storey commercial buildings built from the exact same plans.

People who meet Ben Katchor often remark on how the experience itself seemed like something from his strips, and how after a time in his company the world seems more Katchorian. I met Ben at the Baltic Restaurant, a coffee shop serving borscht in the middle of a side-street block. It was deserted, but somehow very noisy.

—David Krasnow

DK: How did you come to collaborate with the composers' group Bang on a Can?

BK: Michael Gordon, Julia Wolfe, and David Lang, who are the founders of Bang on a Can, got a commission to do a joint opera from the city of Turin. They have a big festival there, the Settembre Musica. As I understand it, their band had played there and they had a tremendous reception, this is in 1996, and the director said, why don't all three of you collaborate on an opera. When they got back here they realized it should have sort of a New York, urban theme. Somehow they thought that comics had something to do with that.

BK: I don't think of comics as particularly American. They had a certain golden age in America, newspaper comics. Dick Tracy, Little Orphan Annie, and Abbie the Agent, these were my favorites. I read them years later in reprint collections. Generally the newspaper strip was lapsing into senility by the 1950s. But picture stories existed long before modern newspapers. In other forms, broadsheets.

DK: A lot of Europeans think comics are our highest art form.

DK: Is that why the entire text of the opera is projected on screens?

BK: They were interested in doing an opera where there was a reason to use text, to have the sung text visible. That's what they explained to me. When we first did it in Italy the text could be read in Italian. Not just subtitles, but the text was translated and actually worked into the sets.

DK: It was sung in English, though?

BK: It was sung in English and all the text you saw was in Italian. It's meant to be in whatever language the audience speaks. Also that helps solve a problem in song. Usually in acoustic music you can hear what's being sung, but this is electric music, and there's a lot of sound. In any case they needed a cartoonist to work with, and that's how it worked out. David Lang knew my work.

BK: I've always thought about it. I'm not a musician, so I can't do it myself. I once did a series of stories for radio based on my Julius Knipl, Real-Estate Photographer series. David Isay produced it for NPR's Saturday Weekend Edition program, and it ran for 13 episodes. That series had some original music arranged for it. And I found it sort of discouraging that composers always thought of period music. I thought, this is
not the music I hear. My strips, the stories, are about this world, and this world happens to be full of remnants of the past. When I met with these Bang on a Can people and listened to their tapes, I thought, this was more like it. Their music is ahistorical. It has references to every place in the world, but it's not period music.

DK: Before you worked with them, were there songs or styles that you thought of when you drew?

BK: I think of contemporary music. I'm an amateur clarinetist, so I listened to a lot of 20th-century music for clarinet. My clarinet teacher had me use Romanian and Hungarian method books. At the time I listened to klezmer, Yiddish art songs, rebetike, light opera—Gilbert and Sullivan, Offenbach. I listened to movie music and theater music, incidental music for plays, like Rvier and Francaix. Songs of all kinds. Being an amateur, I heard only isolated pieces of contemporary music, whatever I found in used record stores. I love the songs of Charles Ives. I still don't follow it very seriously, but I like to listen.

DK: Cartoons, urban theme—I can understand why they wanted to work with you—the lion's share of your strips would qualify. When you drew the original strip called "The Carbon Copy Building" for Metropolis in 1998, did you have something larger in mind?

BK: I wanted to use one of those strips because they're not part of any other series, they're self-contained stories. Actually I gave them—Julia, David, and Michael—a whole pile of strips, and they chose it. I told them, "It has to be a strip you're interested in. I did them, I'm interested in all of them." I did pull out a lot of strips that were about sound and music, from "The Cardboard Valise." There was one about fake ethnic musicians, one about the necessity of piping music into all businesses, another about an Academy of Internal Musical Humming. But that's the one they liked. So I expanded on the strip, just writing, and said "Here's more text than you can ever use." And several months later, these musical numbers existed, about sixteen.

DK: What kinds of revisions did you go through in the script?

BK: We met with the director, Bob McGrath, and there was no storyboard, and I had to explain to him what's happening in these numbers. Sometimes a piece of music ran longer than necessary for the action to take place. They wrote a five-minute song for something that in my mind was one panel, and that had to be taken into account theatrically. What do you do for those five minutes? Do you do nothing and just let the audience listen? The director was very open. When I sit down with a text I invent the strip. The strip is not all there. When I start visualizing I throw out a lot of stuff, I realize it's too wordy, whatever has to be done. Luckily this was a director who had me sit there and talk to him. Of course he did whatever he thought worked, if I gave him a bad suggestion . . .

DK: So you worked more closely with the director than with the composers?

BK: It was like a found text for them, and they set it, and then we had a found score, and we had to figure out how to do it. And this was not a big-budget opera, there was not a lot of rehearsal time. I don't know how these things are developed, but until the music was there you couldn't think about a lot of the staging.

DK: So not until it was staged . . .

BK: Then I figured out what I needed to draw. By then I knew how the projection screens were laid out: downstage, full scrim, and three upstage rear projections. There are only about three drawings from the original strip. I drew about one hundred total. There was not a lot of time, two weeks.

DK: How did you make a hundred drawings in two weeks?

BK: I knew a lot of these would be up for two seconds, they're meant to be seen in motion. I finished drawing and the next day was the first run-through, the next week it went
to Italy. The composers have all worked on other theater pieces, and David Lang said he has never done anything where there wasn’t major shifting of music in the process of making the piece. This was just the way they handed it in. Because of time limitations this is what it was.

DK: Did you work with the actor-singers?

BK: During rehearsals I wouldn’t speak to them, it was all through the director. Writing opera is not like working alone. All of your internal critical voices are embodied by 15 people. Everyone coming from a different background in art, or theater, or music, and they all have their opinion, and some of them make it known. The director has his. But they’re real people, you can’t say forget it, go away.

DK: In the strips you inhabit your characters. How was it to suddenly see someone else inhabiting them?

BK: They’re images. Staging the actors was very much like staging a comic strip. What’s happening; visually does this tableau have interest?

DK: The drawings are easy to recreate in different spaces. By using projections on scrims, very little needs to be built.

BK: That never works. Whenever they build three-dimensional sets out of two-dimensional illustrations, it always looks terrible. You see something the artist never thought of making. This exists as two-dimensional images, but at different levels. The Ridge Theater has been doing that for years, using projections. Not usually for comic strips, though.

DK: A big advantage is that projections allow for exterior and interior to coexist in the viewer’s eye, so the buildings and their inhabitants are onstage at the same time. Where did you stumble on the phenomenon of the carbon copy building?

BK: There are a few in New York, apartment buildings. Some in Brooklyn. The developers would use the same plans and get the same size lot.

DK: And keep the architect’s fees. Did you visit some of these buildings?

BK: I’ve read about them. I haven’t bothered to go.

DK: Do you study architectural history to find ideas?

BK: Since I started the strip I try not to. I’d be paralyzed; everything’s been written about. People think I’m a historian, possessing some academic knowledge of urban lore. I don’t know much more than most people. I don’t consider myself an expert on New York. I live here. I don’t read that much about it—over the years I have read about it, but I live here. It’s all in what I see.

DK: You notice more than most people, Ben.

BK: I know how to evoke it in comics.

DK: I had imagined you poring over these massive books by Robert Stern—New York 1930, New York 1960. You don’t research the strips?

BK: No, no research at all. If I don’t know it I don’t talk about it.

DK: Let’s talk about architecture though. You have two buildings, the original and the copy. The Palaver Building, the copy built six months after the Palatine, is the dark twin. There’s an “inky, blue-black” substance that permeates the bodies of its inhabitants. The Palaver is cursed by the copying medium.

BK: It’s the curse of secondhand invention. Things are always being copied in the culture, and they go up or down socially or culturally, higher or lower. In this case the copy happened to be in this particular neighborhood, and houses the practical, real-world versions of the original’s high-brow activities. It could have happened the other way around.

DK: But it does seem significant that the copy ends up in the
low-brow neighborhood. Is there a lesson here in architectural ethics? It seems to represent a change in your view from the Knipl strips, where your sympathies seem to lie with the grungier, the lower-rent, the more obscure.

BK: My sympathy is with both buildings. There’s no satire. I kept telling the director, they both have to be very sympathetic situations. The messenger from the Palaver is the only character who’s able to go from one to the other. That’s the whole strip. The opera is the same from beginning to end, with some detours. He gets to the Palatine and makes this connection. He doesn’t know that he’s doing it. That’s the tragedy.

DK: Even though the plot is so terse, the opera has a clearly defined beginning, middle, conclusion. But your strips always start with the feeling that they are fragments of something larger; there might be introductory narration, but the action is already taking place. Your book The Jew of New York is almost novel-length; it’s a historical comic novel. Is the brevity of the strip something you’re moving past, toward a longer form?

BK: If there’s the occasion to do it, I’ll do it. I’ve done long stories. The Beauty Supply District has a long story also. I prefer comics that are short. It’s a short form. In the theater, 70 minutes is also a short piece. I don’t think the opera feels long. It feels as though you’re there for five minutes, at least I hope so. The first time I saw it a smooth run-through, I thought, this is good, it feels like we just got here. Nothing happened, some incredibly minor thing happened, it took 70 minutes. I like that.

DK: The Jew of New York has a long, complex story line with lots of plot developments and hare-brained schemes, but you kept the narrative of The Carbon Copy Building from becoming too complex.

BK: That’s the story. People say to me, but what happens? Do they fall in love, Semele and Philip Emetine, do they get married? That’s not what this is about. It’s about the person who can exist between these two places, this man who is poisoned by his job, emotionally, culturally. Whether he knew it or not, that’s another question.

DK: So the curse isn’t being the carbon copy—it’s location, location, location. Do you imagine these buildings set down somewhere we know? It’s the same city I suppose where Julius Knipl works.

BK: It has everything New York has, except all the names are different.

DK: It’s Gotham City.

BK: It would be really boring if it were New York.

DK: Park Manure Avenue, where all these well-endowed philanthropies like the Ichor Foundation are located, suggests Park Avenue.

BK: It’s somewhere like Central Park West or Upper Fifth Avenue, but it wouldn’t interest me to think of those real locations. Parts of Chicago. I like to think of a perfect version of all the cities I know. I like to feel like I’m a tourist: I don’t really know this place myself, and I get interested in seeing what’s there.

DK: Knipl always reminded me of Chicago, where I used to live. With the El tracks around the Loop, downtown Chicago feels very 40s, and it’s overcast so much of the year, it’s like a black-and-white movie. A lot of Knipl pieces look more like downtown Brooklyn than Manhattan. A place that had its heyday 60 or 80 years ago.

BK: Maybe. There’s a lot of old stuff in Manhattan. Only one or two avenues really feel new. Sixth Avenue, from a certain point up, and that’s about it. People come here from Chicago and they think New York seems older. A lot of the downtown of Chicago has been destroyed in the last few years, there’s been a lot of development. New York is pretty old, relatively. Late nineteenth century, a lot of it.
DK: You grew up in Brooklyn at a time when the difference between Brooklyn and Manhattan—culturally, and in terms of lifestyle—was much greater. Manhattan was another world. That was true when I was a kid too. Did you grow up thinking of New York as mysterious? Did you acquire this fascination with urban life early?

BK: I didn’t spend that much time in Manhattan. I was brought in occasionally to go to particular places. I had no sense of the boroughs. I knew downtown Brooklyn and my neighborhood—Crown Heights, Bedford-Stuyvesant. It’s a big city, I can’t say I know it all very well. I don’t know Queens or the Bronx, I know a little piece of Staten Island.

DK: The Palaver and the Palatine could stand for poles of big-city life. The Palaver is run-down and dirty and impersonal—which was how people thought about New York before the Giuliani era—and the Palatine is glamorous and old-money, leading a kind of charmed life. In the Palaver, the narrator bemoans the subdivision of the floors to make tiny offices for marginal businesses like the dessert embalmer and the chewing-gum removers. There’s almost a Wizard of Oz motif in the way one building is colorful and the other is blue-black. Architectural preservation hasn’t always gotten such a respectful treatment from you. One of my favorite Metropolis strips is about "The Committee on Architectural Neglect," this klatch of old cigar-chewing landlords too complacent to change anything in their buildings. It’s very affectionate, and it suggested to me that conscious efforts to renew and preserve are a waste of time. Has development in the city changed the way you feel about preservation, since you started writing about real estate in the late 80s?

BK: It’s an economic boom, so there’s more activity going on. Storefronts are changing faster. That’s what makes it good. I love coming by some place and the whole corner will be gone. And the thing that comes up may be horrible.

DK: And you don’t miss the old corner? A lot of the strips have a sense of nostalgizing, even wanting to preserve, some place or custom.

BK: I do, but I miss a lot of things. I miss people who die. That’s part of life. I might miss who I was at a particular time, and I miss the places that were the background. There hasn’t been wholesale development in this city, major urban renewal, in my lifetime. A lot of it is protected, or desirable the way it is. People still live in New York, it’s not one of these deserted downtown cities where they could knock the whole thing down and no one would mind. I miss places: what’s going on in those buildings. In this neighborhood here, it’s very much as it was when I was here twenty years ago. All this development is a drop in the bucket. There are pockets that are not recognizable. Like I knew Water Street before all that stuff was built—South Street Seaport, Battery Park City.

DK: Some of that land didn’t exist 20 years ago.

BK: If this were the exact city I saw as a teenager . . . You go to Europe and there are museum center cities, they’re stagnant. I like to see it as a tourist but I wouldn’t want to be there. You feel trapped in the past.

DK: Living in the apartment you inherited from your grandparents.

BK: It’s the apartment that was there since the seventeenth century.

DK: There’s a strip where Julius Knipl is on the subway, and he thinks of something that used to be there—candy-vending machines on the platforms—and starts wondering whether he is remembering this thing or imagining that it was there. Working in this realm between close observation and fantasy, in an imaginary place so much like a real place, does this become a dilemma for you?

BK: There are early childhood memories I’m never sure whether I made up. I’m pretty straight about what I see though.

DK: You once wrote about a newspaper of dream life, The Evening Combinator, reporting what happened in people’s dreams. Do you think a lot about dream life?
BK: Do I? Not my own! I never remember my dreams.

DK: You remember other people’s. Were publishers disappointed when you retired Julius Knipl after ten years?

BK: They just sort of wondered why. I don’t think it matters what I call the work. Some people care but most ambitious readers like that I change it. I’d rather these things run for a year or two and then have a new name. The name gets lost at some point and I like the fact that there really is a thematic sense to the strip. The Knipl strip went beyond the character of Julius Knipl.

DK: He was a cult figure, how did your readers take it?

BK: There are people who are nostalgic about everything, they’re nostalgic about the strips about nostalgia. Forget about it. Knipl was about complete immersion in a culture, and The Cardboard Valise, the strip on travel, is about getting out of the culture—the relativity of it. Forget about my culture.

DK: It’s a very particular view of your culture. Like Knipl, The Carbon Copy Building makes me wonder if you’ve ever had a strip with a normal job.

BK: They’re all normal jobs. No job is that normal, they’re all strange to me. Most jobs are very odd if you look at them. I just heighten that and make you realize that they’re all bizarre. I mean this borscht . . .

DK: The borscht maker, laboring away in back. Again there’s a kind of confusion between the real and the imagined. “Real estate photographer” sounds kind of absurd when you say it, but people do it. Yet when I saw the opera I wondered a few moments if there were dessert embalming firms, if there was some courtship ritual of saving the dessert.

BK: Like wedding cake.

DK: Labor is very important to you; people in your strips are always working, most of the action takes place on the job, even when the job itself is kind of indeterminate. But do you just pull a trade like dessert embalming off the top of your head?

BK: Yeah, it was invented purely as a kind of business. When I was doing that strip I invented the directory of the Palaver Building. That was one of them. And then I realized that would be the business that sent the delivery to the Palatine. When I expanded it into the opera I thought of about a hundred businesses.

DK: And that’s how the romance in the Palatine comes about.

BK: I never think about how these things work, or what they mean, I never approach writing like that. I think of these things and they have to feel like the right thing to happen for the story, and I follow it to conclusion whether it makes sense or not. And then it usually makes sense.

DK: There’s a false start in the opera because the Palatine people call the bubble-gum removers, who are also in the Palaver building. But they don’t come.

BK: There are these connections.

DK: You’ve worked in newspapers, books, radio, and now in opera. Do you think about doing film?

BK: Knipl was optioned, someone’s trying to develop it. Live action. I’m out of the picture, they don’t want me involved in it. This particular option is on such a large scale that they want a proven screenwriter. It would be big. It probably won’t happen.

DK: Do you think about pursuing opera?

BK: It’s very hard to deal with in the abstract. With strips, everything I do is in print. I don’t have any unpublished work! To sit down and say you’re going to make an opera if you don’t have a commission, to say theoretically we’re going to do this thing, and not know what to do with it. That’s a hard thing to do unless you’re a name in the music world,
like Bang on a Can. In the world of opera, you can't do it much smaller than Carbon Copy Building, and it's still a lot of money. This was financed by the city of Turin. There was no commercial background, no one is hoping to make money. The commission tends to be based on the music; the writer's not going to get a commission for an opera. There are probably really cheap ways to do an opera—set up for a night or two at a nightclub, two people and a band. I do like the idea, just because it's such a change from comics. I've been talking with Mark Mulcahy, who's in the world of pop music, about developing a musical theater show.

DK: He was in Miracle Legion, a great indie rock group.

BK: I think his music would lend itself to the kind of dramatic situations I invent.

DK: Do you ever get tired of comics?

BK: Well, I think so. But now I do it for a living. I can't just stop and say, from now on I'm going to write librettos. There's not that much work in that. You get tired of anything you do. The physical routine. I love the idea of having to go and talk to other people. Film I could see. Now with digital film things can be made at home, almost like a comic strip, except they end up having theatrical life. Maybe that technology will make it possible at a smaller scale.

DK: William Kentridge, who's basically an illustrator, shoots his drawings and puts the movie on DVD. It's easier to exhibit in museums than film.

BK: All these media that are developing are pretty interesting.

DK: Do you illustrate on computer?

BK: Everything I do is scanned. I draw on paper, but then it's output, it's all digital. The half-tone is manipulated in Photoshop.

DK: Do you like the quality of digital prepress?

BK: When it's done well it's probably better than the old technology. There's an optical haze to stat camera.

DK: You started out in type and graphics, but the old processes of phototypesetting.

BK: We did type and design work. I stopped about the time desktop publishing became available.

DK: By coincidence, or because you didn't like the new technologies?

BK: I started making a living in comics.
DAVID LARSEN

THE K CHRONICLES

HARD TRUTHS I LEARNED AS A CHILD...

MAGIC TRICKS ARE JUST ILLUSIONS...

HARD TRUTHS I LEARNED AS A TEENAGER...

EVEN THE STRONGEST PEOPLE IN YOUR FAMILY DIE...

HARD TRUTHS I LEARNED AS AN ADULT...

YOU STILL GET PIMPLES RIGHT BEFORE BIG DATES...

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!! I have to use the same water fountain as you!!

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!!

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!!

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!!

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!!

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!!

RACISM STILL EXISTS...

No, it doesn't!!

THE BASKET OF BLOOD!

ER! FEH! CHIRRUP! MY MURDERLINGS! JOIN THE SHIVERING ARMY OF REMORSEFUL SOULS THAT WERE NEVER THE SAME AFTER A PECK INSIDE...

"It's my basket and it's my blood"

File under EXTREME HORROR
THERE STANDS THE BASKET—
THE BASKET OF BLOOD! IT'S JUST
OOZING WITH IT! ALL OVER THE CARPET,
THE FLOOR— TALK ABOUT AN UNWORTHY
VESSEL! WHO EVEN NEEDS THAT MUCH
BLOOD ANYWAY? UNLESS IT'S SOMETHING INSIDE THAT'S LEAKING BLOOD,
LIKE A WOUNDED RABBIT, OR A
HOUSECAT? NO WAY A SINGLE
ANIMAL COULD HOLD SO MUCH THOUGH!

WELL, DO YOU DARE TO
LIFT ITS LID? WAIT—YOU WOULDN'T
WANT TO GET YOUR FINGERPRINTS ALL
OVER IT NOW, WOULD YOU? WHAT IS YOUR ROLE
IN THIS DRAMA, ANYHOW? DOES ANYONE APPROACH
THE BASKET OF BLOOD SERENE IN THEIR INNOCENCE?
MAYBE THIS IS WHAT PAID FOR YOUR PIANO
LESSONS! IT'S GATHERING INTO THESE WEIRD
LUMPS— CURDLING! DON'T LET YOUR HEM TRAIL
IN IT! USELESS TO PRETEND THAT YOU SOMEHOW
STAND OUTSIDE IT, THAT YOU'RE OBSERVING
YOURSELF IN THE ACT OF OBSERVING IT—
IT'S A BASKET OF BLOOD, FOR CRYING
OUT LOUD! RIGHT THERE IN FRONT
OF YOU! ALL GUSHING AND DRIPPING!
YES, I MEAN TO HAVE
EXTREME GOTH
CONVULSIONS!
THE SAME HAND FILLED IT AS WOKE IT! THREE KINDS OF FANTA, HEATED TO A ROLLING BOIL! I'VE GOT A CHICKEN WING OUT IN THE RAIN! HOW MANY DROPS ARE IN IT? WHOSE IS THAT SNEAKER PRINT ON THE STAIR? E-MAILS, WITH NO SUBJECT HEADING! THAT WHITE-FACED RAT MAY BE AN OPPOSUM! OH SEEING BASKETFUL OF BLOOD! OF ALL THE THINGS THEY SAY ABOUT THE NIGHT, JUST TWO ARE TRUE! IT'S A RAVAGED CAVITY! AN ANCHOR AROUND THE NECK OF A SWAN! THE MONSTER AT THE END OF THIS BOOK IS ANOTHER BOOK, AND ITS SPINE IS SOAKED IN IT—GULP: YOU GUessed BLOOD! UNHOLY AND UNFRIENDLY GHOSTS, I ABJURE YOU! AND THE TABLETS IN GOD'S BEDSIDE TABLE! WE ATE A SNACK FROM ITS SURFACE AND BUT ONE BONE ROLLED AWAY—NOW IT'S DEEP INSIDE—

LTSN 2000
The Queer Bedroom of Melissa Anderson and Liz Brown

directed and drawn by Rebecca Levi

Before I moved into this bedroom, I was living in a bedroom the size of a writing pad. But now, sharing a bedroom with my lady in Brooklyn, I'm much happier to be here, sharing a bedroom with my lady in Brooklyn. Thank you.

Um, OH, my little Susan Sontag essays here (I love the Ladies?)

I love the Ladies.

Well, that's my Credo. That's my Motto. I will always
carry it with me because I
just adore this photograph of her.

And I also love the very groovy mid-century

This is a ball sculpture. Actually more correctly is a DONG BALL sculpture.

I'm very attached to my ball sculpture. It serves no apparent function whatsoever but to
make kind of movement and be colorful.

This is a Permanent Form-over-Function GIRL MIES VAN DER ROHE lived on in LIZ.

I would consider this a BEASTIE BOYS coffee cup to be a bit of Denny
which could add clutter to the magnificent FENS SHUT. It's our bedroom. I'll hold onto it just a little
while longer.

But, um my first ball sculpture actually
is no longer. I gave it to my friend grams.

You did

Yeah

Why?

Because you like an Austin Powers room!!

I-I NEVER SAID THAT!! I said I liked an Austin Powers room!!

Liz, age three, being protected by ADROCK

Man, is she a cutie.
CAROL MIRAKOVE

windows are handled

sh*t-buckets topped
off eating probable water
contaminates heaters
aligned with countless inserts,
intend that items of meaning could not
imagine meeting

ash-laden hands
caked could not be
other than stupidity, stand
incredulous at the disappearing
point in drawing / ridiculous
reserve of
—sorry to inform—should not
beg repeating kitchen documents
commando where
"intrinsic" and "universe" are
fantastic, only that
cigarette laughlines exactly milling
that I thought rape
as metaphor was mine
to not allow. a rest dreams
of being done with diacritics,
which you fear and rightly so
today the weather blade
runner, no umbrella:
they have killed and we
a body neither
Palestine nor pall
bearing
I have been profoundly struck by Joe Sacco’s testimonies and illustrations, together: he is a genius of the cross-genre. The prospect of writing a poem after Palestine was daunting. I was eager to engage Sacco’s work, but how would I avoid appropriation in doing so? What useful thing could I compose on Palestine from within the context of Los Angeles, having never been to Palestine, having never met the people Sacco has met, witnessed what he has witnessed? It was a tension I wrestled painfully, and I thank Keston Sutherland for his generous ear and advice throughout that process. In writing “windows are handled,” I was relentlessly negotiating the energy in Palestine and my own location.

LAURA MULLEN
Frames from Epoxy Comix

1. Refusing To Face

Empty or “empty” under title: part
Of street; edge of lawn; side of house
Hand drawing
A door open/shut
Sign advertising distance

Interior: window: frame
Parted speech
Mourning: stilled: incomplete

Door ajar, negative and positive
‘Beside myself’
In one a widening (or narrowing)
Line of darkness/light

Into bits
Frame full of fragments
Lines on face meaning

Who will lead us home
caressing
Left to right

Thought balloon: boiling overhead
I didn’t admit [at least]
Hand clasped to mouth for regret
Hovered over the head: Hindenburg-like

Exterior: “For a long time I

Large eye close-up and tear
X’d out tear

Window: snow (widow)

Interior: obscuring view
Of “empty” street [part]

BOOM: fire
Sign:
Word obscure
Next
"A vote against
uncertainty!"

Side of house angle of
sky what might
Next

Areas of erased
'Rescued from the image'
as if

"Meanwhile"

Exterior: white out
Interior: widowed speech

Close up: the edge of the
lifted
Halo of exclamation
Points

In jagged linga shari
Ground anxious
Figure

Elect
Frame:

Bubbled away above the
heads of the gaping
Crowd the blank 'thinking'
as of used
Oxygen: bloop bloop
bloop

2. Recount

Held up to the light light inscaped little new moon fingernail
paring of if I changed can I burn my mind and read close edge of
where cut slip onto floor under table tally when you're out out
waiting it up as if to grasp but unsteady stack tilted in frame and
out pencil at counted twice then subtract "1 is the repose of 2 /
... 6 is the foolishness of numbers" blue pricked into perma-
nent flesh due process spilled what looked they like meaning just
just not quite stepped out mentally dusting but blacken entirely
having thought or join divided edges or punch if to throw if to
cast in untidy "if you could see this you wouldn't" tested adherence
use value yes no and finger before finished not listen on any
list

3. Tragedy

Somewhere in the
equatorial
Locating us

Some tear in
Overhanging leaves

Wilderness ['happy
savages']

Arrows

Interior: done orientalist
On walls and floor the
heads
And hides

"Exploratin' the American myth!"

Extinct

Caption: Caution

Obscured
To explain or suggest

Interior: hand on
telephone
Answering/hanging up

Thought balloon:
Silencing sequentially
'Floated' testimonials
From the products
Of the taxidermists'

ART [thou?]
Interior (close-up bird's eye vu):
Telephone
Claw-like hand
Extended
Sleeve of suit jacket
frayed cuff
Swastika cuff link
Number tattooed on exposed wrist

Drumming fingers for impatience
Caution: “Will the Dead Speak?”

Next: the air-port
Next: a cleared space ['in the forest']

He covers his mouth as if to cough
To catch what might
To read the results [final] into a tiny
Receiving device

O-sageken seebythe dawnsurlly

BOOM: feathers 'snow'
Through frame
White raised scarification
Evidence
Of suicide attempts
The hatching
Of a text: Held up to the light

Interior: as in [the] dark, d’arc
Drift flag of overheard speech
Settled fate

Close-up: eyes
Reflected fire

Central frame: turning reels
Wavering into the air
recorded singing
As cloth shaken out above a surface

Profile lips to [kiss]
The depending
Teat of that hovering blank

4. Crux

Separates
Close-up: oratory:
air-port
“A negative space distorted to reveal
The contours of the
Filled in as in fully inked
Widow of the frantic to complete

Frame: the torn
Fragments “an unknown number”

End frame:
“Next week: ‘Wake’

Is it cold in this frozen space or is there something you’d like to confess?
States meant:

Duchamp speaks of "jack straws": the idea that each element rests, delicately balanced, on the surrounding elements. He also speaks of making a painting or sculpture "as one would wind the reel of cinematic film."

Billy Wilder praised the "lightning struck on every page" of Raymond Chandler's prose, but we might say that (in The Big Sleep) an ongoing electrical storm creates the world sentence by sentence. "A chair scraped on linoleum, steps sounded, the transom above me squeaked shut. A shadow melted behind the pebbled glass."

In "The Rejection of Closures," Lyn Hejinian recognizes the necessary leaping of the reader who seeks to negotiate the "sizable gaps" which open in a work composed of discrete frames, segments, sections, "fields," or "units." "What stays in the gaps remains crucial and informative," she notes, "part of the reading occurs as the recovery of that information (looking behind) and the discovery of newly structured ideas (stepping forward)."

Beckett—in his book on Proust or rather his book on what needed to happen after Proust—gives us the image of a reader/rememberer not leaping but stretching (like some ectoplasmic super hero) to contain or bridge the vast expanses of shattered time we exist uneasily and concurrently in or on or between or . . .

The form of the comic strip is also the form of the altar piece: isolated instances our eyes care for (in the sense Stein meant when she spoke of caressing a noun) and our memories marry to story. I have always been interested in what and how a consciousness—rushing through the world—breaks and mends: most especially the ways in which a hunger for wholeness informs certain uneasy acts of attention.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>manga translations</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LOOKING</strong></td>
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<td>kyoro kyoro</td>
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| **LIQUID** |
| zazaa | ocean waves |
| zaa zaa | steady-heavy rain |
| shito shito | quiet humid rain |
| pota pota | drop-by-drop dripping |
| bota bota | fatter drop-by-drop dripping |

| jaa jaa | from a faucet |
| jaa | peeing man |
| shii | peeing woman |
| suu | trickling blood or tears |
| poro poro | tears or words |
| tara tara | falling one after another |
| sara sara | slow viscous dripping |
| slipping by | |
picha pichasp  lashing
  strolling through puddles or
  bird bath sounds

bicha bichaand  getting dirty

SLEEPING & WAKING

pachi  eyes pop open
muku  wake up suddenly with a purpose or
  but not necessarily conscious
  thought

    wake up suddenly with urgency

gaba

kokkuri  nod off

    sleep peacefully

    sleep peacefully, babylke

    sleep happily

    sleep deeply

gaa gaa  sleep snoringly

LAUGHTER & JOY

ahahaha  plain laughter

    joyful

    joyful, masculine

    joyful, girly

    triumphant

    proud or
    slightly embarrassed

    sneaky

    something funny

    something funny, unladylike

fun fun  happy humming

    happy walking or skipping

EATING & DRINKING

paku paku  eat enthusiastically

    eat silently & intently

    eat sadly and alone

    chewing with mouth open

    consuming large quantities of liquid

    drink loudly and steadily

    swallowing at the moment of truth

waku waku  happy anticipation

    acute heartache or joy

    huge emotional shock

    head hangs in disappointment

kyun

    spaced out

    thinking of nothing

    spaced out in

    speechless astonishment

    really spaced out

    with alzheimer's

    peaked attention

    nervous jump

    surprise

    relief

    heebie jeebies, chills

bó

poke

boke

    spaced out

    thinking of nothing

    spaced out in

    speechless astonishment

    really spaced out

    with alzheimer's

    peaked attention

    nervous jump

    surprise

    relief

    heebie jeebies, chills

piku

    spaced out

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biku

wa

ho

zo

EATING & DRINKING

paku paku  eat enthusiastically

    eat silently & intently

    eat sadly and alone

    chewing with mouth open

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    drink loudly and steadily

    swallowing at the moment of truth

A large part of what makes Japanese manga comics so rich and evocative is the use of onomatopoeic words, extended to situations that don't commonly have sound associations, as with emotions, or different ways of looking. (When I moved to the US as a child, I found it so strange that Snoopy would “sigh.”)

This is a partial catalog of these words—in manga they are handwritten (drawn) outside of dialog bubbles, visually and succinctly reinforcing its meaning.
FLORENCE - ARE YOU LISTENING? I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE SOMEWHERE, FLORENCE. WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE SO DIFFICULT?

OMIGOD! SHE'S GOT A PEN! HELP!! HELP!! OH, NO, SHE'LL FINISH ME!!
While several thousand miles to the north, in a secret church carved from the glacial earth in the Arctic...—There is a sound, and movement.

Fortress of Solitude

Words: Gerry Conway
Pictures: Josh Neufeld

The answer? As ever, things are rarely what they seem.

What sort of creature is the man? What is it doing in Superman's Fortress of Solitude?

A Rob Walker
and Josh Neufeld Production

FIN.
Up goes the mad scientist to the room in his tower where his instruments gleam in the halflight while his thoughts are surrounded by the halfdark that filters out from his heart, but when he goes in and looks around, all he can see is the chair covered with a bright red and green serape and sparks are fizzing in the thought balloon above his head, for yes, he is a cartoon scientist, just as everything I think about is a cartoon something because anything cartoon is immortal in its own funny little way.
Give me back my words with an impressive echo and an increment of meaning.

When I hear his utterances I revere them as my own inspiration! for he voices my own thoughts.

He was not sent to give voice to his own nature; he was sent to speak God's name.
"NO YOU DON'T! NOT WITH ME!"


CAUGHT--IN THE FIRMLY IMPALPABLE GRIP OF GUILT.

A SON OR A PET?
I BEAR WITNESS THROUGH THAT HAIR VEIL, I SEE THROUGH YOU.
VIETNAM CAME JUST IN TIME, THANK HEAVENS.
AND THEY'RE FREE--HAIR CUTS, AND BULLETS--NO, THEY PAY YOU FOR THEM.

AND WITH MY PONY-TAIL I ACCUSE, THE CONG DON'T WANNA CUT MY HAIR!
THEY SHOOT FRIENDLIES, DON'T THEY?
FAMILY, TOO?

NO SON OF MINE IS LESS THAN A SECOND LIEUTEN-
A STRANGE CONTRADICTION LAY IN ME; WHILE I AS YET KNEW NOT THE SOLUTION OF IT; KNEW NOT THAT SWEET SONG, MUSIC CAN SPRING ONLY FROM DISCORDS SET IN HARMONY; THAT BUT FOR VILLANOUS EVIL THERE WERE NO GOOD, AS VICTORY IS ONLY POSSIBLE BY BATTLE.

LOUIS PHILLIPS
The Comic Possibilities of Furniture

Walnut early English dining-room chair.
Illustrated London News

Oak rolltop desk.
Sears Catalogue

American sofa, circa 1900. Sears Catalogue

"Woof woof woof," the dog said.
"What did he say?" the bartender asked.
"Didn't you hear him?" the man said. "The dog said 'Ruth, Ruth, Ruth...'

And so the farmer said to the salesman, "You can sleep in my daughter's room."
KEVIN QUIGLEY

TRUE GHOSTS
"STRAIGHT AROUND ME"
by Kent-Quigley

There is a spooky of land near the river
That is known more
Than a neglected farm with a barned-up house.

Breckinridge, quite underated,
And moreover, was
Willing to attend
A chance.

I was aware of the strange
Atmosphere around me, and felt
Very lonely.

These are the only true ghosts.

TRUE GHOSTS
"WINTER"
by Kent-Quigley

If the ghostly presence hovered
anyone with her manifestations,
It would seem that she preferred men.

It was winter, and the church
Was closed to the public.

I was aware of the strange
Atmosphere around me, and felt
Very lonely.

Stalled, he blinked and looked again.
You've seen me. Please go now. If you love me, Daddy, will let me be.

TRUE GHOSTS
"ANTIQUE"
by Kent-Quigley

We had come not to admire the antiques but to find out about the ghosts.

He had been staying in the house for a long time, for no reason, except to suffer.

I think he was on the step and against the window and felt it all.

TRUE GHOSTS
"WANDERING COMPANIONLESS"
by Kent-Quigley

Clinically dead for a full five minutes, he had
Undergone, during that
time, not a period of blackness, but a most
Flaunting experience involving...

One of the Hewitt girls, Sally, was particularly given to mischief.

TRUE GHOSTS
"CROSSROADS"
by Kent-Quigley

But the burial at the crossroads served
A noble purpose.

These are the only true ghosts.

TRUE GHOSTS
"TRUE NOVEL"
by Kent-Quigley

He walked from London, with the intention of killing the chief worder and setting fire to the prison. It was the night of August 17, 1840.

They boarded a ship sailing for America and suffered the usual shipwreck.

There were two children and there was Sarah, but we don't know the names of the children.

TRUE GHOSTS
"NEW OWNERS"
by Kent-Quigley

When the door appeared he
Appeared at it and
He was an American.

A single house, with a
Window, standing over a gabled door.

The story of the
Parable is

TRUE GHOSTS
"STRANGE COMMODITY"
by Kent-Quigley

One of the Hewitt girls, Sally, was particularly given to mischief.

TRUE GHOSTS
"TRUE NOVEL"
by Kent-Quigley

He walked from London, with the intention of killing the chief worder and setting fire to the prison. It was the night of August 17, 1840.

They boarded a ship sailing for America and suffered the usual shipwreck.

There were two children and there was Sarah, but we don't know the names of the children.
She was full of LSD when the man came through the door and murdered the others.

Her name was Olavie and she asked me to drive away. I was thirteen and frightened.

He chased her down to the river's edge—she could imagine him unloading his gun into her body.

I saw her lying there. She had slept, and now she was gone.

It is said she returns each night to try to retrieve her senses.

The bridge, apparently, had been built over the river, so we crossed it and saw the others.

We stepped abroad the bank. My schoolmates—most of them—had exchanged a word. A few had whispered. I don't know how long they had been there, but I was young, and I couldn't believe her. She didn't want to go with them.

The church warden came to tell the rectory about the vagrant. He wondered if she had ever been there before.

We're only once, I've heard.

Gradually, her description of what she saw or heard blended into the personalities themselves, as her own personality unraveled temporarily, if only to itself.

How strange it all seems, and when

The church warden came to tell the rectory about the vagrant. He wondered if she had ever been there before.

THE RHAPSODY IN BLACK AND WHITE OF HIS OLD FRIENDS AND BELOVED WOMEN'S HANDS - NOT EXCHANGING A WORD, A WORD - WHICH LATER CLEARLY SHAPED HER DREAMS.

He thought that it was a rose presented to him by his wife from the next world.

THE BONE-CHILLING CRIES COMING FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE FAMILY LET THE DAY TURN TO NIGHT.

TRUE GHOSTS

"FORTESCUE"

He thought that it was a rose presented to him by his wife from the next world.

The bone-chilling cries coming from somewhere within the family let the day turn to night.

"OH DO"

"FAMILY"

Grasping her description of what she saw or heard blended into the personalities themselves, as her own personality unraveled temporarily, if only to itself.

How strange it all seems, and when

"TRUE GHOSTS"

"FORTESCUE"

He thought that it was a rose presented to him by his wife from the next world.

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How strange it all seems, and when

"TRUE GHOSTS"

"FORTESCUE"

He thought that it was a rose presented to him by his wife from the next world.

The bone-chilling cries coming from somewhere within the family let the day turn to night.
I wanted to make comics in a tightly restricted arrangement, closer in intent to the poem than to the short story, that at the same time could potentially contain everything. The restrictions—the classic "strip" format of one tier of three or four frames, two recurring, iconic characters, plus a traditional, even shopworn subject—to keep the chaos at bay. The "contain everything" because chaos is more or less my natural mode. The method I chose was to apply flaky, collage-like relationships and allusions to a strip that on its surface looks as fixed-in-the-firmament as Little Orphan Annie. Ghost stories seemed the perfect metaphor: hauntings aptly describing, in one way or another, every aspect of being alive—my life, anyway. The title too—as straight and simple as a doorjamb, sounding like a generic sample of the type of book I obsessively devoured between the ages of ten and fourteen, yet playing on the rich layers of meaning and association that each word carries. Though each installment was to, in dream-like fashion, not quite add up, it was also my hope that musically they would make perfect sense; and that—as not to be presenting something too precious, too removed—practically every frame would contain a story in itself. I also hoped it could be funny and scary and sad in all the old fashioned ways.
In real life, the things that dominate my experience and intellect are vision, speech, and hearing. Comics capture these senses by combining image and text—they give you the essential life. Comics also give the thought balloon—the subconscious—to add to what is on the surface of experience.

I am primarily a ceramic artist. I arrange vessels into unexpected still-lifes that imply narratives, creating still-lifes that are not still. At times, I have used text in these arrangements to make narrative explicit. Recently, I began making digital images. Using Photoshop, I scanned photographs of myself, historical ceramic objects, images of my own ceramics, drawings and text into the computer. In the past, the reality of the ceramics sometimes seemed to battle the imagination of the text; when I render everything theoretical on the computer, it erases these differences. I have also blurred distinctions between what is thought and what is heard—in this image, what is coming into or going out of my mouth is ceramic, and the text may be either silent or spoken.
For once, simplicity abets us, its black stick-figure—
cartoon’s dissonance with the comical.

And so our sparse emissary stands at the sill:
the question of knowledge

is compacted to a brick’s density
and heaved through the window.

The epistemological angel
catches all the broken glass
before it hits the ground.

The word at the end of the line,
issuing from the bubble that issues
from his mouth
rhymes with redundance.
PUTTING THE FUN BACK IN FUNDAMENTAL

YOU'LL LAFF UNTIL YOU CRY

NOVELTY

PUR-I-TAN-I-CAL
FORMERLY PUR-SATAN-I-CAL & CO
A DIVISION OF PUR-I-SIN-I-CAL

EXCUSE ME
MAKE IT A BANNER YEAR

PUR-TON-O-FUN-CO-PUTTING THE FUN BACK IN THE GOOD BOOK OF VIRTUES

LET PUR-TON-O-FUN-CO SHOW YOU THE WAY TO SELL... AAH YES

BEAT YOURSELF GOOD

I'M A UP-OF-SIN
EN-LITE-N-ED
Disguises - Costumes - Fun - Wear
Helping Sinners See
De-Lite
Sinners
SINNERS

PUTTING THE FUN BACK IN FUNDAMENTAL

SINNER'S SIN-A-WAY
A NEW YOU IN EVERY BOX
SIN - BEG
HEAR
THINK
NO SIN

SPEAK NO SIN
NO SIN
Peeking
GOOD CLEAN
I'M
EM-BARE
ASSED
EMBARRASS
YOURSELF
YOUR FRIENDS
OPTIONAL

Purl
FUn
Eeek!
I'M MORTIFIED
I'M ALL
WET

the GREAT
I'M SORRY
I'M PRIVILEGED
I WANT MONEY
I WANT POWER
I WANT TRUTH
I WANT LOVE
I WANT BE
LIKE BOO HOO
BOO HOO
NICE BOO AND HOOG
PICH HOO

WHITE M G WAIL

I WANNA DE NICE
I WANNA BE NICE
BOO HOO
I Think Tough Thoughts, 1999-2000
acrylic and colored pencil on paper, 40 x 38 inches
Courtesy of Nolan Eckman Gallery.

I'm Wrong/So What, 2000
acrylic on canvas, 50.75 x 54.75 inches
Courtesy of Nolan Eckman Gallery.
mount night assaults. Then on a beautiful plain, the Hind flying tanks coming, dark shapes moving fast in the cobalt-

and is the two at once. After a while a Hind collapses in the air, the others move rapidly away. To hide (in the sky)
a million dead and the land waste seen at once launched anti-aircraft missile Stinger. So the dream (other blue sky—the dark figures draw closer, there is no cover on the desert or shade—a few tribesmen cluster, the Hind events don't appear consecutive or slow—now—they appear at once—pairs are events—in between day is beside the Hinds, gunships firing or moving targets using optical sighting. The fighters, mujahedin, have no cover, sighted, in desert. So they're hunted (because they have no cover), if not killed by the Hinds, helicopters hunt them flying tanks overtaking those who fire the slim shoulder—than or outside of this) is—to translate at the same time—night doesn't assault. It's its black only. Yet the moon in them. War as a moon overhead on roads through the poppies that rush forward, a car is in black and a car in front to cover one car in the midst. Spring Hinds liquidate the mujahedin in the field liquidate in poppy field by a car collapsing from the Hinds pursuing in the cobalt sky a flock of women entire black robes floating red plateaus of desert with Hinds (gunships) coming. A mujahedin shoulders a Stinger, fires. The missile from the mujahedin appears to move slowly a cluster of men in the coverless red traveling sighted the Hind collapsing in the blue air far away driving them out, the control succumbs to the Taliban in the slaves. No pictures of anything are to be seen by anyone time 'is seen' to diminish (to dying), but because it diminishes really, the red and cobalt and these events expand there the Taliban forbids anyone to see pictures, or women to read—training women to be midwives has to be free of these but not by seeing pictures or reading though it is sighted at robed giving birth or on the treeless red at the same time as happened before). Giving birth or not, there's nothing consecutive (because it's in one's time, which seems to diminish while expanding by that). Because one's own life—pairs are a frame, as pear tree 'out'

the dark cobalt and red. Finds the corpse and flying to him with the dark red beneath him on the desert, the black robes billowed are embedded in the dark red horizon. Crags on huge plateaus, the Hinds coming in the cobalt-blue sky come to them also

I went out and saw a pear tree walking with my back having been cracked

Living in the subjunctive, social—both—is space—it's fear propelled—isn't in one (who's in it) or 'when it's in one', may be isn't in the others—existing there—seeing it in oneself only (as: not coming 'from' them, but in one 'only' then'—is then freely the relation of suffering et al to space—so it isn't in black night)

this other sees fear coming 'from' others only—'there'
so acts as fear in her—which is to become or hurt them (she's)
is black night subjunctive, no, there

there's only that (one's/their) behavior in relation to space

what is space?—lightning outside 'as' mountains is one

What falls at the margin line is a line break—lines are paragraphs. What passes into that frame—'introduces'—but it has to be the 'original' frame—random but already 'time' there

the woman filled with fear uncovered with no Hind it sails

the Hinds coming in the desert the men point to them one collapses after a while in the sky
evening in free learn covered been bin

birds flying motion that's men's space that's evening she can't 'take' a joke rather than the Hinds coming in the cobalt elsewhere than the Hinds gunships coming to the other men evening is space moved as birds between men than not for, but coming for the men

are people fear with no instant if so

woman daintiness in pokadot, white hair, standing beside vomit as if This is my vomit, you will take care of it. To employees nothing to do with it beside whose place she's standing screaming. They scream. Napkins thrown by blue-shoed or them as she's tapping her shoe. That people may slip there.
they can't read or see—and those are the events—
occurring—iron boat in the lapis lazuli, people standing
in it, barely moves in the lapis lazuli pressed in high altitude
people in it) comes close to waved sand shores and moves
away. To barely move, the lapis lazuli (not the water) moves.
the lapis lazuli water treeless heat. Waves of the ground by it.
military trucks are on the roads that are in the high altitude
ground beyond. The people are ground by the military
standing, her grandson pouting saying she should be left
behind in the sun. So the lapis lazuli doesn't move. The flat.

Standing—wall—wall
rose
and—rose flowers, social—both
conceptually as of dropping (being—or a view) in
space—as dropping 'out'—is not using language, here
either (?)—slow
(which is 'one walking so slow that outraces eludes them')
to walk so slowly as not to be there with them at all
who 'are social only')—or 'outracing' 'them' ahead, neither
yet one sight at a time—'retains'—(a sight itself
'retains'? outside)
and sight is only separate from language or
movement—
as dropping out low vertical—night is both, with
no people
but images seen at once, left there, no seeing either
is wild moon? in day

a left there—as 'left leg'—the viewer is in a
separate place from what they see (at the moment) always—
the viewer is 'they',
both
running—wall is space—
For young baseball players, modernism is only a due possibility.

Comb grease worn into jeans.

Like analytic philosophers who regard other worlds.

Or heaved designers through history.

This one can be sadder and fierce.

And by furious serenity.

Our last hours are often those at home.

The garage is a place to start.

Deals and wood glue speak my language.

Like an alpine hike with a real Swiss guide.

You haven't taken him down when you capture his leg.

But sometimes the real heroes have to wait outside.
Goethe speaks of "repeated puberty" as an ideal state for the artist. Low Level Bureaucratic Structures: A Novel literalizes this problem by exploring adolescent energy as it encounters the world of representation. Drawing, copying, is a way for the protagonist to identify with, learn (be formed by) the objects of the adult world—cars, airplanes, epiphanic kung-fu movies. Several narratives of formation at once—and the poem as both commenting on, and being symptomatic of, them. (I cheated by also including appropriated Cultural images of medieval ornaments and modernist architecture). My self-imposed assignment was to do one of these six square grids every day for two weeks, the result being a sort of cartoon-based bildungsroman.
I want my lap topped

veal bait

I'm utop'd out!

1000 layer panty cake

that's what's wrong with content it's already in the past

importance is treatable

beting on a cloud shape

slitway to heaven

hair pasties

on, bacon, on

being or else

photographs by Eileen Tiavell
CHRIS SLANE & ROBERT SULLIVAN

from Maui

MY MOTHER TOLD ME, I MUST NOT SEEM TO CARE THAT I HAVE BEEN PUNISHED FOR GIVING THE BALLEST PIECE OF ADVISE. I NOW KNOW IT'S NOT THE WAY. I AM NOT A LIAR, AND I'M NOT A FRIEND OF SOMEONE BAD. ALSO

DOH! IT'S HOT! LET ME TAKE IT OFF YOU.

I'M TAKING IT OFF MYSELF.

HEY! I WANT YOU UP TO

LOOK... DON'T LET ME SAY IT...
WELL... DON'T LET ME SAY IT...

YOU'LL FIND ME ON THE FOOL BASKET TOO...

Hello Boy!

HEY FOR HAMUI!

MY MOTHER IS NOT ME?

WHAT A CATARACT!

I'M STANDIN','

WHACK!

WHACK!

SNOW!

AND NOT IF YOU FIND OUT!

SNOW!

AND THE BLOOD OF A HUMAN!

HAH HAH!

THE BLOOD OF A HUMAN!

WHAT'S UP MUM?

WHAT'S UP MUM?

MY MOTHER TOLD ME TO BRING YOU TO DRINK.

THEY HAVE

THEN YOU MUST BRING ME TO DRINK.
LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME. I'M DEAD ALREADY. THIS SIDE.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME?

YOU HAVE SOMETHING WANT?

YOUR UNWANTED.

TAKEN IT?

WE'RE FINALLY TAKING THE TROJAN!

HURRAH!

AND NOW FOR A WHIRLWIND OF ACTION WITHOUT ANY BALLADS.

STROKE! FASTER!

BEFORE HE CATCHES US AND KILLS US!
Various appendages pivot around a central ball joint—

The head appears to be detached from the torso, armless, base of multiple breasts all belly and legs shaped and glued to look like skin

Patent leather shoes, a blue ribbon. Doll inside a darkened room or wooded landscape, strange, female doll, lips slightly parted
Clouds of points or vegetal proliferations search chaotic solutions in the dress sequence
Like shadow bodies made of boundary cells.
Like quartic petals.
Like pixel counters.
Like tiny vortices in a maelstrom.
Like ceiling beams made of water.
Like random fluctuations in time.
Like porous windows.
Like temporal variations in a continuous fold.
Like finer numbers in deeper detail.
Like a permanent fire.
Like a variable hour.
Like a dreamer rescued from distress.
Like a five dimensional cube.
Like a “running of the heart.”
Like three love, the heart and the ears.
Like three hate, the liver, the gall and the tongue.
Like cycling letters.
Like iterating numbers.
Like creating a golem.

figure 7a, b (a) A web of nerve cells fans out. Tiny filigree networks gather touch and pain messages derived from sensory feedback in the shallow body. When synaptic vessels generate new pathways for pain, I feel my cells being raked along a system of live circuitry.

figure 7 b (b) She constructs an image of the shallow body mirrored in electrical impulses, so we watch portraits of my pain on a tv monitor. I trace the free-endings and dendrites like trembling lattice in fine copper wire or silver in electricity, in halogen light, then transfer to a clear plastic body.
My brain’s representation of bodily sensations can substitute for the sensations themselves as memories of pain or beauty.

Changes in the shallow body correspond to certain mental images, images of the deep body juxtaposed to images of something else.

Which is the suffering body?

One thinks sumptuous thoughts. The other feels memory unencumbered by presence of language.

If I embroider a cross-section of our brain with a pocket-sized version of our bodies stacked inside, this could be a representation of healing.

A single visor grows down the middle to form a forehead—

a pair of promontories for cheeks, a little groove down just under the nose, a web inside the upper lip and gum, outer wings of the upper lip a palate tolerance added for normal body movement in woven fabric

Fine, warm ash-brown caps, stoles and a close-fitting hood made of dehaired fiber

She laid down her white fields. Even the penciled grid implied makeshift sleeves like a remedy for bad water.
A doll perhaps asleep on my hospital bed. If I didn't see I must have dreamed you with beautiful bindings, width of ribbon an imprint, not cutting skin, detachable arm for the dress stand stuffed with wadding. If mocking dolls, climbs behind a glass, reflects nothing. If dolls mock, pin and sew the leg holes to give the second pair some spring.
I grew up reading *Captain America* comics. In Spain, my father bought them for me at the corner kiosks with a bag of peanuts, and we'd sit at the park next to the Candeléjas movie theater where he took me to watch all those John Wayne movies. At night, I made belief that I was like Captain America, except I represented the little island of Cuba where I had come from. I drew pictures of my costumes, my weapons. I squirted salt water into my nemesis' eyes, I shot lightning bolts at their feet, watched them dance in the blue crackle-flash of electricity. I tanned on the sands. For an emblem I had this bone-shaped logo on my chest, or as my mother called it “El cocodrilo,” what she said everyone said Cuba looked like. At school I fought with other kids on the playground: Captain Spain, Captain Algiers, Captain India . . . we never revealed our secret powers. Mine was the instant ability to remember something about my island and then start crying, put on a good act, and when the other kids dropped their guards, I zapped them with my lightning-producing ring, a paper clip bound around my middle finger with rubber bands. I couldn't fly, but I could walk on water, I couldn't swim, but I knew the names of fish. I could hold my breath though, and close my eyes, appear and reappear at different times in my life. Enough power, I thought, to save all my people.

Normally negative twelve degrees would keep my girlfriend indoors I would tink cuz even da Millilani Town Center parking lot aftah da midnight movie is already too Iice da Bear for her. But somehow, somewhere, someplace she still get some stamina all stored away, cuz soon as I saw her face she had dat look like she wuz on a masochistic mission—to shop, till “I” drop.

Before we leave da hotel I make sure we plan our route cuz I no like look like one Japanese tourist, but no can help wen everybody in Manhattan stay wearing black trenchcoats and I stay wearing my purple scarf, green hat, brown gloves, blue jeans, and bright, construction worker orange jacket—da kine clothes dat I know no really match, but wuz cheap sale at da Ross' by Sam's Club—I figgah no sense spend money on clothes I only going use ONE time. And even if we wuz all stylin profilin, we would still stick out, cuz every block we would all be walking-walking-walking den only us would stop, cuz we no cross da street wen da sign sez “Don't Walk,” cuz wea we come from das jaywalking and can get ticket, but I guess to big city business people “Don't Walk” jus means, “Ah, no sked, chance 'em, can always sue da guy.”

Snow looks all pretty wen it falls like feathers like how I seen on TV, not wen it's all flying in my face so you can imagine why I monku wen we gotta backtrack and go back to da same store we already went, making me wondah if da first two times wuz jus reconnaissance mission or wot? And wouldn't be so bad if her objective wuz to buy stuff she actually wanted, but sometimes it seemed like she jus wanted da package . . . so she could stuff and mount 'em on her bedroom wall like trophies from her big shopping safari, bragging to all her friends about da brown papah bag she got from Bloomingdale's, da plain blue number from Macy's dat sez “Macy's,” and da clear see-through sack from Ann Taylor Loft, one more thrilling version of da modest beige offering
from Ann Taylor regulars. Da ting dat no make sense to me is why dey call 'em Ann Taylor Loft cuz da store wuz on da ground floor, but I guess dey call 'em Lof to make 'em sound more “lofty” cuz actually ees kinda like da clearance store, but I guess you cannot call 'em Ann Taylor Clearance Store or Ann Taylor Outlet cuz das like advertising “Come, check out all da rejek clothes dat all da rich people don't want.”

And I no see why we even hafto look all da stores on Madison and 5th Avenue like Versace, Ferragamo, Gucci, Fendi, Bulgari, Tiffany's, and Cartier cuz I tink we get all those stores back home. At least I tink we get 'em, I no really notice cuz das da kine store we no even look 'em in da window wen we stay shopping at da mall. Da only classy store we go wen we go Ala Moana is Neiman Marcus but das only cuz my girlfriend's shi-shi cannot come out in da regular public facilities. So she gotta use da ultra-clean, 5-star, Good-Housekeeping approved Neiman Marcus bathroom wit kleenex boxes and hot and cold running water. And no, I no really know why you need hot and cold running water. I no really know why anybody would need anything in dat whole entire store, cuz ees like who in da world can afford anything from ova dea. One plastic, jus fo' decoration, material buttahfly cost $149! You like buttahfly, jus go park, you like buttahfly. Maybe rich people dunno cuz dey no look in da bushes, but get planny real kine outsai, and y'know at least da free one CAN FLY.

Wen we get home I no say nahting wen my girlfriend tells her story about our Last Crusade—how we stayed warm by going insai at least one store every block, and not jus anykine store, but da kine wit da revolving doors, da kine dat you gotta time 'em like Indiana Jones kine befo' you rush 'em and go insai. Cuz doze wuz da stores dat wuz so cold, she sez, dat she jus had fo' buy, had fo' buy, one extra brand name jacket.
IT ALL BEGAN ONE DAY IN A TRAILER HOME IN PEORIA, WITH A SUDDEN FIT OF ANOMIE ...

UNH...

GRK...

OH, DAN, YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE ANY MORE OF IT! GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, PLEASE ... THERE'S NO PLACE FOR A POET IN THIS MERCENARY SOCIETY - IT MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP!

WELL, DON'T JUST SIT ON YOUR FAT BUTT - DO SOMETHING! HEY, WHAT ABOUT THAT DRUG THE NATIVES USE IN SOUTH AMERICA? IT'S WORTH A TRY ... LET'S GO!

SOUTH AMERICA, AND STEP ON IT!

COULD POETRY BE RENOVATED SO EASILY? WOULD ANYBODY CARE ... ?

IMAGINE - EVERYBODY ILLUMINATED BY POETRY! WHO NEEDS ZEN!

...IF WE CAN FIND THE STUFF!

YOU MUST BE THE POET DAN DACTYL - IT IS AN HONOR ... WHAT KINDA JOINTS? TRIED GUANARO? QUITE A HIT, THE BOYS TELL ME ... MOST ... ILLUMINATING!

GUANARO - SOUNDS COOL, IS IT HARD TO OBTAIN?

HARD? IMPOSSIBLE, M'SIHEL. WHY, HERE IS A LIST OF THE POETS WHO HAVE DIED OR GONE MAD TRYING ... AH, ONE MUST BE PHILOSOPHICAL ... A TIP - FIND DOCTOR VERLAINE ...

GREED REEFED AS COMMUNITY FETISHISM - IT'S A TOUGH WORLD, DAN.

THAT'S THE RUB!

THESE GUYS DON'T EXACTLY LOOK LIKE POETRY AFICIONADOS!! HOW TO SCORE THE MAGIC STUFF, I'LL ASK THIS GUY ... HE REMINDS ME OF E.E.CUMMINGS ... HEY, CHEEK-FEATURES, AIMEZ-VOUS LA POESIE D'ARTHUR RIMBAUD? NON?

I'M FED UP, MAN. YOU'VE HAD YOUR ANGST AND YOU'VE BEENATEN UP ON A POOR FOREIGNER ... CAN WE FIND A HOTEL NOW AND GET SOME REST? I'M BEAT!

I CAN'T STAND THE WAY EVERYTHING SEEMS SO UN-AMERICAN, SO WEIRD ...
LATER THAT NIGHT ... NO ONE
NURSE, O'YOU KNOW A DR.
VERLAINE? ADMITS TO KNOWING DR.
VERLAINE - HE WAS
SENT AWAY - THERE WERE
PROBLEMS...

WHAT - GUARANO? OR ... BOYS?

THE MAN WAS INFECTED
WITH CERTAIN ... LITERARY
ENTHUSIASMS ... HE LEFT
SCRAWLED TRACES OF THESE
PHANTASMS ... HE IS BETTER
OFF WHERE HE IS, IN THE
SWAMP COUNTRY...

I FEEL BAD VIBES ABOUT
THIS DUDE - WHAT IF WE GET TO
JU-JU ALLEY AND HE'S DRUNK
AND RAVING - DO WE NEED MORE
BOURREOIS INDIVIDUALISM IN
THE POETRY GAME?

LIKE, MAYBE THE
GUYS' A JUNKIE - HE'S
A DOCTOR, RIGHT? SNEAKING OUT BACK,
PILFERING PETHIDINE.
DO WE NEED ANOTHER
W.C.WILLIAMS ON
SMACK?

I HEAR WHAT YOU
ARE SAYING, CECIL. BUT I FIGURE IT'S
WORTH A CHANCE. ALREADY WE HAVE
TOO MANY GALWAY
KINNELS!

PORTE GUMBEAU IS
A QUIET TOWN ... BETTER THAT
HE PERISH IN THE PURSUIT OF
THOSE UNNAMEABLE THINGS ...
HERE, A SHEET OF HIS
RANTINGS - TAKE IT - GO!

NURSE DREAD -
A MENTAL 'CORDON
SANITAIRE' ... PROUST'S
FATHER WOULD HAVE
APPROVED - WHAT A
SQUARE!

I' DUNNO, I WOULDN'T MIND
TAKING HER TEMPERATURE
REPRESSION AND
ABREATION - THE
TWO FACES OF
EVE ...

AS LONG AS WE
HAVE WRITING
SCHOOLS, THERE
WILL BE AN
ENDLESS SUPPLY!!
MY THIRD WIFE
USUALLY SAYS DON'T
FIGHT FIRE WITH
URINE!! -- UH --
NO

I CAN SEE WHY
YOU MARRIED AGAIN!

THE DRINKS YOU
ORDERED, SIR -
CHATEAU
KEROSENE
BATEAU INRE
THE HOT KAVA
AND THE
ARAK...

I WOONDER WHAT REALLY
DROWE DR.
VERLAINE INTO THE
JUNGLE ...

VOILÀ, GARÇON - A
'SOUTHERLY BUSTER' -
GIN, VODKA, VINEGAR,
SALT, CRUSHED ICE, HOT
RUM, LIGHTER FLUID,
A DASH OF NITRIC ACID -
AND MAKE IT
SNAPPY!

Y'KNOW, DAN, IF THE
VALUE OF AN ACT OF
REVOLT IS DETERMINED
BY THE WEIGHT OF THE
REPRESSIVE FORCE IT
OPPOSES - SHIT, THAT
MEANS ITS VALUE IS
DERIVATIVE!!

EVERYONE KNOWS
THAT, YOU DIMIT.
BUT LITERARY
REVOLT CAN HAVE A
DIFFERENTIAL VALUE
DERIVED FROM - HEB.
LISTEN TO THE
GOOD DOCTOR

I SNEAKED A LOOK -
IT'S FRENCH - "ELLE EST
RETOUVÉE, QUOI?"
L'ÉTERNITÉ, C'EST LA MER
ALLEE AVEC LE SOLEIL -
THE SEA FLED AWAY WITH
THE SUN - WHAT'S THAT
ABOUT??

ONE TAB TOO
MANY, I'D SAY, AND
GET THIS: I BELIEVED
I HAD ACQUIRED
SUPERNATURAL
POWERS - OUT TO
LUNCH!

I VOTE WE
TRACK DOWN
THE MYSTERIOUS
DOCTOR!

THE LETTERHEAD
"VOODOO CHICKEN
SNACK MOTEL" -
THE PERFUME - "NUTS
D'IVRESSE"

I HEARD THIS - I BELIEVED
I HAD ACQUIRED
SUPERNATURAL
POWERS - OUT TO
LUNCH!

THE NEXT DAY

DAN SAW TO TURN
LEFT AT HACKENSACK
WERE THAT BEFORE OR
AFTER THE ARAK ...
OH WELL ...

JUST THINK -
DOWN THERE, A
CIVILISATION THAT
IS UNAWARE OF
PAUL DE MAN - IT'S
DIFFICULT TO
BELIEVE.

AND AS FOR A GRASP
OF LANGUAGE POETRY,
OR ANY THEORY WORTHY
OF THE NAME - BERFEIT,
ZIP, ZILCH, NIL
NOWT ...

IF BRASS
WAKES UP A
TRUMPET,
NO ONE HEARS
IT DOWN THERE!
THROUGH THAT PASS, THE LAND OF THE APORTA - HEAD-HUNTERS, MAN-EATERS, PANTY-SNIFFERS, HEAVY DRINKERS ...

FUEL TOO LOW FOR US TO TURN BACK NOW ...

THEY SAY THEY MAKE GREAT WINDOW-DRESSERS - MACY'S IS THICK WITH APORTA - SOMETHING ABOUT THE FEATHERS AND CHICKEN BLOOD THEY USE IN THEIR OBSCENE RITUALS.

A GREEN CARD, NO PROBLEMO ...

LAST TIME I BOUGHT A FROCK, ONE FELT ME UP!

LUCKY GUY! HEY, THAT LIGHT DOWN THERE - WHAT DO YOU THINK?

JUST SOME HIPPY LIGHTING A JOINT - WHY CAN'T THEY GET A LIFE? OR MAYBE IT'S THE MAD DOCTOR LIGHTING UP.

THIS LITTLE KNOB IS KINDA CUTE - WHAT HAPPENS IF I GIVE IT A TWIST TO THE RIGHT, AND ... UH-OH!!

SHOULD HAVE HEARD THE ENGINES BY NOW - DECIL'S A GOOD PILOT, BUT SOMETIMES HE GOES TO-LA-LA LAND, AND THEN IT'S GOOD NIGHT!

OH SHIT!!! WE'RE GOING TO CRASH!!!

YOU COULD HAVE KILLED US, YOU MAD BITCH YOU CUR GODDAM PAUL DE MAN! SHEESH!

SO HOW COME YOU THINK DOCTOR VERLAINE'S AROUND HERE?

HIS ARE FLUSH WITH DOUGH, THEY'RE BUYING SHARES, POST-GRAD DEGREES, YOU NAME IT.

I THINK THE DOUGH COMES FROM GINKO - THEY SAY DOCTOR VERLAINE IS A GENIUS AT REFINING ORGANIC COMPOUNDS OF THAT TYPE.

Lucky I had those brakes fixed in peoria, what was heidegger said? CARRY A GUN!

AND WITH THE FUMES OF THE DRUG IN THE AIR, DAY AND NIGHT, WHY, HE'D BE RAVING LIKE A MAN INSPIRED!

THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE POETRY - WAIT! DOWN THERE - AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN - A VILLAGE - STREET LIGHTS - FAMILIES READING TO THEIR KIDS - GOSH - AND OVER THERE - A DRUG FACTORY!
MEANWHILE, ALONG THE VALLEY FLOOR, CECIL STUMBLERS TOWARDS THE HIDEOUT OF DOCTOR VERLAINE...

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR LIKES A GAME...

A GAME OF CHESS MEANT SOMETHING, THEN - NOW, A PAWN IN A GAME OF GREED... AH, CAPITALISM ...

LENIN?!...BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW I LOOK LIKE HIM?? WHO IS THIS?

THEY'VE GOT HIM RATTLED, ALL RIGHT. TIME FOR A SEDATIVE POWDER AND A CUP OF TEA... OR PERHAPS SOMETHING A LITTLE STRONGER...

I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ANY DRUGS, YOU FUCKWIT!! SORRY, YOUR EXCELLENCY - FORGIVE ME, A TOUCH OF THE SUN - IT GETS TO YOU OUT HERE, GUANARO?? I NEVER TOUCH THE STUFF...

WHERE HAD A LITTLE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION REGARDING MICHEL FOUCAILLIT'S WORK...

PERLOFF, OPENING, VENDLER DEFENSE CHECKS...

I'LL PREPARE SOME MEDICATION THEN I MUST GET BACK TO THE LAB - SHE PROMISED SHE'D RETURN - AND NOW HIS EXCELLENCY IS MONKEYING WITH MY PENIS...

I HAVE BEEN OVER-TIRED LATELY, SEVEN YEARS I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THAT CALL - SHE PROMISED SHE'D RETURN - AND NOW HIS EXCELLENCY IS MOCKING MY PENIS...

DID I HAVE THAT CONVERSATION - OR WAS IT SOME KIND OF FIT?! MY PHILOSOPHY TUTOR WARNED ME ABOUT SOLIPSISM - TRICKY STUFF!

RELAX, MON VIEUX - IT IS OVER, LET ME PRESCRIBE A LITTLE SEDATIVE TO CALM YOUR NERVES - PERHAPS IT WAS JUST A DREAM - THE LONGED-FOR PHONE CALL - EH?

I CAN SMELL FLOWERS - NO, A BLOWING - NUTS TO GEVERSEY!

GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, BLANCHE - THERE'S A TIME AND A PLACE! THIS AIN'T A PICNIC! PEOPLE COULD GET KILLED!!

WHOA - CECIL - NOW WHERE DID THIS SPRING FROM?

BLANCHE IS RAMBLING AGAIN - FUMES GOT TO HER - WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO? AND WHERE IS DELVENE?

DAN FINDS AN OLD FRIEND...

AND ALL I GOT WAS A STRING OF BLIND DATES! NEXT YOU'LL BE TELLING ME TO READ EMSHUN! WAIT - WHAT'S THAT SOUND? VOICES FROM AROUND THE BACK OF THE LABORATORY - LET'S TAKE A LOOK...

WHOA - BLANCHE - WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?

WELL, IF IT ISN'T THROBBONGLE, TEEN PORNO STAR - HOW THE MOVIE BUSINESS, OH? NOT QUITE SO LUCRATIVE AS PHARMACEUTICALS, EH?!!
I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS, WITH THEIR BUMBLING PLANS, THEIR HALF-BAKED TALENTS!

A BONUS OF MY CHEMICAL RESEARCHES - TELEPATHY! I CAN READ EVERY THOUGHT THAT TRICKLES THROUGH THAT SOGGY BOG OF NEURONES THAT YOU CALL A MIND.

I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS, WITH THEIR BUMBLING PLANS, THEIR HALF-BAKED TALENTS!

I HAVE A REAL JOB NOW, HELPING TO SUPPLY A HARMLESS SUBSTANCE THAT MAKES PEOPLE FEEL HAPPY - WAIT A MINUTE - WHAT'S THAT SOUND - ENGINES!!

A BONUS OF MY CHEMICAL RESEARCHES - TELEPATHY! I CAN READ EVERY THOUGHT THAT TRICKLES THROUGH THAT SOGGY BOG OF NEURONES THAT YOU CALL A MIND.

I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS, WITH THEIR BUMBLING PLANS, THEIR HALF-BAKED TALENTS!

YOU'RE A SADIST, YOU DREADFUL MAN - I'VE MET YOUR LIKE BEFORE - THEY'RE ALL THE SAME - 

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YOU'RE A SADIST, YOU DREADFUL MAN - I'VE MET YOUR LIKE BEFORE - THEY'RE ALL THE SAME -
SAN FRANCISCO, 1946.

I THINK WE JUST BLEW OUR BEST CHANCE TO SAVE CIVILIZATION FROM ITS OWN FATAL IMPULSE TOWARD COMMODITY FETISHISATION. AT LEAST I MANAGED TO GET AWAY WITH A PACKET OF HAND-BLENDED EXPORT GRADE GUANARO.

I WAS LISTENING TO LITTLE RICHARD SINGING 'TUTTI FRUTTI!' WHEN THERE WAS A SNAPPPING SOUND, AND IT TURNED INTO THAT ROBERT ASHLEY PIECE, "THE BACK-YARD... POIGNANT AND WEIRD..."

THAT NIGHT, DAN AND BLANCHE TAKE A TOKE TOO MANY, AND FIND THE COSMOS NAUSEATING AND THE PROSPECT OF A LIFE IN PEORIA DEEPLY SICK!

WELL, OLD BUDDY! WHAT DO YOU RECKON - WAS IT WORTH THE ANGST - HEY, WHERE THE HELL ARE WE??

SAN FRANCISCO, 1946, GUANARO TIME-WARP - BACK TO A POINT IN LITERARY HISTORY WHERE WE HAVE A CLEAR TEN YEARS BEFORE THE BEATS ARRIVE AT THE GALLERY SIX TO MESS UP MODERN POETRY ONCE AND FOR ALL - YIPPEE!!

HUNH!! THE LITERATURE OF YOUR MATERIALIST SOCIETY IS DOOMED - WHY YOU AMERICANS CAN BARELY MANAGE FREE VERSE! - AND I DON'T MEAN TO MAKE MY CHARM AND MY CUNNING AS A BIOCHEMIST AVAILABLE TO HELP SAVE IT!

BASTARDS! NO VERS IS TRULY LIBRE FOR THE MAN WHO WANTS TO DO A GOOD JOB!!

OVER THERE, CALIFORNIA WAITS FOR ME... LIKE A BRIDE BROODING ON A SHOPPING SPREE!

THE GANG REGROUPS CHEZ NURSE DREAD... AND AFTER A MAGNUM OF ARAK AND A QUIET SHOT OF HOMO TRANQUILLISER THE MEANING OF LIFE BECOMES A LITTLE LESS TROUBLING.

I SHALL RETURN WITH LIMBS OF IRON - I SHALL HAVE GOLD. I SHALL BE IDEAL & BRUTAL. WOMEN TAKE CARE OF THESE FEROCIOUS INVALIDS...

BLAH BLAH... MORE HUGH HEFNER FANTASIES.

I SAW A SIGN FOR COCKROACH SOUP!!

IF WE SHAKE A LEG WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE IT TO THE DOCKS IN TIME TO CATCH THE "WALTZING MATILDA" - OH, FOR A LIFE ON THE OCEAN wave, A DEEP AND WATERY GRAVE.

I'VE GOT THAT OLD FEELING - FOREIGN PARTS - THEY'RE VAGUELY EVIL - THE BIZARRE COOKING SMELLS - STRANGERS GABBLING TO ONE ANOTHER - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?!

BAT SHIT AND BOILED PISSE - YOU SURE YOU WANT TO USE THIS STUFF??

I WAS LISTENING TO LITTLE RICHARD SINGING 'TUTTI FRUTTI!' WHEN THERE WAS A SNAPPPING SOUND, AND IT TURNED INTO THAT ROBERT ASHLEY PIECE, "THE BACK-YARD... POIGNANT AND WEIRD..."

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VERLANE GRABS A BOX OF GUANARO AND BOLTS INTO THE JUNGLE...

COMEBACK, YOU FROG MONGREL! I'LL RIP YOUR HEAD OFF!

COME BACK, YOU FROG MONGREL! I'LL RIP YOUR HEAD OFF!

WHY DON'T THEY LIKE ME?
WELL, NOW I SHALL ASK FORGIVENESS FOR HAVING FED ON LIES... AND LET US GO, BUT NO FRIENDLY HAND - AND WHENCE SHALL I DRAN SUCCOUR?"
Hi, Mom,

At the Beep. Leave a Message.

I THINK WE ALL UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DNA RESEARCH.

THE PHYSICAL WORLD IS ACTUALLY A VAST SYSTEM OF ENERGY.

INFORMATION IS THE ENERGY OF FREEDOM.

THE PHYSICAL WORLD IS ACTUALLY A VAST SYSTEM OF ENERGY.

OUR MINDS ARE FALLOW AND RICH FROM BEING TILLED WITH THE ASHES OF THE MEDIA'S CROP ROTATION STYLE OF TOPICAL NEWSAGE.

OUR MINDS COMBUST INFORMATION LIKE FUEL. ANY KIND OF INFORMATION.

"Each piece of music has its own internal coherence." "Come on.

Tash, isn't that a bit unwieldy for us to deal with? The point of analysis is clarification.

And I said, "Glenn doesn't obey goal-directed frameworks. But you probably don't think he's a real composer."

Shhh. Why don't you take a nap or something? You look worn out.

Oh yes, the Bavarian are you continually given up in class.

They have the basic and structure of... say Bruckner. In fact he fits in quite naturally in the evolution of the concerto.

And he's wrong? Bruckner is all surface harmon. It never has a theme.
Blondie and Herb Woodley, 1991
acrylic on canvas, 72 x 42 inches
Courtesy of Fredericks Freiser Gallery.

B Musings about Charlotte Corday and the Course of European History, 1974
gouache on paper, 22 x 18 1/2 inches
Courtesy of Fredericks Freiser Gallery.
CINDY THE TATTOOED
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER
by MACK WHITE

ME AND MAMA STARTED GOING TO CHURCH AFTER PAPA DIED. MAMA
COULDN'T DRINK TOO GOOD. SO WE WENT TO THE CLOSEST ONE:
THE FIRST HOLY GHOST CHURCH WITH SOME FOLLOWERS.

AT FIRST, BROTHER HARRIS WAS THE
PREDACER. HE ALWAYS PREACHED A
HELLFIRE-AND-BRIMSTONE SERMON.

THE LORD SEES EVERY-
THING YOU DO!

YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM HIM! HE SEES
EVERYTHING YOU DO!

WHY, THE LORD CAN SEE INSIDE YOUR
MINDS! YOU THINK A SIMPLE
THOUGHT AND FRIENDS KNOW IT!

AMEN

TELL IT, BROTHER!

I REMEMBER THE NIGHT MAMA FIRST GOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.
IT HAPPENED DURING THE ALTAR CALL. SHE JUST SUDDENLY
STOOD UP AND WENT TO SPEAKING IN TONGUES.

MONBALA-MONDALO-MONDALO-
MONBALA-POR-DA-

THEN SHE WENT UP FRONT AND FELL ON THE FLOOR. SHE LAY
 THERE SHAKING WHILE BROTHER HARRIS LAD HANDS ON HER.

RELIESE THIS WOMAN, SATIN
 AND LET HER GO!

MONBALA-MON-
BOMBALO

BUT LATER, I GOT USED TO IT.
AND IT GAVE ME A GOOD FEELING TO BE THERE. EVERYBODY
WAS ALWAYS SO HAPPY AND FULL
OF LOVE FOR THE LORD....

SISTER CINDY STARTED COMING TO
THE CHURCH A FEW MONTHS AFTER
AND I'LL NEVER FORGET THE
FIRST TIME SHE TESTIFIED.

I'D LIKE TO THANK THE LORD
FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING
HERE TONIGHT....

"WHY IF IT WEREN'T FOR HIS INFINITE
GRACE AND GOODNESS, I'D BE DEAD AND
IN HELL RIGHT NOW. YOU SEE, I WAS
RAISED A GOOD CHRISTIAN GIRL. BUT
I BACKSLID BAD WHEN I FELL IN LOVE
WITH A MAN AND WALKED THE GIRDLE...."

"HE WAS WHAT THEY CALL A 'TALKER'
FOR THE PREACH BASH. TALKING WAS
WHAT HE DID BEST. YOU SEE, HE TALKED
PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR MONEY - AND
HE TALKED ME OUT OF MY VIRTUE...."

"...I ALLOWED THE TEMPLE OF MY BODY TO BE DEFILED
WITH THE DEVIL'S TATTOO-AND DISPLAYED MY SHAME
TO ANYBODY FOR THE PRICE OF ADMISSION...."
THEN THE CIRCUS FELL ON HARD TIMES AND DISBANDED. NOT LONG AFTER, MY SO-CALLED LOVER DESERTED ME...

I DRIFTED AROUND, WORKING THE CARNIVAL AND PUBS, BUT THE DEMAND FOR TATTOO LABELS SOON CAME TO AN END, AND EVENTUALLY I COULD FIND NO WORK AT ALL. I WAS REDUCED TO DRINK, SOON FOR THE PRICE OF A DINNER TICKET, THEN ONE NIGHT, I WAS CKAPED FOR A DINNER REVIEW. NOT LONG AFTER, MY SO-CALLED LINER DESERTED ME, AND THE CIRCUS I'LL NEVER COME TO AN END, AND THE CIRCUS I'

MY TATTOOS CAME ALIVE AND TORMENTED ME. SOME MIGHT SAY I INHIBITED THE EVIL SPIRITS, BUT I AM SURE../ IT WAS THE MISCHIEF OF THE DEMONS THEY WANTED TO BREAK THE DEMONIC POSSESSION. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, I PRAYED.

MY PRAYER WAS ANSWERED. THERE APPEARED BEFORE ME A GLOWING CROSS THAT GAVE FORTH A WHITE LIGHT SO INTENSE IT BURNED AWAY THE DEVIL'S TATTOOS.

DEAR LORD, RELEASE ME FROM THESE DEMONS!

...AND LEFT IN THEIR PLACE NEW TATTOOS-- THE LORD'S TATTOOS!

AND THIS IS AS MUCH AS REASON WILL ALLOW ME TO SHOW. YOU MUST STICK IT ON FAITH THAT I AM ENTIRELY COVERED WITH THE HOLY IMAGE.

I AM A WALKING PICTURE BOOK OF BIBLE STORIES, PICTURES AND...
OTHERS STOPPED COMING TOO. THEY DIDN'T LIKE THE CHANGES SISTER CINDY WAS MAKING, BUT THEY WERE ONLY A FEW—AND ANYWAY, LIKE SISTER CINDY SAID...

WE'RE BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM. THEY WERE LIKE WEASELS THAT HAD TO BE ELIMINATED SO THAT GOD'S GARDEN CAN GROW.

NO, I'M NOT THE ELECT—YOU ARE THE ONES WE HAD CHOSEN TO HEAR MY SECRET TEACHINGS...

BETH... IN HUMANITY I STAND BEFORE YOU, YET I AM NOT REALLY ANGEL. I AM GROWN IN THE LORD'S TATTOOS.

THE TIME HAS COME.


AND THAT IS A RAMANT,FIRMER THAN ANY BULE, IT IS THE WORD OF GOD IN PICTURES, DRAWN IN MY OWN HAND IN MY FLESH, THUS I AM THE WORD—THE WORD AGAIN PAID FLESH!

I AM THE FEMALE CHRIST—THE NEW EVE!


AND THIS REDEMPTION WAS ONLY PARTIAL, FOR IT TO BE COMPLETED, THE WORD MUST BE INCARNATE AS A WOMAN—AS THE MOTHER AND SO I HAVE COME...

SISTER CINDY HAS PROPHEZIED THAT BROTHER HARRIS WOULD COME AND TRY TO LEAD US ASTIRY SO WE BE READY FOR HIM.

YES, THAT ACT WAS TOO FASHION AND BLASPHEMOUS EVEN FOR THE STATE, THEY'VE...

SISTER CINDY FREED US FROM SHAME, SHE TAUGHT US THAT MAN'S MERIT IS A GREAT SIGN OF WORTHINESS THAN TOLLING IN TONGUES AND SMOCKHAMMER ON CAUSE IT'S TRUE WE'VE RETURNED TO THE INNOCENESS OF SHAME WE WILL HARM THAT ONE NIGHT THE DOOR CRASHED AND...

SISTER CINDY FREED US FROM SHAME, SHE TAUGHT US THAT MAN'S MERIT IS A GREAT SIGN OF WORTHINESS, THAN TOLLING IN TONGUES AND SMOCKHAMMER. CAUSE IT'S TRUE WE'VE RETURNED TO THE INNOCENESS OF SHAME, WE WILL HARM THAT ONE NIGHT THE DOOR CRASHED AND...

WELL, I DONE SOME CHECKIN' ON YOUR 'FEMALE CHRIST' AND SHE AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A CHEAP CARNIVAL WHORE...

SISTER CINDY IS THE FEMALE CHRIST!

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Dots and Lines

Aleksandar Zograf

When I was a kid, everybody knew
that I adored reading, or just
looking at books or any kind of
printed material. If they gave me
a book, I'd be quiet for hours.

I liked to read newspapers
even though I didn't understand
many of the topics they were
writing about.

One of the things that I liked
most were the little symbols,
dots and lines which they inser-
ted between articles in
newspapers back then.

It's hard to explain, but I'm
aware that some of the ideas
in my present comics are
inspired by what I saw in
newspapers when I was
kid.

© '92 Mack White
Early Camera Boom

Early Fade to Black
Early Porta-pak Video

Early V-8 CD-ROM Drive
JONATHAN ALLEN is an artist living in Brooklyn, New York. In September 2001 he will be exhibiting work at Queens Theater in the Park in Queens, New York. He is currently at work on The Hum Muscle, a book of collaborations with John Coletti. • WILLIAM ANTHONY is the author of four books. His most recent is War is Swell published by Smart Art Press in Santa Monica, California. His recent one man shows were in Rotterdam, London, and Santa Monica. • PETER BAGGE's first comic strip was published in The East Village Eye in 1980. He is most famous for Hate Comics which chronicled the misadventures of Bagge's semi-autobiographical character Buddy Bradley. Set in Seattle itself, Hate wound up becoming permanently associated with the Seattle youth and music scene that generated so much worldwide publicity in the mid-90's. The many record sleeves and posters Bagge illustrated for local labels solidified this association even further. He is currently writing a monthly all-ages comic book about an all-girl pop band called Yeah! for DC comics, which will be illustrated by Love and Rockets' Gilbert Hernandez. He also is working on several other freelance projects as well. Check out http://www.peterbagge.com for more information. • HOLLY BITTNER recently completed an MA in creative writing from Temple University. Her work has appeared in the Philadelphia editions of the American Poetry Review and the Boog Reader. • CHRISTOPHER BOUCHER is a student in the MFA in Fiction program at Syracuse University and the web editor for Salt Hill. • JOE BRAINARD was born in Salem, Arkansas in 1942. He grew up in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He later moved to New York and was a central figure in the New York art and poetry scene until his death from AIDS in 1994. His art is represented by Tibor de Nagy Gallery. Granary Books recently reissued I Remember. For more on Brainard, see the journal Pressed Wafer 2 which just published a tribute to Brainard's work. • FC BRANDT has been dabbling in the writing and drawing of comics for the past ten years, and is the creator of the best selling Far Flung calendar/comicbook amalgam, soon to be a major motion picture and collectible lunchbox. He is hard at work in Los Angeles, CA breaking into
the storyboard scene. You can keep close tabs on him through his internet portal at http://www.bainst.com. He sucks at self promotion, and hates writing about himself in the third person. • Three issues of IVAN BRUNETTI’s comic “Schizo” have been published by Fantagraphics Books. See also: http://www.ivanbrunetti.com. • WARREN BURT usually lives and works in Melbourne, Australia, doing music, theatre, visuals, and other things. He now has a website: http://www.emf.org/subscribers/burt/ where more information about him and his work can be found. • ELIZABETH CASTAGNA is a painter living in New York City. Her most recent exhibitions include The Robert Steele Gallery in New York and Principal Sombreros in Barcelona. • ISABELLE CHEMIN has been working with performances and pictures, often using science and technology. She does the website of the art-group Das Synthetische Mischgewebe, http://www.v2.nl/freezone/users/dsm. Her comics Échanges may appear on the site or in book-form. • ABIGAIL CHILD is a filmmaker and writer living in New York commuting to Boston with shows upcoming of her most recent film Surface Noise (2000) at Images Festival Toronto, Pacific Film Archive Berkeley and Eastman House Rochester. New writing has appeared in tongue to boot No. 5 just out and edited by Miles Champion. She is the author of previous 4 books, including A Motive for Mayhem, Mob and Scatter Matrix. Child’s next film project turns to the incubatory post-war American suburbs-exploring colonialization, assimilation and the seemingly limitless horizons (optimism/terror). • DAVID CHOE used to live in Los Angeles. He has moved to Oakland. He is the author of Slow Jams. • REY CHOW is Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the Humanities at Brown University where she teaches in the Departments of Comparative Literature, and Modern Culture and Media. Her books include Primitive Passions (on contemporary Chinese cinema) and Ethics after Idealism (a collection of essays on cultural politics). • EMILIE CLARK is an artist living in New York City. Her collaborations with Lyn Hejinian were recently included in the Poetry Plastique exhibition at Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York. • JOHN COLETTI is currently at work on The Hum Muscle, a book of comics with artist Jonathan Allen, and A Place To Shrin with painter Zachary Wollard. Recent work appears in Prosodia, A Portable Boog Reader, 6x6, TheEastVillage.com, Ixnay, and The Brooklyn Review On-line. • PETER CONRAD’s comics appear in anthologies like Kerosene and L’Horreur est Humaine, and in papers like Proper Gander. His cartoons and strips appear in papers like the San Jose Mercury News and Black and White, as well as on web sites like Netscape and AvantGo. Check out his self-published comic “Attempted Not Known” at http://www. peterconrad.com. • TROY COOK has received an MFA from Mills College. Recent stuff can be found in Berkeley Fiction Review and 580 Split. • MARTIN CORLESS-SMITH is an Englishman teaching in Boise, ID. His books are Of Piscator (U. of Georgia, 1998) and Complete Travels (West House Books, 2000). • VERONICA CORPUZ is currently a MFA candidate at Naropa University where she is working on a collection of text-image poems entitled “daily.” She is originally from Pittsburgh, PA. • ROBERT CREELEY has two CDs just out, Have We Told You All You’d Thought to Know? (Cuneiform ) and Robert Creeley (Jagajuguvar). • BRENT CUNNINGHAM’s poems and reviews have recently appeared in Kenning, Context, and Small Press Traffic Newsletter. Additional selections from The Connectives have been published in Proliferation and Mirage/ Periodical. • JANE DALRYMPLE-HOLLO’s series “Line Becomes Approximate Form and (Sometimes) Line Again” can be found in the September, 2000 issue (vol. 1, no. 4) of the online magazine How2 at http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/ studler_center/how2/intro.html and also Three Graphic Works can be seen in $lavery: a cyberzine, ed. Harris Schiff: http://soha.ios.com/ ~harris4/upgrade.html. • Look for two new books by ADAM DEGRAFF coming out in the spring of 2001, Blow The Rose Glass Hap put out by Shark press in New York and Milkweed on We Have A Fax Machine press out of San Jose, California. He can be reached at copingsaw@hotmail.com. • TRANE DEVORE is the author of one published book of poems, series/nomencl (Avec Books, 1999), and has work forthcoming in First Intensity, Salt Hill, Near South, and Mirage. He currently has work posted at canwehaveourballback.com. This is his first published illustration work. • PATRICK DURGIN is the author of Pundits Scribes Pupils (Potes and Poets, 1998); more recent work appears in Aufgabe, Crayon, Ixnay, Lipstick 11 and Untitled. Further on, Mark Job will be published as an issue of A.BACUS in the 2003 series. • MICHELLE SPENCER ELLSWORTH just finished writing and performing her latest multimedia solo performance work entitled, “All Clytemnestra on The Western Front: A Techno-Feminist Reconstruction of
The Iliad." Nationally known for her witty, gripping, and innovative performance work, Spencer has performed at such venues as Jacob's Pillow, PS. 122, Dance Theater Workshop, Diverseworks, The Sushi, The Telluride Experimental Film Festival, and The Solo Mio Festival. In addition to performance work Spencer creates video installations, draws cartoons, and collaborates with cool poets, musicians and filmmakers.

Michelle is a guest artist in the department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Colorado in Boulder. • LARRY FEIGN began his career as a caricature artist at Honolulu's Waikiki Beach. He then moved to Los Angeles, where he worked in animation and also did comic books and multimedia presentations for corporate clients. In 1985 he relocated to Hong Kong, where for the next 12 years he produced daily cartoons for English-language newspapers in Hong Kong and Malaysia. His The World of Lily Wong comic strip has been reprinted in over 150 publications world-wide. In 1997 he was commissioned by Britain's The Independent to chronicle, in cartoons, Hong Kong's final 100 days under British rule. He has received Amnesty International's Human Rights Press Award for the last two years in a row, as well as several awards for his work in print and on the World Wide Web. See http://humorist.net • THALIA FIELD's collection Point and Line is available from New Directions. • ELLEN FORNEY is a Seattle cartoonist/illustrator. Her book of autobiographical comic strips, Monkey Food: The Complete "I Was Seven in '75" Collection (Fantagraphics Books) was nominated for a Harvey and an Eisner award. See more of her work at http://www.ellenforney.com. • MARA GÁLVEZ-BRETÓN is an independent/interdisciplinary scholar/writer who has been published in Chain, Feminism and Psychology, and O-blek. • DREW GARDNER edits Snare magazine. Recent books include Water Table (Situations Press) and Student Studies (Detour). He also has recent work in Hambone and Cello Entry. • STEPHEN GIBSON has had poetry published in Ploughshares, Poetry Northwest, Gargoyle, and The Boston Review. His drawings have appeared in Big Cigars and Greed. He has published two chapbooks of poetry (Industrial View Facing South and The Waiting) and is the editor of the magazine Mobile City, which was recently featured on NPR’s Morning Edition. • PHOEBE GLOECKNER is the author of A Child's Life (North Atlantic Books/Frog, Ltd., 1998) and Diary of a Teen-age Girl, an illustrated novel, which is forthcoming from North Atlantic/Frog. Her cartoons, links to interviews and reviews of her work, and other related items of interest can be found on her website: http://www.ravenblond.com/gloeckner/ • Composer MICHAEL GORDON is, along with David Lang and Julia Wolfe, one of the founders and artistic directors of Bang on a Can, an organization dedicated to adventurous new music, with presentations in New York and around the world. • ARIELE GREENBERG's poems are in the current issues of Crayon, Conduit, Outlet, The Hat and other journals. She recently graduated from the MFA program at Syracuse University, where she served as poetry editor of Salt Hill, and is moving to Boston to be with Rob Morris, and hopefully to teach and write. Her first collection of poems, Given, is in need of a publisher. • LYN HEJINIAN's most recent books are The Language of Inquiry, a collection of essays published by the University of California Press, and The Beginner, published by Spectacular Books. A new work entitled A Border Comedy is to be published in the October, 2001 by Granary Books. • BRENTA HILLMAN is on the permanent faculty of St. Mary's College in Moraga, California. Her six collections of poetry—White Dress (1985), Fortress (1989), Death Tractates (1992), Bright Existence (1993), Loose Sugar (1997) and Cascadia (forthcoming, 2001) are from Wesleyan University Press; she has also written three chapbooks, Coffee, 3 AM (Penumbra Press, 1982), Autumn Sojourn (Em Press, 1995), and The Firecage (a+bend press, 2000). • EMANUEL HOCQUARD was born in 1940 and grew up in Tangiers. He has been editor, with the artist Raquel, of the small press Orange Export Ltd. and, with Claude Royet-Journoud, of two anthologies of new American poets. He currently directs, with Juliette Valéry, Un Bureau Sur l'Atlantique, an association fostering relations between French and American poets. His recent books in English are This Story is Mine, trans. Norma Cole, Inpress, 1998; Codicil & Plan for Pond 4, trans. Ray DiPalma & Juliette Valéry, The Post-Apollo Press, 1999; A Test of Solitude, trans. Rosmarie Waldrop, Burning Deck, 2000. • SANDY HUSS teaches fiction writing in the MFA program at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. A collection of her short fiction, Labor for Love, was published in 1992 by University of Missouri Press. Since then, her writing for the page has been a continuing exploration of the juxtaposition of texts—her "own" and
Brenda Iijima is the author of 
Magazine, 
was librettist for the opera 
Hawthorne-Melville Correspondence, premiered at American Opera Projects. He is engaged to be married to Juliana Spahr, editor 
of 
for Cartoonists, is available for $3.50 from David Lasky, 4505 University Way, NE, PMB # 181, Seattle, WA 98105. He also has a catalog of his comic books which is free for the asking: davidlasky@yahoo.com.

Frances Lerner, see also

Carol Mirakove collaborated with Chicago-based photographer Doug Fogelson to form one of 10 pairs of poets and visual artists in the show 
Sting Like A Box, exhibited at the Jett Set Gallery in Chicago. Her poem to Mina Loy is forthcoming in the Heroines issue of 
Outlet; her chapbook 
WALL is available from ixnay press. She lives in New York.

Laura Mullen is the author of 
The Surface, The Tales of Horror and After I Was Dead. Recent work has appeared or is forthcoming in 

Sawako Nakayasu writes poetry and performance texts, often concerning hockey. Recent work has appeared or is forthcoming in 
HOW2, Kenning, and as a Lucille broadside. Florence Neal is a visual artist whose prints, paintings, sculptures, and installations appear in national and international exhibitions. She is cofounder and director of the Kentler International Drawing Space in Red Hook, Brooklyn, New York.

Josh Neufeld has been drawing comics since he was four years old. With his friend of almost 20 years, Dean Haspiel, Josh co-created 
where Josh does stories about his travel experiences in Southeast Asia and Central Europe. 
Keyhole has run for six issues with two different publishers. With R. Walker, Josh does a satirical strip called “Titans of Finance,” which was published on the web by TheStreet.com.
Look for a *Titans of Finance* comic in summer 2001. Josh has contributed artwork to Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor* (Dark Horse), the SPX anthologies, *The Big Book of Urban Legends* (DC/Paradox Press), and *Duplex Planet Illustrated* (Fantagraphics), among others. Josh resides in Brooklyn and makes a living mixing freelance illustration with web design. You can find his work online at [http://www.josh.neufeld.com](http://www.josh.neufeld.com). • RON PADGETT's books include *New & Selected Poems* (Godine), *Great Balls of Fire* (Coffee House), and *The Straight Line: Writings on Poetry and Poets* (University of Michigan). He is the editor in chief of a three-volume reference set entitled *World Poets* (Charles Scribner's Sons) and translator of Blaise Cendrars' *Complete Poems* (University of California). • TAMARA PARIS is a writer/performer who just finished production on the animated plot "Strip," in Los Angeles and can now be found scribbling the column Last Days for the alternative rag *The Stranger* in Seattle. She'd love to hear from ya at prettypix @excite.com. • RAYMOND PETTIBON lives in Hermosa Beach, CA. An anthology of his drawings was recently published by D.A.P. titled *Raymond Pettibon, the Books, 1978-1998*. Upcoming solo exhibitions are at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, May 25-July 8, 2001, and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, July 5-August 26, 2001. • KEVIN QUIGLEY's work has appeared in issues of Fantagraphics' *Pictopia*, Simon and Schuster's *Mind Rot*, *Top Shelf's Top Shelf Anthology*, WFMU's *LCD*, and Japan's *Gar*o. He is the editor of a collection of Japanese alternative comics called, *Comics Underground Japan* (Blast Books, 1997); and his 64 page solo collection, *Big Place Comics*, which was granted a Xeric Award in 1997, can be obtained by sending five dollars to: Kevin Quigley, 187 Landing R.d., Newport, N.J. 08345. He is currently looking for a weekly home for his *True Ghosts*. Any inquiries can be sent to the same address. • JEANNE QUINN received her undergraduate degree in art history from Oberlin College; she received her M.F.A. in ceramics from the University of Washington. In the last year, she has had one-person shows at Foster/White Gallery in Seattle, Robischon Gallery in Denver, and the University of Montana. For the summer of 2001, she will be a resident artist at the Kahla Porcelain Factory in Germany. Her work will be included in the upcoming traveling exhibitions and catalogues: *The Artful Teapot*, by Garth Clark; *Postmodern Ceramics*, by Mark Del Vecchio; and *A Ceramic Continuum: Fifty Years of the Archie Bray Influence*. She is an assistant professor at the University of Colorado. • RAMEZ QURESHI (1972-2001) was a poet and critic who lived in Scarsdale, New York. A prolific writer, his work was published in numerous in-print and online magazines, including *Cauldron & Net, How2, Jacket, Lagniappe, Rain Taxi, Readme, Riding the Meridian* and XCP. Ramez was a friend of numerous poets and writers and his presence will be greatly missed. A list of links to all his known writing online can be found at the end of a recent essay on the painter Mark Rothko at: [http://www.jps.net/nada/rothko.htm](http://www.jps.net/nada/rothko.htm). His sister Sofia is currently working to put together a website containing much of his writing; anyone with information should contact her at: Qosifie@aol.com. • ELIZABETH ROBINSON is the author of *Bed of Lists* and *In the Sequence of Falling Things*: A new book, *House Made of Silver*, is just out from Kelsey St. Press. A newer book, *Harrow*, will soon be out from Omnidawn Press. She coedits EtherDome Press with Colleen Lookingbill. • DAVID SANDLIN was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1956. He moved to Alabama in 1972 and has lived in New York City since 1980. He is the artist/author of several books, including *Land of 1,000 Beers, Burning Ring of Fire, and Road to Nowhere*. Sandlin's comics have appeared in *Raw, Zero Zero, Snake Eyes* and *Strapazin*. He's shown his paintings, prints and installations around the U.S. and abroad, most recently at the Fumetto Comix Festival in Lucerne, Switzerland. He is represented by the Gracie Mansion Gallery in NYC. • PETER SAUL lives and works in New York. His recent solo exhibitions of paintings include: "Heads 1986-2000" at Nolan/Eckman Gallery, New York, 2000, and "Peter Saul Retrospective" at the musée de l'Abbaye Sainte-Croix-Châteaurous, Les Sables d'Olonne, France; musée de l'Hôtel Bertrand, Dole France; Beaux-Arts Museum, Mons, Belgium, 1999-2000. • LESLIE SCALAPINO's recent books include *New Time* and *The Public World/Syntactically Impermanence* (both Wesleyan 1999). Forthcoming: *The Tango* (Granary Press, 2001) and *Zither/Autobiography* (Wesleyan, 2002). • LYTLE SHAW's poetry books include *Cable Factory 20* (Atelos) and *A Side of Closure* (a+bend). He has essays forthcoming in *Qui Parle* and *Cabinet*. • SALLY SILVERS is a New York City based choreographer/performer/writer. The photographs are from her last piece, *Storming Heaven*, an evening-length work on twentieth century social revolutions that was performed at the
Kathryn in New York City in April 2000. • CHRIS SLANE is an award-winning editorial cartoonist and freelance illustrator living in Auckland, New Zealand. Samples of his artwork can be found at http://www.gyro.co.nz/slane/index.html • BLAIR SOLOVY lives in New York where she continues to develop her projects, A Body of Research, in various art forms. Thanks to Sandra Kunz, Electron Microscopist, Brown University, for electron micrographs and Dr. Chris Davatziko and Dr. Jerry Prince, Johns Hopkins University, for brain images. • CHRIS TINA OLSON SPIESEL works visually in both two and three-dimensional media. Her current writing projects include a piece on prison design as the dark side of utopian vision and one on HUAC’S deployment of news photos as part of its “argument” to a hostile witness. She co-teaches “Visual Persuasion in the Law” at Quinnipiac University Law School and will be giving the same course at New York Law School in the fall semester, 2001. She is a Faculty Associate in the Institute for Writing and Thinking at Bard College. • VIRGIL SUÁREZ was born in Havana, Cuba in 1962. He is the author of four published novels: Latin Jazz, The Cutter, Havana Thursdays, and Going Under, and of a collection of short stories titled Welcome to the Oasis. With his wife Delia Poey he has coedited two bestselling anthologies: Iguana Dreams: New Latino Fiction and Little Havana Blues: A Contemporary Cuban-American Literature Anthology. Most recently he has published an anthology of Latino poetry titled Paper Dance, coedited with Victor Hernández Cruz and Leroy V. Quintana, and his own collection of poetry and memoir titled Spared Angola: Memories From a Cuban-American Childhood. His poetry, stories, translations, and essays continue to be published in journals and reviews like Triquarterly, Field, Cirmanon, Meridian, Callaloo, The Ohio Review, The Caribbean Review, Salmagundi, New England Review, Ploughshares, The Mississippi Review, The Kenyon Review, and Prairie Schooner, and many others in the United States. You Come Singing, a new collection of poems, is out from Tia Chucha Press/ Northwestern University, as well as the limited edition book of poems titled Ganabato Poems (Wings Press, San Antonio.) In The Republic of Longing , a new collection is out from Bilingual Review Press/Arizona State University. Next year Palm Crows, his fifth collection, will be out from the University of Arizona Press’“Camino del Sol” Series. Currently he is at work on a new collection tentatively titled Caliban Ponders Chaos. • GARY SULLIVAN edits Read Me: http://www.jps.net/nada • ROBERT SULLIVAN was born in 1967 of the Maori tribe Nga Puhi, and Galway Irish descent. Has published 3 books of poetry, Jazz Waiata (1990), Piki ake: climb (1993) and Star Waka (1999, reprinted 2000) all with Auckland University Press. He has won many NZ literary awards and fellowships and will be the Visiting Creative Writer at the University of Hawai‘i, Manoa in Fall 2001. • LEE A. TONOUCHI wuz hea. You can find oddah stuff by him insai The Hawai‘i Review, Tinfish, The Asian Pacific American Journal, and ZYZZYVA. His book called Du Word stay coming out from Bamboo Ridge Press in 2001. • EDWIN TORRES lives in New York City. This spring he directed & performed Gecko Suite: An Opera In Three Colors, at The Kitchen in NYC. His recent collection of poetry, Onomalingua: Noise Songs And Poetry, is an ebook published by Rattapallax Press and available from http://www.rattapallax.com. • JOHN TRANTER spent his youth on a farm on the Southeast coast of Australia, attended country schools, and took his BA in 1970 after attending university sporadically. Fourteen collections of his verse have been published, including Gasoline Kisses (Equipage, Cambridge, 1997), Late Night Radio (Polygon, Edinburgh, 1998), Different Hands (Folio/Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1998), a collection of seven experimental prose pieces, Ultra (Salt Publishing, UK, 2001), and The Floor of Heaven, a book-length sequence of four verse narratives (Arc, UK, 2001). His work appears in the Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry. He is the editor of the free Internet magazine Jacket, at http://www.jacket.zo.com.au/ • JULIETTE VALÉRY was born in 1968. She currently directs the series Format Américain that publishes new translations of contemporary American poetry and, with Emmanuel Hocquard, Un bureau sur l’Atlantique, an association fostering relations between French and American poets: http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/ org/bureau. • Bard College graduate ZAK VREELAND is a writer and composer living in New York City. He is currently the only producer of photoromans in the U.S. Prospective actors and photographers are encouraged to inquire at sv822@bard.edu. His book How to Write will be published by Malingua press in 2002. • CATHY WAGNER has 2 chapbooks (Boxes, Seeing Eye Books and Hotel Faust, West House Books) and a first book (Miss America, Fence Books) coming out in 2001. • ANNE WALDMAN is the author most recently of Marriage: A Sentence (Penguin Poets)
and the forthcoming *Vow To Poetry*, a collection of manifestos, interviews & essays, from Coffee House Press. She is coediting *Angel Hair Sleeps With A Boy In My Head*, the Angel Hair anthology, with Lewis Warsh to be published by Granary Books, Summer 2001. Her CD *Alchemical Elegy* has just been released from the William Burroughs Word Virus Studio at Naropa University and may be ordered by sending $12 to AW, Summer Writing program, Naropa, 2130 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder Co 80302.

• ROB WALKER is the co-creator (with Josh Neufeld) of *Titans of Finance* (due out in August from Alternative Comics). He writes for Slate.com, and lives in New Orleans. Internet: http://www.robwalker.net


• JOHN WESLEY’s most recent exhibitions include “Love’s Lust” at the Fogg Museum, Harvard University Art Museum and “John Wesley’s Paintings 1961-2000” at PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York. He is represented by the Federicks Freiser Gallery in New York.

• MACK WHITE is a cartoonist, illustrator, and writer whose work has appeared in *Gnosis,* Details, PULSE!, Heavy Metal, True West, Zero Zero, Strapazin, Stripburger, and many other magazines in the U.S., Japan, and Europe. He has also published four books of original stories and artwork: *The Mutant Book of the Dead* (Starhead Comix) and *Villa of the Mysteries #1, 2,* and *3* (Fantagraphics). White’s conspiracy research on Waco and other topics has been published in such magazines as *The Nose* and *FringeWare Review.* He was also interviewed in the documentary “Day 51: The True Story of Waco” and is a frequent guest on radio talk shows across the country. Recently he illustrated Ken Smith’s book, *Raw Deal: Ironic and Horrible Stories of Forgotten Americans* (Blast Books), and is presently working as Production Designer on Scott Perry’s upcoming film *Cowboys and Martians.* Mack White’s website is http://www.mackwhite.com. He may be contacted at mackwhite@austin.rr.com or PO Box 49575, Austin, TX 78765.

• Composer JULIA WOLFE is, along with Michael Gordon and David Lang, one of the founders and artistic directors of Bang on a Can, an organization dedicated to adventurous new music, with presentations in New York and around the world.

• ALEKSANDAR ZOGRAF’s real name is Sasa Rakezic, born in 1963, he started to publish his comics in various Serbian magazines in 1986. From the beginning of the 90s, most of his works have been published abroad, in magazines like *Weirdo, The Comics Journal, Zero Zero, Rare Bit Fiends, The Stranger, New City, Cow (U.S.), Lapin (France), Mano, Il Manifesto, Linus, Kerosene (Italy), Babel (Greece), Galago (Sweden), Stripburger (Slovenia),* etc. His solo comic books include *Life Under Sanctions, Psychonaut (1-3), Flock of Dreamers (U.S.), Dream Watcher (UK), Diario Psiconauta (Italy, Psychonaut (Germany)).* His works have been exhibited in numerous exhibitions and comics conventions.

• TOM ZUMMER, born Saginaw, Michigan. No further information is currently available.
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Since 1993, Chain has been publishing a yearly issue of work gathered loosely around a topic. The topic allows us to switch the editorial question that we ask each piece of work submitted from “is this a great piece of art” to “does this piece of art tell us something about the topic that we didn’t already know.” This makes Chain a little rougher around the edges, a little less aesthetically predictable. Within the frame of the topic, we tend to privilege mixed media and collaborative work and work by emerging or younger artists. We welcome submissions from readers. Please see our call for work in this issue.
CALL FOR WORK

Chain 9: dialogues

If you are a reader of Chain, we would be pleased to read your work for our next issue if it addresses the topic of dialogues or is a dialogue in some form. We welcome dialogues between all creatures great and small, between beings of utterly different languages and speech habits, between subjects and objects, between discourses, politics, massive paradoxes, and contradictions. We welcome dialogues that cross the territory of beings and that investigate theatrical space and include gestures and stage directions and vivid effects as well as speech. More traditional dramatic work and writing in the Socratic tradition is also welcome. But in general, no dialogue too radical! We are especially interested in getting people talking with people other than their family, friends, and lovers.

Please send camera ready visual art, essays, poems, stories, performance texts, collaborations, etc. by December 1, 2001. Please send two copies of your submission to Jena Osman, English Department, Temple University, 10th floor Anderson Hall (022-29), 1114 W. Berks St., Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090.

This issue will be edited by Thalia Field, Jena Osman, Juliana Spahr, and Cecilia Vicuña (we are also pleased to announce that Cecilia will be joining Chain's editorial board permanently).

Please, NO email submissions (we tend to lose them). Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you would like your work returned. For more information on submission, see http://www.temple.edu/chain

Deadline: December 1, 2001

7: MEMOIR/ANTIMEMOIR

Across the differences, there is a consciousness of language as the inter-me-diary.

self-portraits, identification papers, true-false-forced confessions, bio-texts, journals, diaries, life stories, family trees, personal-native-credit histories, records, tell-alls, mirror images, memorabilia, identities, aka's, contributor's notes, resumes, passports, autobiographies, repressed-false-happy memories, memoirs

6: LETTERS

In my head I composed a letter I knew by heart. It began in a way I knew by heart but didn't know I knew. I bit my lip not to mouth what I wrote out loud. So it was I resisted adventitious locution, the wafted remit I ran the risk of exacting were it the "open sesame" I wished it would be. "Dear Leg-Leg Vibe," I wrote, biting my lip.

—Nathaniel Mackey

epistolary exchanges, alphabets, symbols, orthographies, archival finds, typographies, correspondences, fonts, emblems, handwriting, inscriptions, glyphs, gossip, notes, graphemes, anagrams, hypograms, scarlet, purloined, valentines, letters from camp, letters from the front

5: DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

ha'-(l)(i)-s-du-tlv' -ga Bend yourself on something.
i-da-nv' -ni-da Let's be sitting around.

That's what it is to make an easement. To share a place where talking can happen. For the purpose of refielding. For understanding. For making the adjustments which survival adjusts.

—Diane Glancy

Catalan, Cherokee, Chinese, Cyrillic, Czech, English, Esperanto, Finnish, French, Galician, German, Guarani, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Ilocano, Japanese, Klingon, Korean, Latin, New English, Norwegian, Pig Latin, Pijin, Portuguese, Quechua, Rumanian, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamazight, Taneraic, Tibetan, Tongues, Vorlin, Wurundjeri, Xu Bing, Yiddish, Zaum
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