

FRANK

MAGAZINE

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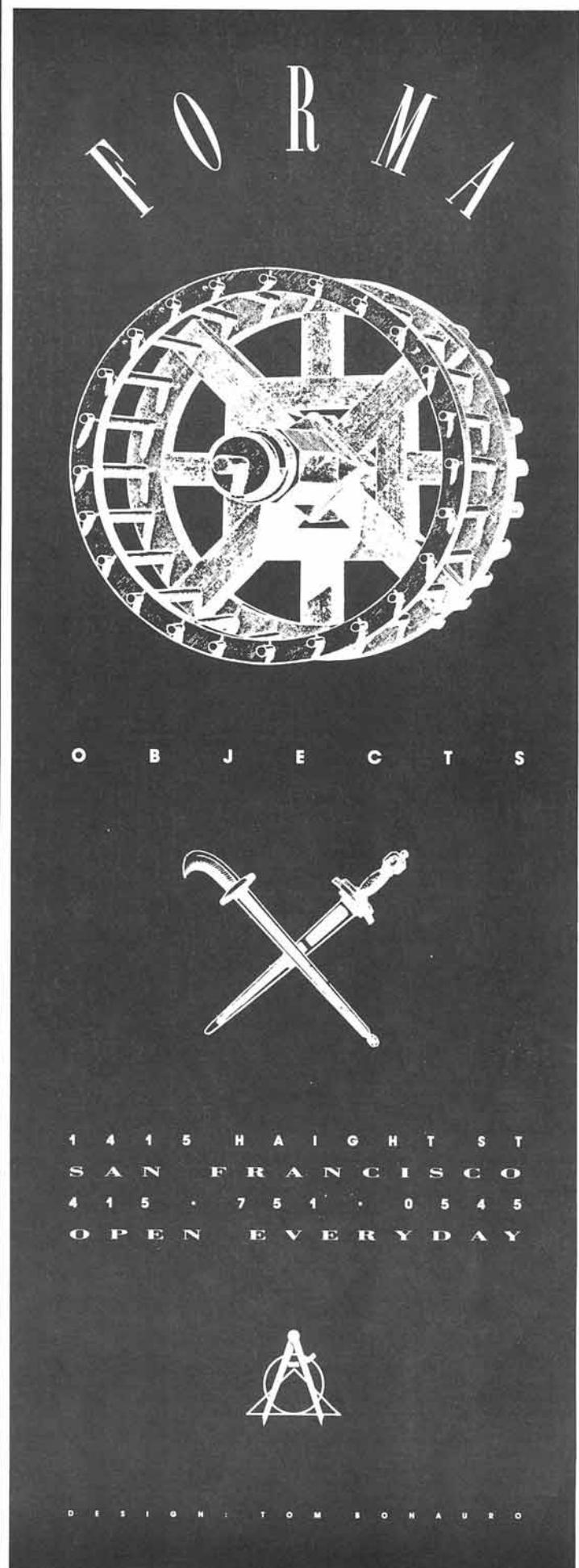
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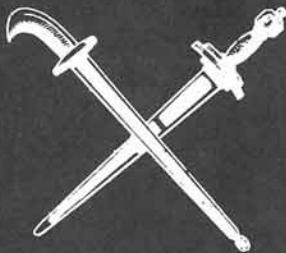
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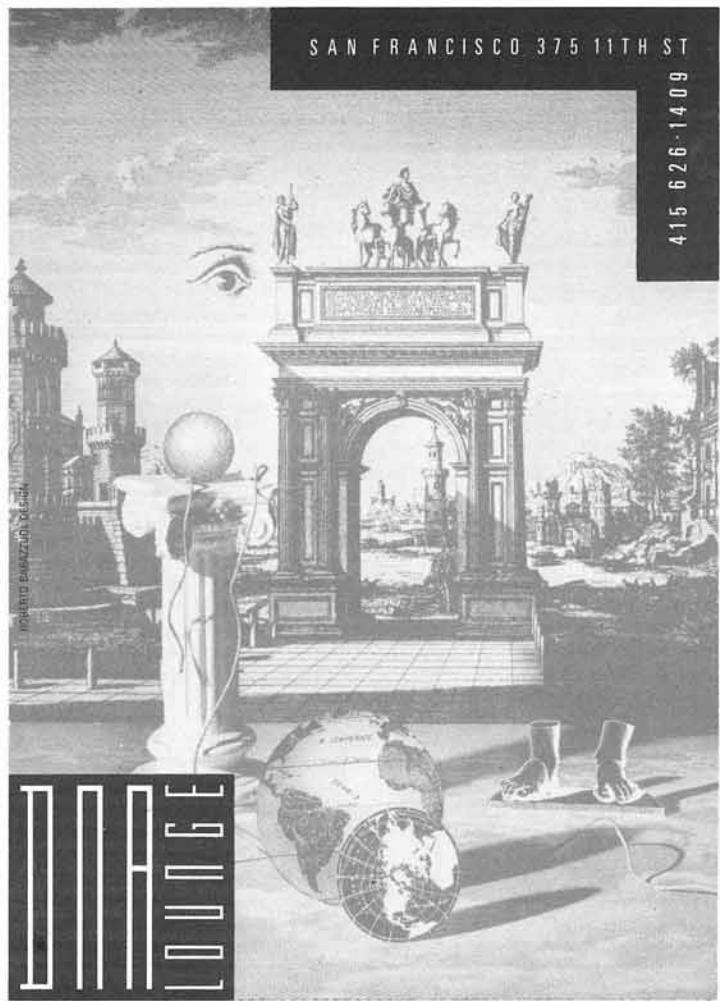
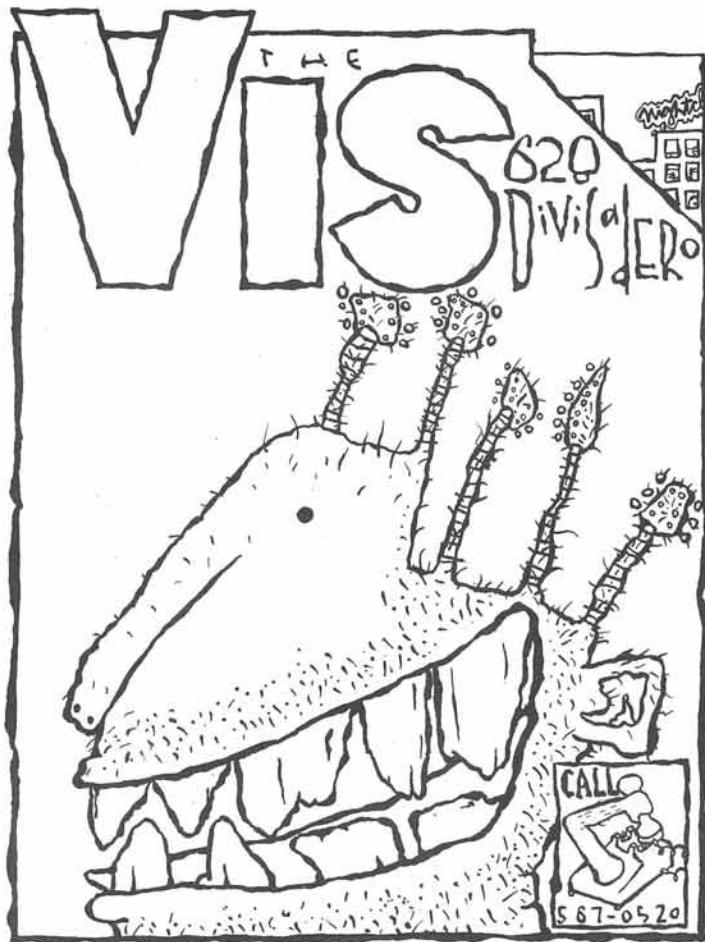
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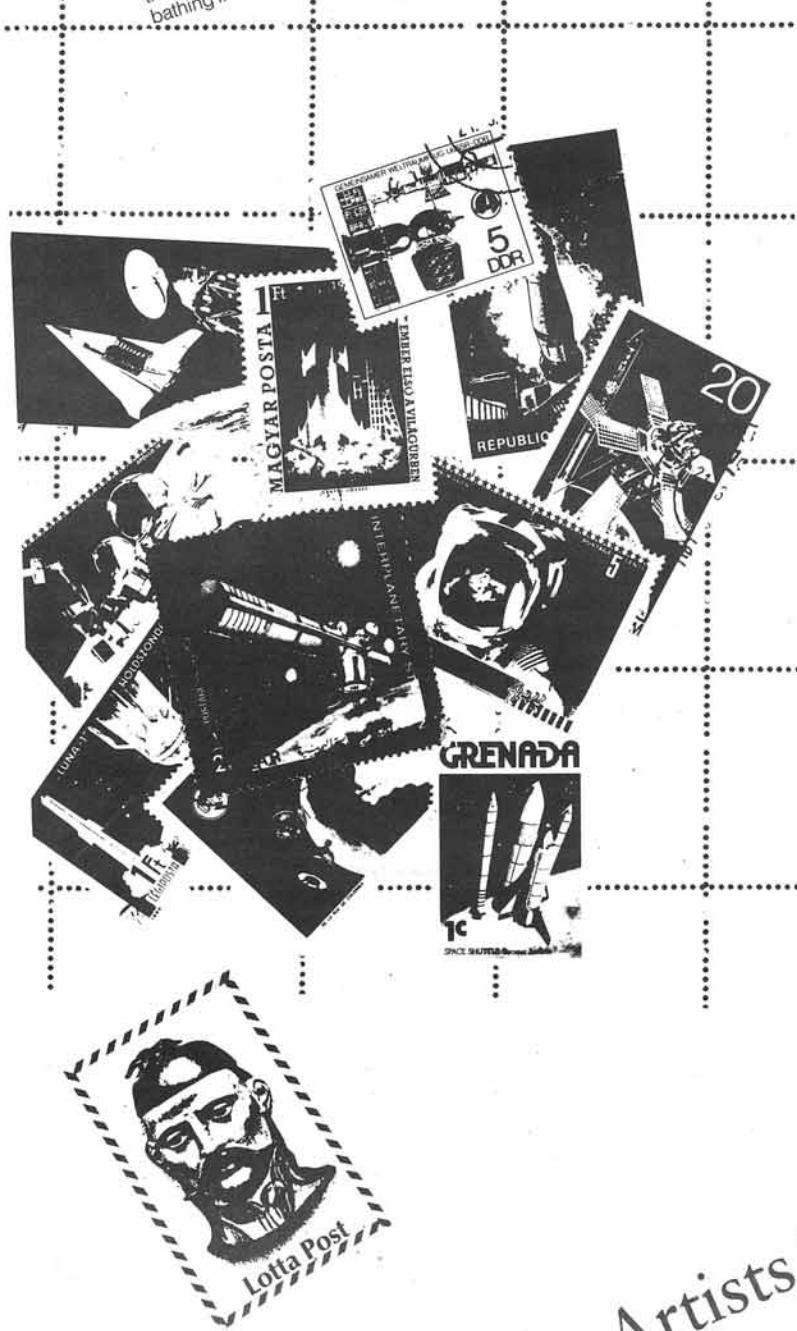
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We are pleased to announce

To FRANK:
February's full moon I pretended to back-paddle around an artificial salt lake the size of Moscone Center, in Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, Canary Islands. By the new moon I was borrowing a Toyota above the speed limit along your stucco corridors, and clambering down clayish cliffs to the good beach by Golden Gate Bridge. I couldn't believe it. This full moon I romanced myself along the pithy sand down in Laguna Beach. The small surprise of light surfaced badly and beautifully. Now the moon is moving spooky past the windows of my plane back to New York where I'll hide from the new moon inside a viral street and pluck money from litigant trees. By the time they're bare I'll be moon-bathing in the tropics . . .

Thanks for the tan,
Good Time Jim

FRANK CORRESPONDENCE



Dear FRANK:

Yes, the visual doppler effect one experiences in the DMZ of California, somewhere by Paso Robles along Highway 101. I chanced across your magazine one day, liked what I saw. Thought I might send you a couple of Out West road poems, most of which I write while driving.

That thing in the upper left of the photo is a dried-out shell of a tarantula hawk, one of those wasps that can zap the spider of your dreams. It wasn't entirely out of superstition that I felt the need to include it in the photo.

So all these fools these days are hysterical about terrorism. Funny that these same folks think nothing of sliding behind the wheel of their car and actually driving down the freeway. Think of how many drug-crazed zombies one encounters on a given stretch of the Hollywood Freeway between, say, Studio City and Silver Lake. Or is this being too colloquial? Having actually been (for 17 days) on the inside of a PLO prison in Beirut, I'll take my chances with *fedayeen*.

Well I hope you enjoy these . . . perhaps one of these days I'll drop by your Haight St. office. Are you that accessible or are you well protected by a coterie of amazonian secretaries in pumps, ready to put you on hold?

All the best . . .
Laurence Malone

Artists Stamps



Dear FRANK:

The whole meaning of life is contained in a single comma, a brief pause in an ongoing thought; periods are deaths. I am reminded of this at odd times, as when I'm leaving my friend's house and the door closes behind me. Very often it closes with a whisper, the way a comma should sound; but all too often it closes with a click and I am momentarily shaken. What would I do without the continuity of the red neon shoe that hangs over 24th St. in front of my friend's house? Whether I'm arriving or leaving, its garish presence serves as a bookcover to my visit. Each visit is a chapter. What does it matter than if the door closes with a click or a sigh? I look at the red neon shoe and know I am welcome to reenter the story.

Yours always,
Mark

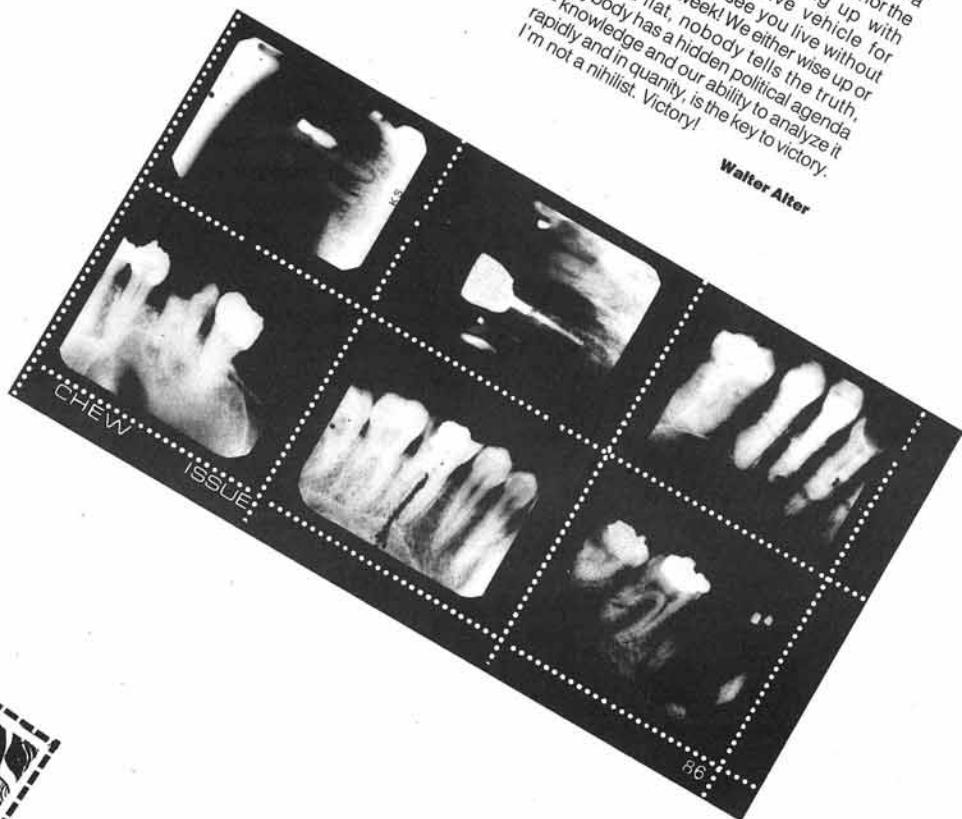
P.S. uncertainties are...



Dear FRANK:

I'm working on an article about PRIMITIVISM and its situation in a technology oriented society. If we are to create a world with minimum pain and maximum pleasure we will have to have machines to do the work. Ask the Ethiopians if they'd rather dig in the dirt with a stick or ride a John Deere tractor instead. I'm in it for the freedom and keep coming up with freedom as the effective vehicle for electricity — let me see you live up or get rolled flat, nobody tells the truth, everybody has a hidden political agenda — knowledge and our ability to analyze it, I'm not a nihilist. Victory!

Walter Alter



Dear FRANK:

Somewhere in Brazil a tree is felled while a couple tangos in a nightclub. Sa sa sa sa they dip and shake their shoulders. Pa ba the trombones glint as their slides stretch up to the mirrored ball. Fa boom the tree goes slashing creepers and vines. Aaaa swoons the trumpeter, grinning and running his handkerchief over his lips. Hacha hacha hacha the tambourines go. Shoup shoup slide the feet across the floor.

Sincerely,
Mark

P.S. It is quiet in the jungle now but I think I hear someone laughing.

GINA LOTTA POST is an artist book containing stamp issues that have not been published previously, as well as, reproductions from published editions.

Life is good to poets these days. Poetry is in. The magazines want it, the coffee houses want it, even the nightclubs want it (preferably from rock musicians). The journalists grind out the catch phrases: "Beat Revivalism," "The Spoken Word," "Performance Poetry." All appearances point to the arrival of a major trend.

But the vogue machines don't start themselves. Something is happening: a whole new generation of poets is coming of age, and poetry, for the moment, is suddenly fresh again. I talked to four active young poets and asked them about what they've seen, what they've done and where it's all leading.



Jennifer Joseph is the author of "The Future Isn't What it Used To Be". She edits the "Young Poets" section of *Poetry San Francisco* and runs her own Manic D. Press.

FRANK: You organized the "Young Poets" readings, which really took off. What happened?

JJ: Well, with the first one, I asked people I knew to come read. The word got out and people started coming. In November it was like a bunch of kids: "I've got these poems, I hope you like them, I'm going to make 900 excuses and 4000 explanations and then I'm going to read them." Then in January they were saying, "I've only got 500 excuses and explanations and I've got a few more poems." By April it was, "Fuck the excuses. Fuck the explanations. Here's the poetry." And that's what I was hoping for.

FRANK: Is there a particular style to these poets?

JJ: I know I'm really into the evolution of language; using slang, using funny catch phrases, mixing metaphors. Doing everything I'm not supposed to do. In creative writing class they said, "Don't mix your metaphors." Yah! Mix every metaphor you can find!

FRANK: Poetry San Francisco publishes

prestigious, established poets. How do they respond to your "Young Poets" section?

JJ: As I explained to Herman Berlandt, the publisher, my job is not to convince older generations that what I'm doing is valid. My job is to turn people my own age onto something that is very cool poetry.

FRANK: Is there something about our era that has a particular effect on younger poets?

JJ: Besides imminent nuclear annihilation? When I cornered Ferlinghetti and asked him how he sold all those books, he said, "We kept getting busted. Allen took off his clothes and we'd get busted." I said, "Poets can't get busted anymore. We'll never sell any books." Since the 60s, when you take off your clothes everybody says, "Put your clothes back on." Or if you take a lot of drugs they say, "Oh everybody's taking drugs." There's a certain brand of alienation in the 80s — it puts all the other generations' alienation out the door.

FRANK: Right after the Bay Guardian ran their "Beat Revivalism" article, you burned a beret on stage. Why?

JJ: It was a symbolic gesture of getting rid of a symbol of a generation. God knows, artists have been wearing berets for centuries. Of course it didn't burn. The joke was on us. The symbol wouldn't die. Some symbols just won't go up in flames when they're supposed to.

BURNING

Marshall Weber, an artist and writer, is the director of Artist's Television Access (ATA), a gallery-performance studio.

FRANK: At ATA you helped put on and participated in Aaron Noble's reading series. Tell me about that.

MW: The shows included: "Terminal Pornography," "Sore Spots," "Brag, Threaten" and "Bad Words." It started with "Terminal Pornography" which was Aaron reading some very controversial stuff. He really grilled a lot of people with that. When I first read Aaron's stories I told him "You're disgusting," and I told him I would never have him read at ATA because the stories were so challenging and because at that time his work was...scatological.

FRANK: Scatological?

MW: Shit, anal sex, porno — he seemed to be following the Kathy Acker school. The social implications were radical. It was high impact work.

FRANK: What kind of crowds did you get at the readings?

MW: A lot of writers and a lot of fans. The crowds were typically informal and boisterous. At the second reading, "Sore Spots," Michael Pepe got into a fight with the audience. Jonathan Formula typed a story in front of the audience, read it to himself, criticized it and then refused to read it and then ripped it up.

For "Cheap Shots," the last one, Aaron got

down on his hands and knees at one point

and read through a microphone with the

amplifier balanced on his back.

FRANK: What kind of stuff was it?

MW: It was all very controversial work, you can't use the word underground because many of them are well respected around San Francisco. Aaron always got terse, succinct people to read: they weren't romantic. They were all socially oriented, issue oriented. Five of them went on to do their own shows here.

FRANK: How would you describe these writers to the general public? Avant-garde?

MW: I would never use the word Avant-garde. I hate that word. They're "emerging artists." I like that better because it implies that they're young and important, which they are. It also implies they're professionals and will be doing this penniless, pitiful job for the rest of their lives, which they will.

FRANK: For the "Cheap Shots" poster you had "No Beat Revivalism" printed over the top.

MW: The whole beat revival thing is really a joke. It's so artificial. The people who are promoting it don't realize these guys are still here, dying of alcoholism in various stages. They're not being revived...resuscitated maybe.

The beat world: I was never attracted to it. I met some of the people. They were interesting, I learned a lot from them but I was never fascinated with the beat scene. Some of the poets are good poets but the whole hippy thing really disgusts me.

FRANK: Do other artists pay attention to poetry?

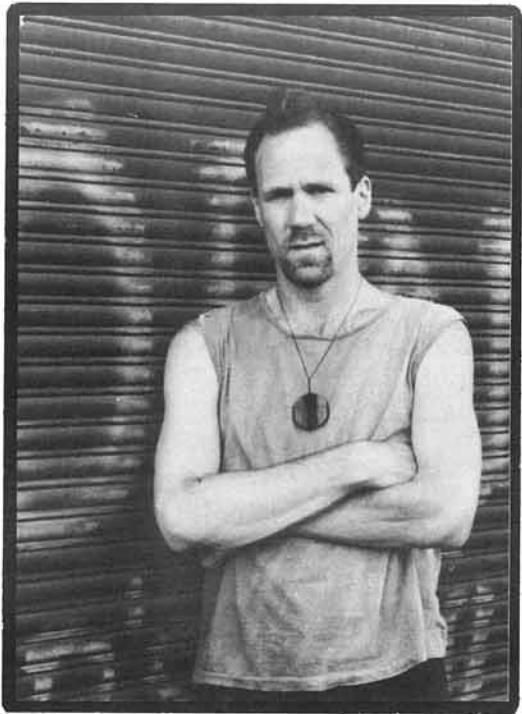
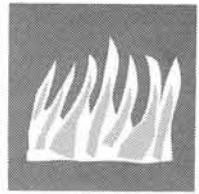
MW: They should. Poetry has been thought of as a visionary pursuit and I think the art world could stand a little of that approach, of that vitality.



BERETS

by Blake Nelson

Photographs by Taryn Fling



Harvey Stein's second book, "Love and Politics in Outer Space" has just been published by Bone City Press. (Available for \$7.50 postpaid, from Bone City Press, P.O. Box 421477, S.F., CA 94103).

FRANK: You made a poster for your poem, "Good Shooting." How did you get that idea?

HS: That was a lot of fun. I was sitting in my room thinking about guerilla marketing, which I always think about. So I bought some gun magazines and cut out the guns and started pasting them up with the poem. Then it hit me, that this was really a powerful image. Guns in this culture are so subconscious. I'm sure everybody dreams about getting shot or shooting someone.

I did it all myself and printed 200 copies and glued them up all over town. Within a day or two all the ones in the most public places were torn down, ripped, fingermailed — but some lasted for months.

FRANK: There's one completely intact, right by my house.

HS: Really? I still get comments about it. I think it worked. I'm going to do it again.

FRANK: "Good Shooting" is very accessible, like most of your poems.

HS: Most poetry puts people off. Because it's intellectual and it's not entertaining. They use

big words, they leave gaps in narrative, they use these things they think are revolutionary, and maybe they were in the fifties when modern art was difficult to understand. To them that difficulty is still interesting and original. But for me, I want to be simple.

There's so many ways modern art has put people off. I try to bring them in. Pablo Neruda said the true test of poetry is: can it speak to strangers?

FRANK: Describe a particularly wild reading or performance you've done.

HS: For an opening at Beef Gallery, Darse Elman and I covered ourselves with body paint. Especially our faces: *silver, dripping faces*. I read my science fiction poem, "Shiver Gasp Spasm of Love" with a spaghetti strainer on my head while Darse danced.

We were encased in glass, in the front window and we spoke through a microphone with the speaker outside on the street. We couldn't really hear the audience, I would stare out at them and they would stare in at me. There were lots of weird faces, back and forth.

FRANK: If someone viewing this said, "That's not poetry," what would you say?

HS: I would say poetry is dead... well it's always been pretty dead. It hasn't been a popular art form for a long time and now it's flirting with popularity again. We're doing what poets have always done but we dare to have fun too.

Dashka Slater studied poetry at the University of California in Berkeley. She is a staff member of the *Berkeley Poetry Review* and serves as an intern at *Poetry Flash*.

FRANK: I get the feeling from reading Poetry Flash, that "Language Poetry" is the new controversy. What is it?

DS: The language poets, to oversimplify, say that language carries in it the ideology of the culture and all its worst tendencies: fascism, war, sexism. If poetry is to say something other than what our culture is leading toward, it has to break down the language... it's a great theory.

FRANK: Who are the language poets? They sound like young radicals.

DS: No, they're not young. They're academic in their orientation but they haven't been incorporated into the universities.

FRANK: How old is the theory?

DS: What they do is what Gertrude Stein did. It's not that new really to have things be nonlinear and have disjunctive styles. Part of their theory is that the reader is supposed to participate and create his or her own meaning. Language Poetry has been around, I don't know, five years at the most.

I think it's interesting, but it's very elitist. They want to reach the masses, but to expect people to read poetry that doesn't make sense is unrealistic.

FRANK: Did you have trouble with the "academics" at Berkeley?

DS: Sometimes. The first workshop I went to, the professor immediately wrote 15 things on

the blackboard that you should never do in poetry. Then he read one of the student's poems and all the students obediently said, "Oh well that breaks rule number 12." It was terrible. I was gone in 30 seconds.

FRANK: What about the students themselves, were they all so obedient?

DS: A lot of them are just afraid to be young. They don't want to write like young writers do. Young writers tend to be self-indulgent, sometimes to a fault. But now's the time to do it if you ever going to. Young writers don't like stuff that's very romantic or that's depressing or sentimental. They like humor and cynical stuff and descriptions of landscapes.

FRANK: No love poems...

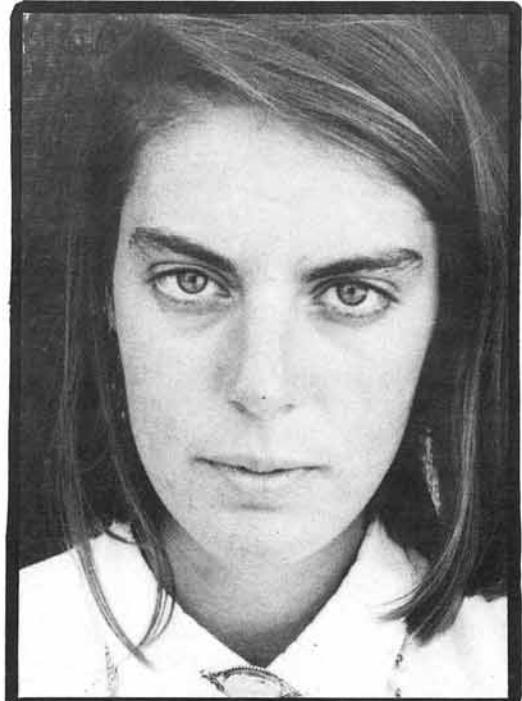
DS: I think it's impossible to get love poems published right now.

FRANK: Maybe these people have never been in love.

DS: I think the problem is that they have. And it's embarrassing. They're embarrassed by any fusion of sentiment and emotion. They say, "Oh, this is so unpolished."

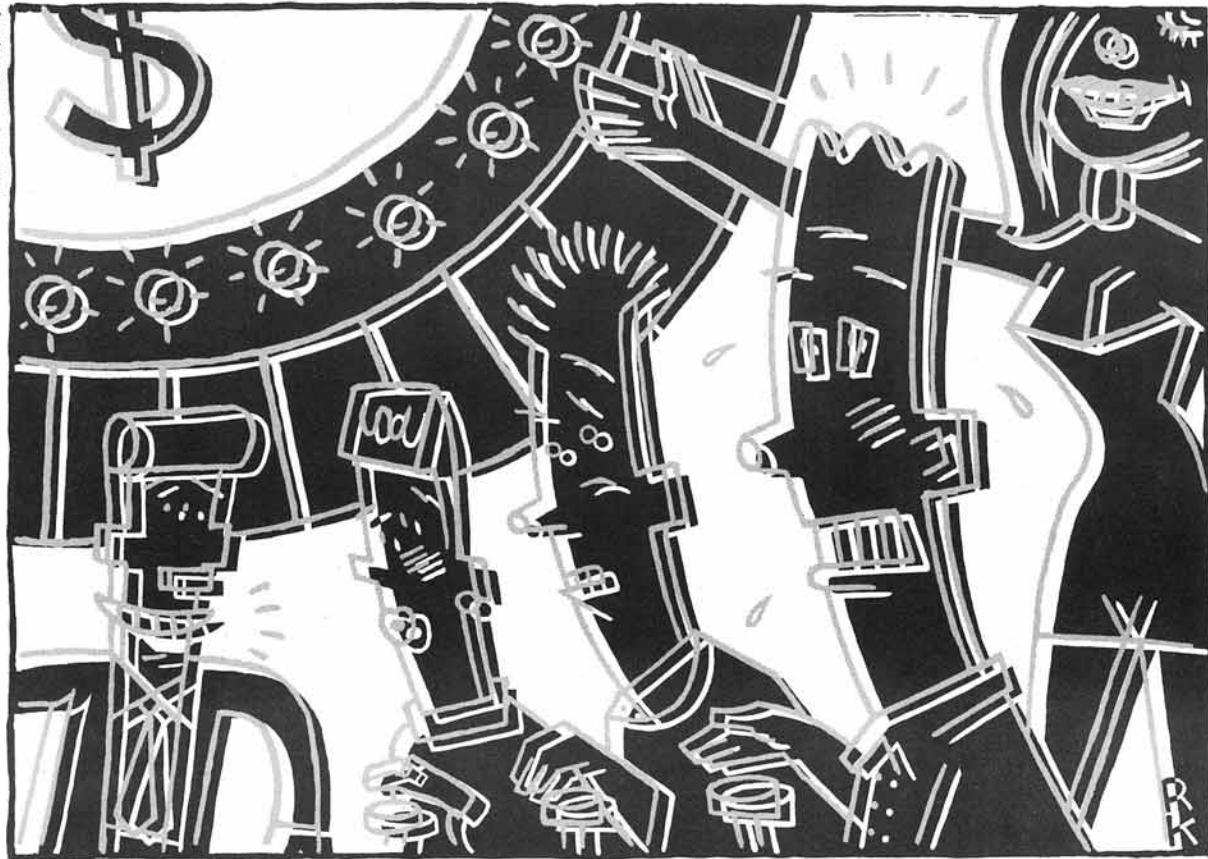
FRANK: From your vantage point, do you see any new trends in poetry?

DS: On campus for a long time it was the modernists and imagists who were in, Eliot and Pound. No one's interested in them anymore. Everyone's into Yeats. All the Yeats books are checked out of the library. Everyone's doing their thesis on Yeats. To me that says people are not so much into alienation. His work stressed the richness of nature and human creation. It is much more regenerative.



10 G's

Illustration — Robert Kopecky



**in CASH
and PRIZES**

Tim McGee

"Gee, I've never met anyone who's actually been on a game show," is what most people say when I reveal that I appeared on "Wheel of Fortune." It doesn't take much imagination to figure out why some past challengers don't advertise that status. No one has ever asked, "Why did you do it?" Apparently most know the answer to that one, as evidenced by the most common first question: "Did you win anything?" I've often suspected that, given a free shot, the most common second question might be: "And aren't you a little ashamed of yourself?" That's why I've taken to answering query number one with: "I won over \$11,000 worth of stuff in about 45 minutes."

It's nice to be able to say that. Admitting to a degradation that was not at least profitable would be another matter. It's also nice that my career as a game show contestant began on one of the majors. When I appeared on "Wheel," it was still daytime-only fare, unseen by millions. Since the addition of a prime time slot, "Wheel of Fortune" has become the new national pastime. And thanks to Martin Short's frequent "Saturday Night Live" portrayals of Ed Grimley (the archetypal geek consumed by a passion for the game), "Wheel of Fortune" is now known even to discriminating viewers who wouldn't stoop to watching the show itself.

All this has helped host Pat Sajak rise from the ranks of mere television personality to that of celebrity, and made his assistant, the lovely Vanna White, into what a recent *Chronicle* article called "something of a TV cult figure." I, by extension, have become someone worth meeting. Imagine the doors open to one who can say, "Shake the hand that shook the hand of Pat Sajak."

Just last year, local luminary Zippy the Pinhead, fearing he was dying, formulated his last wishes: more than anything Zippy wanted an audience with the lifesize ceramic dog seen on "Wheel of Fortune." Believe it or not, I won that dog. Yes, that beautiful canine, artfully reproduced by an Italian designer, is the focus of my own living room decor. The trip to Hong Kong, the TV, stereo, Gucci gift certificate, microwave oven, electric typewriter, etc. were all fine and dandy, but none is as dear as Loretta, my ceramic greyhound. (Loretta Swit was that puzzle's winning solution.)

I never did hook up with Zippy. At the time of his crisis, I was busy interviewing for my second game show appearance, a recently taped episode of "Sale of the Century." Less famous than "Wheel," but a quality show nonetheless, "Sale" is a trivia/reflex contest where the first of three opponents to hit a buzzer gets to answer the general information question the host had been reading. A correct response adds \$5 to your starting bank of \$20 — an incorrect answer subtracts \$5. Sounds like small potatoes until you realize that if you've got the lead at Instant Bargain Time, the host will try to sell you a European vacation or some such luxury for about 20 bucks, or whatever it takes to put you into a tie with your nearest competitor.

A Speed Round at the end of the game gives lagging players a chance to catch the leader. The one with the highest total at the finish goes to the Bonus Board to win a prize ranging in value from two grand to 25 thou. A good day's take might be 10 G's in cash and prizes. An 11 day streak, the max allowable, could net you \$70,000 in cash and another \$50,000 worth of trips, cars and assorted chachkas.

That's what I call a quality game show. And unlike "Wheel," there's very little luck involved. It's also less risky than "Pyramid" or "Password," where your fortune could depend on the performance of some celebrity who may not be celebrated for brains.

Although I owe part of my success on "Wheel" to luck (and some less-than-stiff competition), I give myself most of the credit for playing one hell of a game. Okay, so I bought a vowel I didn't really need — at least I didn't say anything truly stupid. Which, of course, is part of these show's stock in trade.

What makes a given game popular is hard to say, but it's important that the home viewers (i.e., the average dummies) occasionally feel mentally superior to the contestants. That way, they can sit at home pounding the arm of the davenport, shouting, "I could do better than that." In truth, many could, but few give it a try.

What does it take to get on a game show? One idiotic grin, two trips to L.A., three changes of clothing, a little bit of skill at the game involved, and not a lot more. First you must choose the contest that's right for you. I wouldn't be able to identify the "Star Spangled Banner" until the title came up in the lyrics, so "Name That Tune" is definitely not for me. And since network rules allow you only three game shows in a lifetime, it's important to choose carefully.

You then write to the address they announce after the show. They write back, giving you a phone number so you can tell them when you'll be in L.A. They don't provide transportation or anything else, with the possible exception of a free lunch on taping day. Then you go to Los Angeles for a quick skills test, preferably dressed like you stepped out of a Sears catalogue, and smiling incessantly.

If you pass the test, they invite you back for a Run Through. This is the critical selection stage that separates the men and women from the Yahoos, and the Yahoos get to go on. They say what they're looking for is personality and enthusiasm. What wins is lunatic ebullience. Think Richard Simmons on nitrous oxide and you've got a good idea of how they want you to behave.

That explains why every contestant on every show seems to be an absolute geek. Some are the genuine article — some are merely posing as same. But since the ability to become exhilarated over a toaster-oven is a prerequisite for playing, all players possess an equal ability to look idiotic.

If you survive the Run Through, you get a Taping Date, the day you're supposed to

show up at a television studio with three changes of clothing. That's because they tape five shows at a whack. If you're fortunate enough to be selected for the first show and are the victor, you simply change your outfit (to give the illusion that a day has passed between shows) and get right back on stage.

Certainly the most hellish trial inflicted on the contestants is the ordeal they're put through on taping day. All the candidates are isolated in a corner next to the studio audience and forced to watch one show after another, never knowing until the last minute when their turn will arrive. Forbidden any outside contact, they sit primed for action, many teetering on the edge of hysteria, sometimes for as long as eight hours.

This is where you can tell the real geeks from the pretenders. The true believers maintain their cheery dispositions and continue to applaud on cue, their optimism unchecked. The posers just turn ugly, and start making snide remarks about the players or the prizes they've won.

Several hours into my recent "Sale of the Century" taping, when one player was awarded a vacuum cleaner, the man on my left remarked, "Now there's a prize that really sucks." Minutes later, when someone got a trash compacter, the fellow on my right says, "Yes ladies and gentlemen, this remarkable device easily converts forty pounds of garbage into... forty pounds of garbage." Meanwhile, I studied the World Almanac, reacquainting myself with the Presidents of the United States.

All I needed to hear was, "Born in 1782 and elected eighth President..." and I'd have been shouting Martin van Buren. And there wasn't a state capital I couldn't rattle off in less than a second. The grand prize of the day was a sexy Italian sports car I felt destined to drive, and suddenly it was my turn to play.

The next thing I know, I'm seated on stage between two women, fingers poised above my red buzzer button, aching for the opportunity to show my stuff. Tight as the high C wire on a harpsichord, I tell myself, "My time has come — let the game begin."

The blonde on my left, the reigning champ, buzzes the first question and gets it right. The second question goes to the woman on my right. The next is taken again by the woman on my left. Before I know it, the first round is over and we break for a commercial. Both my opponents are racking up points and I have yet to touch my buzzer. I've known the answer to every question so far, but I'm frozen in a zombie-like stupor.

I give myself a pep talk. You can't wait until the end of the question. Anticipation — that's the name of the game. You've got to use the four seconds allowed after you buzz to figure out what they're looking for and come up with the answer. If they can do it so can you.

The commercial is ended and the host resumes with the question, "From the Latin word for order..." and I hit my buzzer,

stopping him mid-sentence. The floor is mine and all I have to do is come up with a word. Having studied Latin for four years, I know that I know it. Unfortunately, my information retrieval system puts me on hold. As time runs out, I give my first response of the show, saying, "I don't have a clue."

I give myself another pep talk, warning against the dangers of over-anticipation. The next question asks on what TV show you might find the character Higgins. I get an instant mental picture of the man with his natty dress and British accent, know that I know the show, hit the buzzer, and find my mouth in mutiny, unwilling to voice the words, "Magnum P.I." I fall an additional \$5 behind the competition.

By the time the Speed Round arrived, I had thrice betrayed myself by buzzing first and then failing to answer within the four second limit. Both my opponents already had thousands in prizes, and the reigning champ still had about \$60 in her bank. Mine was empty.

But then, something happened. With only a dozen or so questions between me and defeat, I started clicking. I buzzed the first question of the Speed Round and got it right. I did the same on the second and third. The champ took one from me, but I came right back with another four in a row. All of a sudden, the audience was witnessing a comeback unprecedented in the annals of game showmanship. With only seconds left on the clock, I was locked in a tie with my blonde adversary when the host reads the question, "If you're on the Puget Sound, you are in what state?"

Reality shifts into slow motion as, out of the corner of my eye, I see the champ's fingers start to depress the buzzer. Summoning every ounce of energy in my possession and directing it to my finger tips, I press... and beat her to the punch. The host looks to me for the game-winning answer and I shout, for all the world to hear, "New York."

Believe it or not, I've been on Puget Sound. Not once, but twice — both times in recent years. And both times Puget Sound was in the state of Washington. I said, "New York," and lost \$5, thereby handing the victory over to the champion.

She, in turn, went to the Bonus Board, picked two numbers, and won a \$22,000. Alfa Romeo convertible with red leather upholstery. I, on the other hand, will get a check for \$60, ninety days after the show airs.

There may be a lesson here, but frankly, I don't give a damn. I take some solace from the fact that I still have a chance to regain my honor and maybe even win big in the process. A year from now, I will return to Los Angeles and audition for one final game show appearance. Meanwhile, I go about my life (walking) and try not to think about what might have been. And every now and then, when I see a blonde drive by in a sexy little sports car, I just smile and say to myself, "Washington, damn it, Washington."

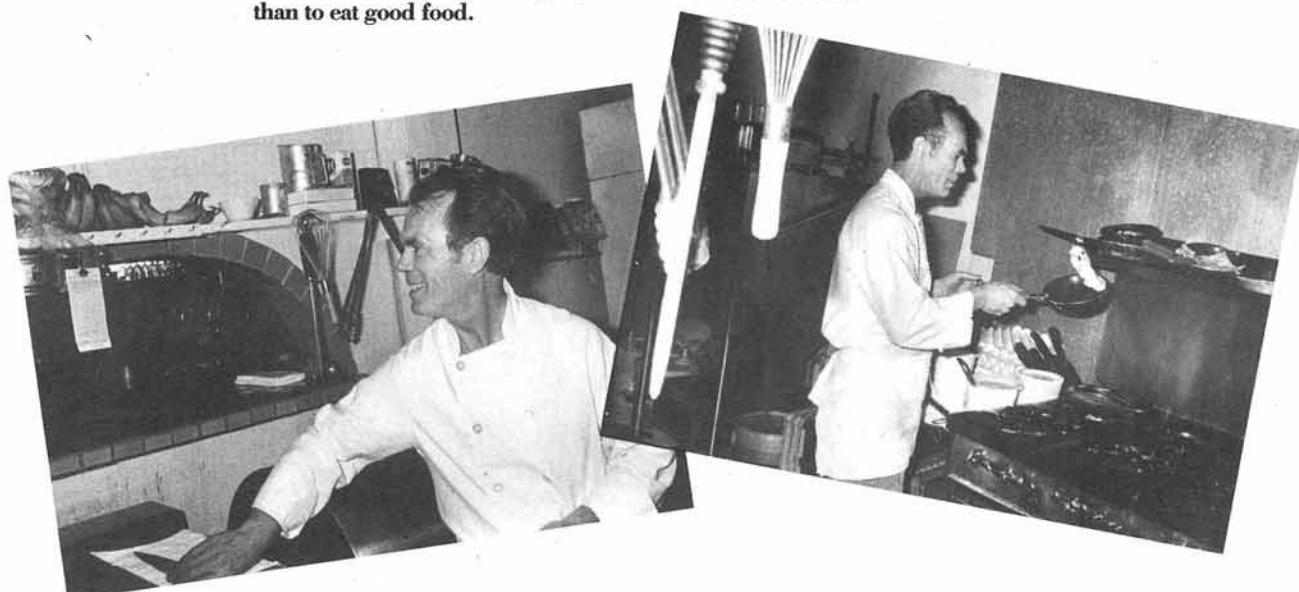
In Short Order

Breakfast	
Steak + Eggs	595
Bacon + Eggs	370
Sausage + Eggs	370
Ham + Eggs	380
Hot Links + Eggs	400
Hamburger Steak + Eggs	430
French Toast	
Two Eggs	220
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Griddle Cakes - Bacon	375
Cakes + Bacon + Eggs	425
Cakes + Ham + Eggs	435
Griddle Cakes + Eggs	325
Waffle	205
Strawberry Waffle	280
Griddle Cakes	195
Short Stack	185
Milk	15
Scrambled Eggs	215
Cream of Wheat	95
French Bread	20

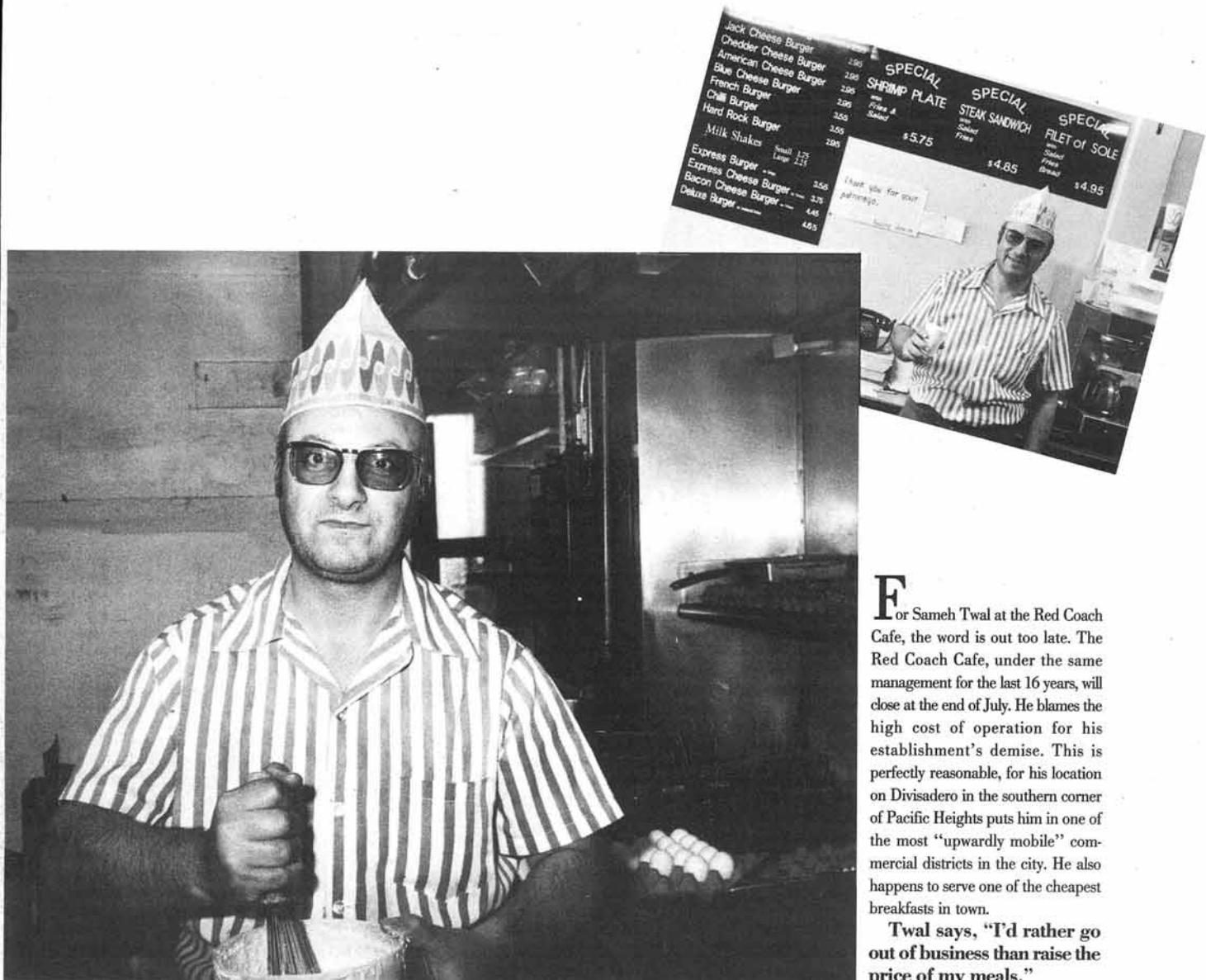
Jimmy V's is located on Ocean Avenue in a neighborhood that seems to be going in a different direction from most neighborhoods. There are no gourmet food stores, coffeehouses, cookie bars, or clothing stores. The movie theater is now a baptist church. What was once a bowling alley is now a family medical center. And what looks like the local tavern is actually one of the best breakfast spots in the city.

James Vassar, the Texas-born owner, has been cooking the daily breakfasts at Jimmy V's for the past three years. His specialty is omelettes, and he has the deceptive style of someone who's been making them for an awfully long time. The kitchen lacks any of the manic energy normally associated with a short-order grill but Vassar knows exactly when to pull something out of the of the pan. He does no prep work, which means that nothing is pre-cooked or prepared earlier in the day.

Vassar's worst fear is that people eat out to be seen rather than to eat good food.



Text — Tim Rowland
Photos — S. Lee Hagenhorse



For Sameh Twal at the Red Coach Cafe, the word is out too late. The Red Coach Cafe, under the same management for the last 16 years, will close at the end of July. He blames the high cost of operation for his establishment's demise. This is perfectly reasonable, for his location on Divisadero in the southern corner of Pacific Heights puts him in one of the most "upwardly mobile" commercial districts in the city. He also happens to serve one of the cheapest breakfasts in town.

Twal says, "I'd rather go out of business than raise the price of my meals."

It's Tops Coffee Shop, 1801 Market St. has been "family operated" by the Chapmans since 1957. The cook, Bruce Chapman, now in his 20s, has been working around the grill since he was seven years old. Bruce says he can cook a complete breakfast in less than two minutes. His sister, Sheila, who waitresses and cooks, agrees with this.

They both work so fast on Saturday mornings that it seems as though there's at least four of them. It's Top's, where the interior has not changed since 1945, was originally called the Minute Man Cafe and the element of speed continues to be part of its tradition.

Another part of their tradition is their pancakes, which cannot be copied. They are made on a three quarter inch grill which has been in the place since 1935. The grill was discontinued in 1937. "You can't find a grill like this anymore, one that'll stay this hot," says Bruce. "I give out the pancake recipe all of the time. It doesn't matter."

"The trick is the grill."



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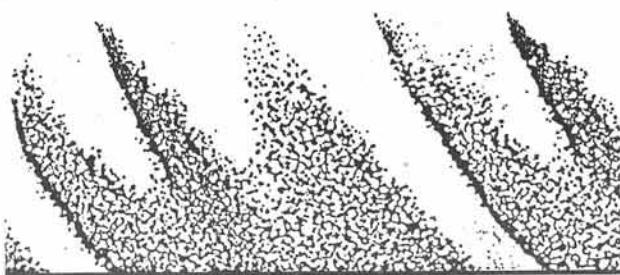
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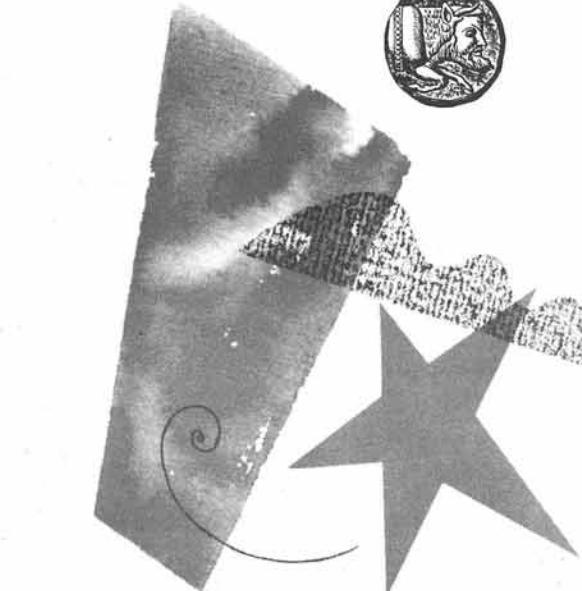
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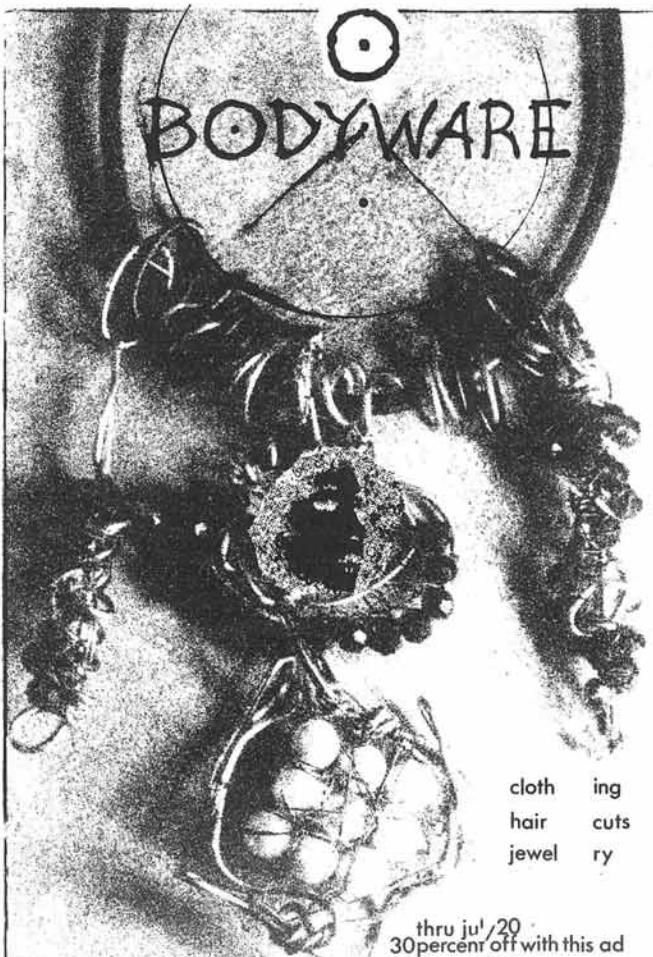
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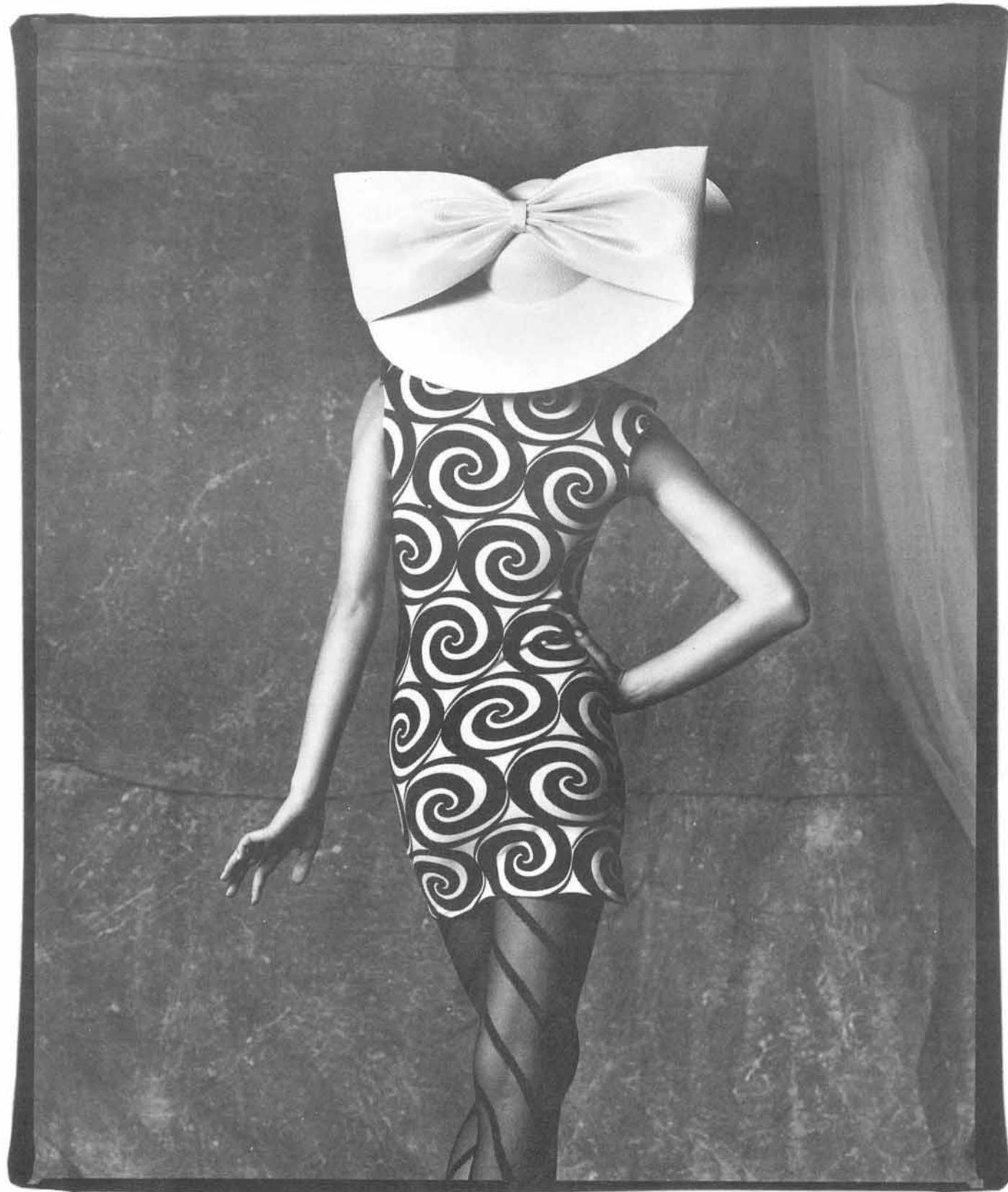
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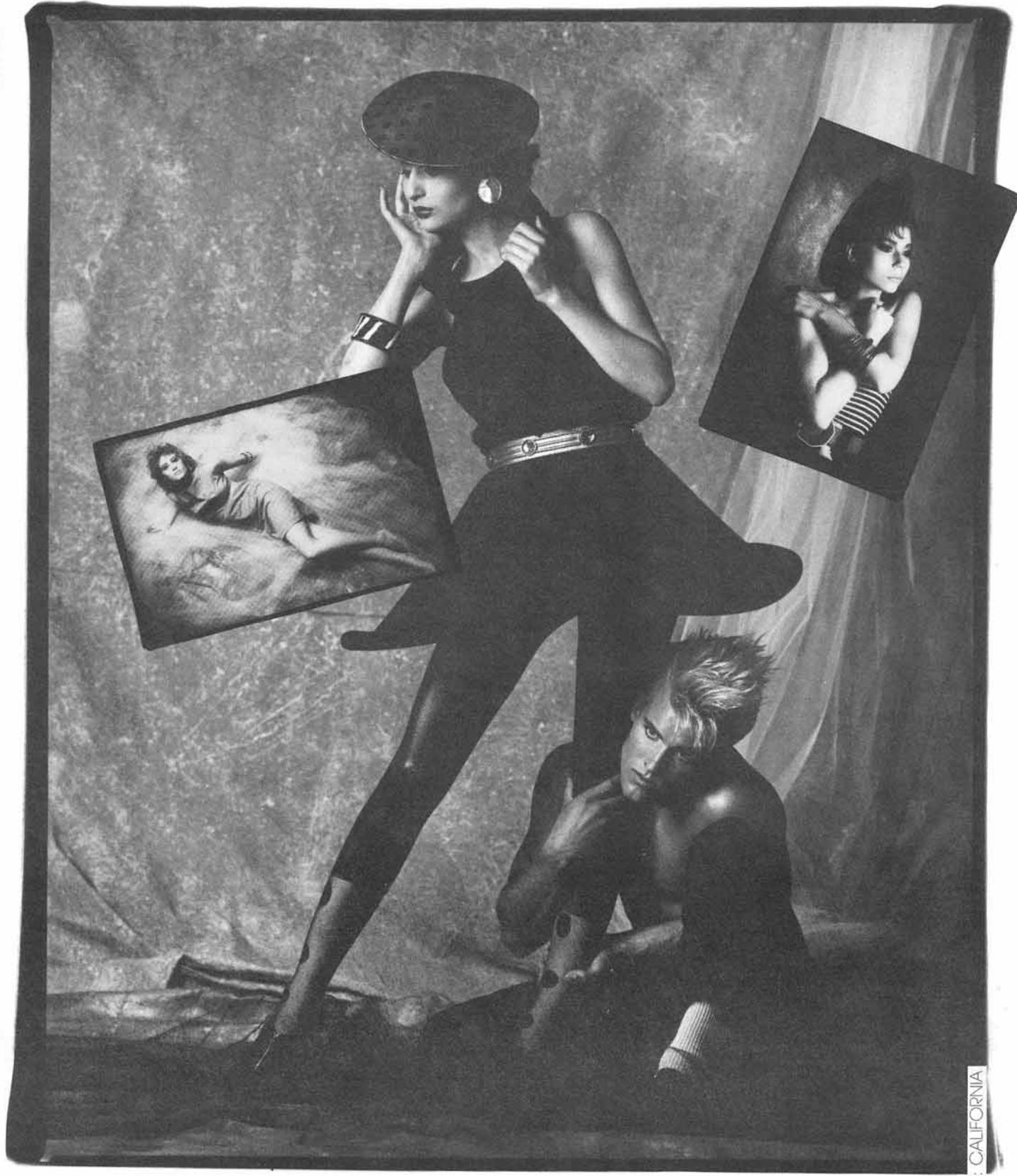
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PHOTOGRAPHS: MARK FARBIN MAKEUP: SYNDI SAIZAN HAIR: ERIN GALLACHER MODELS: MUSKA, CHRIS, JULIE, SHASHAWNA



JEWELRY: CALIFORNIA

ART DIRECTION/DESIGN & STYLING: KATHLEEN BIFULOO CLOTHING: CALIFORNIA & CARNEVALE SHOES: GIMME SHOES

R

E

V

I

Mark Mardon

skateboard



Against the yellow wall there are no mysteries. There the tall man sits, the tall young man with the green sweater tied around his waist, there he sits, his back against the wall, his butt upon a skateboard, upon a non-skid surface, his legs drawn up, his arms folded around his knees. He contemplates the world. There are no mysteries. There is concrete, asphalt and metal. There is some brick and wood. Every once in a while there's a tree. It is no mystery why the tree is there: someone planned it, just like everything is planned — and then falls apart. There is nothing natural in the city, and nothing eternal. That's why the tall young man with the green sweater sits upon his skateboard. If there is nothing natural, there is also nothing unnatural — all is fixed, all is a facade. Skateboarding is just another facade in the city, another way of life.

All-American punk white boys on skateboards: as standard in the city as lox and cream cheese on a bagel. You see them in the skateboard shops with their parents, when they're still squeaky clean and innocent and too young to buy the equipment on their own. They plaster their boards up and down with cartoon decals, hideous monsters and demonic faces of evil. They are delighted by the clash of fluorescent greens, oranges, reds and the black lips of hell creatures.

They wear the requisite multi-colored hi-top tennies and the standard knee-length, Hawaiian-patterned shorts. They assemble on street-corners, consciously cool post-

pubescent boys, wanting to be looked at, never admitting it. One steps out of the circle, gingerly tosses his board to the ground, toes it, makes it pop up, steps on it, makes it squirm, dance. The others watch impassively out of the corners of their eyes; he pays no attention to them, only to his motions, to his performance. But the dance is quickly over, even before any climax to it can be made, and the boy rejoins his buddies. He has not the power to leave them. Not yet.

Over in the East Bay two punked-out girls are preparing to invade the City. They have their spikes and black leather jackets, their ripped black jeans and their bruise-colored eyeliner — and their skateboards. These are skateboards that have known the streets, that have kissed asphalt and bashed their lips into curbs. These are skateboards that have dumped their riders and propelled themselves to freedom by bucking and running under cars. These are *mean* skateboards, and the only reason the punk girls have them is because their punker boyfriends stole them. These are scarred and battered skateboards, solemn skateboards, skateboards with a ravaged, angry look. These are skateboards with short, nasty, violent lives, that will have their backs broken by the end of the night.

The girls will thrash on the hills with their rad boys and one of them will end up bloody. It's cool. Her boy will like her better after that. She widens the rip in the knee of her jeans

Continued on page 22

Annie Barrows

childrens books

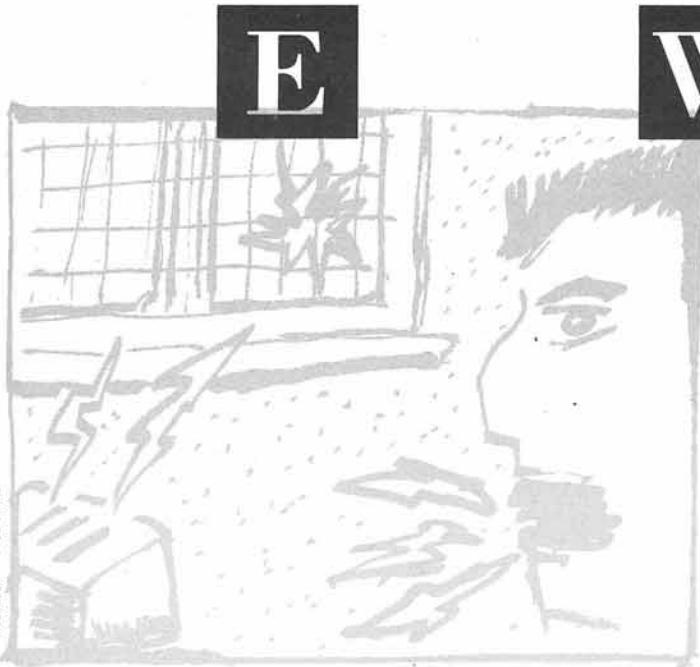
The rapture of reading children's books is akin to the rapture of the yawn — a slow stretch backwards, a delicious suspension of analysis, a relaxation into the luxury of simply listening. Literature is lots of work; we must gird our loins to be not only cognizant, but appreciative of Subtle Allusions, Symbols, The Author's Purpose, Literary Antecedents, The Author's Voice, Psychosexual Over- and Undertones and all those other things we have been taught to fiercely chase and bag. Children's books provide a respite from the task of literature, but they also, more usefully, provide a respite from the task of adulthood.

There is a particular kind of time in childhood, an endless suspended animation, in which nothing ever happens and everything has always been the same. Children's time is thick as fudge sauce — there is really nothing that they have to do (unless they are those poor hounded children of parents who see life as one long preparation for Harvard, with ballet, piano, watercolor, soccer and swimming lessons and foreign films and museums on weekends).

Almost every child spends long stretches of time in complete boredom. The tribal rites of adolescence change all that. By the time one has been mugged by adulthood, one can barely remember the bliss of childhood

Continued on page 34





W

S

industrial music

Just when it began to get boring again, something new pops out of the closet — and the next Horseman of the Apocalypse is: Industrial Music! Following on the heels, dragging on the punk underbelly, industrial music seems to be the next phase in untwisting the twist, and why not? Why not be done with the music industry's hordes of strutting idiots; trash the radio. A blender or toy windup animal has more soul and originality anyway. Industrial is an attempt to make a soundtrack for our real surroundings by putting existing music, rusty machines and found sound in a shaker to see what rises to the top.

Industrial music is a catch-all phrase for experimental music. It takes in everything from art/noise to high tech, low tech, bongers, scrapers and screechers. The art/noise, like the tortured hog sax solos of 3 a.m., is outside of musical convention. It can be tape recordings of found sound from the environment. Art/noise is basically sound sculpture, and like other sculpture the effectiveness of this depends heavily on how and where it is presented. Hard to pull off, but worth the trouble if it comes through.

The new primitivists are the most confirmed low-tech people. It's like: Poo! You're an aborigine in New York — what do you do? Tie hubcaps on yourself and yell a lot? The idea is to break down the structure of what music is and what music does and rebuild it on ancient models that have been ploughed under in the great march to progress, like chants from matriarchal religion, trance singing or fossilized note scales from the Boat Axe Culture. Why not? It might be good. In addition to the new primitivists you have countless groups impossible to classify; punk rockers without electric guitars, painters with

microphones, musicians who boycott music stores, people with incomprehensible schemes and people out for a good time.

Out on 8th St., the ATA Gallery was packed with Denverites. Most of the bands and audience were from Denver. The excitement was contagious and the bands were good. Human Head Transplant had a woman playing trumpet through a sound altering device that made it sound like an angry monster stranded in mud. It was quite effective. From Vancouver, the Haters made an appearance, four guys in executioner's hoods, simultaneously playing records with nothing on them. They "make" the music on the spot by carving the records with knives and screwdrivers, and then play them. Every 30 seconds or so a record is "done" and tossed into the crowd. The effect of the different patterns of record skips and popping made an enthralling and surprisingly delicate pattern. There were records all over the place when they cut out.

The Denver Invasion show was exceptional because most pieces worked well. Most times you get your share of duds as well as successes; the thing about Industrial is you never know what to expect. There's been quite a growth in bands and places to play lately — a scene, as it were. I don't really care if it's "the rage" right now or not: Industrial music is a series of channels of experimentation involving classical, punk, jazz, folk, ethnic, poetry, theatre and performance art. When something gets established, it turns into something else.

The diversity of this movement, or movements, is a healthy sign for all the arts concerned. The cross pollination will create new mutations for the future. The wildest is yet to come!

Fred Rinne

Rob Bregoff

lower haight



Photo — Stefano Massel

A user's guide to the Lower Haight

I recently walked the few blocks near the intersection of Haight and Fillmore, stopping in businesses to ask a few key questions. The first question usually was "what do you call this area?", thinking I could be the first to immortalize in print some catchy moniker like SOMA, but the universal answer seemed to be: "I just call it the Lower Haight." So much for being buried between Walter Winchell and Herb Caen. I also asked why they chose this area in which to do business. Again, most conferred, "we like the (a) creative atmosphere (b) low rents (c) mix of ages, races, lifestyles etc."

There is here the patina of California new age live and let live attitude spread over the racial and economic tensions that occur when a neighborhood is being born-again, and there is the smugness of wanting to be a pioneer and uncover the charm and potential of a new territory. This is our own little East Village, or Soho of 10 years ago.

I inquired as to what most would like to see happen to the neighborhood in the future. Most said they would prefer it remain somewhat like it is, with a nice mix of people.

These are the environs where 10 years ago it was all heroin and hold-ups, and before that, in the 40s, a home for many well-to-do and working class Jews, just as the outer Richmond was mainly Russian, Mission and Army was German and the Castro was mostly Irish. My how things change. The biggest fallacy I encountered was the expectation that the area would not change, while most were participating in the conspiracy that produces change the fastest: bringing new ideas and businesses into the neighborhood. But not to worry, because, as the French say, the only thing constant is

Continued on page 22

lower haight

continued from page 21
change.

The latest in commercial Latte in the neighborhood occurs at GROUND ZERO, homemade business of neighborhood resident Jay Johnson. The interior is light, crisp - a great place to sit around pretending to read *Le Figaro*, while trying to figure out if the cute yellow-haired guy at the next table is gay or not. It's a quiet riot of industro-chic Formica and the toasty smell of a big espresso machine at work.

Across Haight Street you'll find BODY-WARE, where the extemporaneousness of the merchandise melds well with the magically slapdash interior of the store. Owners Thom and Filipe tell me that their neighbors leave "junk" on their doorstep, expecting it can be used, and it usually is. This really is art-to-wear, and art to be.

Nearby, Delaney Launderette has a sign in the window that reads: "All new dryers are hot now, they have been corrected." Thank you Deity.

In CRIMES OF FASHION, aside from a wall of leather hats, they sell new and used clothing and play reggae music. Julie, employee of the day, wasn't running for Miss Congeniality, and told me the neighborhood "is like it is." I should have figured that out.

O'LOOONEYS, another aptly named business, probably looks much as it did 30 years ago, only I doubt if the present owner, whose name is Mohammed, is part of the original O'Looney clan. He told me that having a store in the neighborhood was "better than nothing," and that he was struggling to stay afloat in a competitive grocery market. His next struggle will be even harder: deciding whether to sell pig's feet or goat cheese. Good luck, Mohammed.

ACAPPELLA'S was closed when I passed by, but a gaze in the window revealed a formidable pink and gray interior, with some refreshingly bad paintings on the walls. Cheesesteaks seem to be specialite de la maison.

Not one but two sushi bars occur in the next block, and I hope you'll notice that I haven't even used the Y-word yet. WASABE SUSHI makes the traditional cel-on-rice type that we have come to know and love, or be

repulsed by, while across the street at BACK BAY they specialize in a less familiar Osaka-style sushi, where the eel and rice is compressed in little wooden boxes and artfully bisected. Both places had very polite Japanese owners who provide welcome sanctuary from the sometimes besotted war zone of the street.

BACK BAY CLOTHING shares its large storefront with the sushi emporium, so you can try on shoes while eating octopus.

At ROBERTO ROBLEDO'S clothing studio, I spoke with manager Isabelle Beekman, who thinks this is still the worst neighborhood (albeit amusing) and that it seems to be changing for the better.

MARCELLO'S Pizza, at the corner of Haight and Fillmore, occupies the site of the former, notorious Hank's 500 Club, (Rebecca Accessory - designer Kmeik, 8-year neighborhood resident, called Hank's the Murder-of-the-Month club.) Marcello's acutely bright and clever interior resembles a cleaned up Musee Mechanique. Antique toy trucks used to encircle the room on a track, until one plummeted to a table, narrowly missing a customer. Manager Jack says that they've done well in the neighborhood, and have had few problems, aside from an occasional armed robbery and dealing with all those pizza-hungry ghosts.

Across Fillmore, the new LO-COST MEAT MARKET is an Asian run and staffed upper Stockton Street style steak store. Missing are the live chickens, frogs and turtles that make Chinatown stores so droll.

At least four restaurants occupy the block of Haight between Fillmore and Webster, all are unique. One can partake of burritos at CARLOS' PLACE, where the manager impolitely said, "I don wanna be in no magazine or nothin'..." while he walked back to his steam table and turned his back, hoping I'd go away, and I did.

Next stop on my tour gastronomique was PRINCE NEVILLE'S, regrettably closed at the moment, but the only place in town with goat and ackee on the same menu. I've been anxious to try this place for a while but I think I've been avoiding it, as an evening of Reggae music is not my idea of a good time. I'd rather pasta than rasta.

A DELI LOVER'S CAFE owner Curtis wants to fill the gaping hole in the food scene that could only be filled by a real N.Y. Jewish Deli, but sorry Boys, this ain't the one. You'll have to be ruder to customers, use more nitrates, and add a nice veneer of grease to these cherry pink walls before any New Yorker I know will shut up. On the other hand, DELTA'S DEPRESSION DOUGH, across the street, may be just the ticket. Specializing in deep fried bread, ala the American midwest, this affordably-priced cafe provides paper tablecloths and crayons (ala Cafe Une Deux Trois in NYC.) This way, the otherwise struggling artists in the nabe can whip up masterpieces on the tabletops, while Delta whips up masterpieces on the griddle. Some of the masterpieces (the art, not the food) find their way to the blue walls and this may be the Gertude Stein salon of the future.

At the UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT aerobics studio, the crowd is not your typical pastel swathed self-punishment groupies (brings to mind that Y-word again...) Owner Gerda, and her Doberman, would like to get some dance classes going for the neighborhood's underprivileged kids. Look out Dance Theatre of Harlem.

On Fillmore, just south of Haight, you'll find more interesting businesses like: COMMUNITY BLENDS, 2-year-old very San Francisco style espresso joint that features killer muffins; PET POURRI, a spanking new animal accessory boutique; a dynamite new Thai restaurant, which is already attracting lines of hungry cilantro buffs; ZIP ZAP, a sort of supercuts for the greghaired set, and TONY BENNETT'S CONEY ISLAND, a closet-sized hot dog shoppe-cum-wierd candy store-cum-ice cream parlor. Sweet and polite counter-person Sandy serves up an epicurean model foot-long with skill and alacrity...and for dessert, perhaps the blue plastic ring with a hundred karat faceted piece of rock candy where the diamond solitaire should be. The mouth waters, the mind reels.

Back at Haight at Steiner, Joe Herschelle, grandson of Louise Salinger, (founder of the noted school of fashion by the same name) is in the process of creating another retail-store-as-a-work-of-art to show the clothing that he and partner Phillippe are also creating. I can't

wait to see how this styrofoam cave-of-a-space turns out, but so far, so wierd.

NOC NOC is a 3-month-old beer and wine bar that has its roots planted firmly in the serious eso-terrorists movement, and features the obligatory partially-working televisions, gray painted everything and some very drab minimalist music. The landscape may be too post-Hiroshima, but the beer list is the best this side of Tommy's Joynt.

HOL—CAM'S new boutique features exclusively designers Holly and Camille's habillment, which draws from the eerie and snappy styles of the many eras. Snow White and Morticia Addams would be equally happy shopping here. Holly and Camille's friend Luther did the fixture and furniture, which provide the perfect tomorrowland meets fantasyland props as a foil for Hol-Cam's togs.

Further down Haight, I talked to businesswoman Vickie, who sells new and "experienced" clothing. Vickie turned out to be quite the compassionate philosopher, and lamented the fact that so many longtime neighborhood denizens were being forced to move because of greed and rents. When I asked her what she'd like to see happen in the area, she said, "More salad, less grease..." A statement which pretty much speaks for itself. More lettuce for Vickie, please, and hold the Mazzola.

Marina at *Beef Magazine*, an art-oriented journal, provides space for many up-and-coming artists to perform or hang shows in an environment that, she hopes, will inspire artists to spurn the ominous commercialism that is pervading the art scene these days. Vissi d'arte.

As I was climbing back into my car, a mysterious plastic appliance flew from a second-story bay window and shattered unceremoniously on the sidewalk below. On closer inspection, I discovered it was an air purifier. I took it as a sort of "hurry back" gesture from the locals. This is that sort of neighborhood.

Rob Bregoff

skateboard

continued from page 20

and exposes the five-inch scab. That's just one: you should've seen what she did to her head!

Out of the city there are the highways, even unto the Midwest. On these highways in ages past and even unto the present there sailed solitary figures in convertibles. They were loners, drifters, free men. They were, and ever are, American heroes.

No less, the solitary skateboarders of the City. These few, a very few, feel no tie to heaven and are ever defying the earth, but it holds them. It holds them and twists them, but they twist back and so an antagonism of forces conspires to create a most startling and unworldly ballet on the streets. Nothing engages these men so much as the act of breaking free. They are a long, long way from their gangs on the streetcorners, all of whom vanished from the scene. These men are on their own. You and I cannot touch them.

A green sweater around his waist, a blue, torn tanktop, some well-worn black jeans, old running shoes — shoulders, arms, breast and neck bare, skin tanned, jaws wide, hair long, curly, dirty blonde, turned-up nose, cleft chin, high cheekbones, hardened look, wary eyes, eyes that have seen inside the walls of the city, into the cubicles of human isolation, a body that has felt the humiliating blows of ignorance. Maybe he'll open up for someone, a woman, maybe, someone to pound his flesh and heart hard.

This man on a skateboard lives an aesthetics, a philosophy, a sport and he doesn't give a damn if you know it.

But I do.

Mark Mardon

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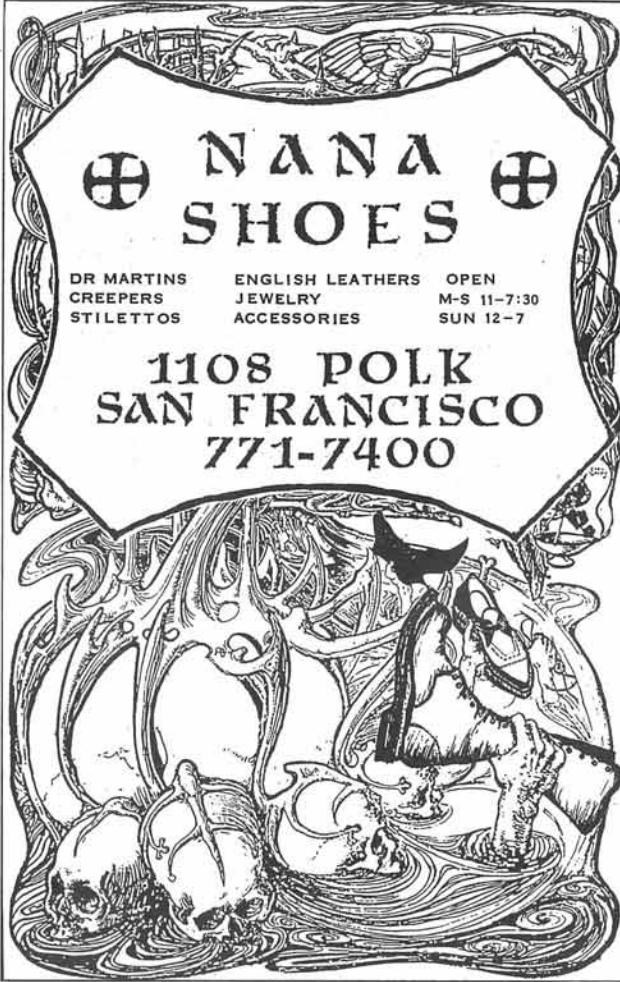
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- 1. What are you confused about?**
- 2. What are you sure about?**



Valerie Barall
1. People
2. My weight

Snapped at Photo Booth — FRANK Gala 3/86



Stefano Massei

1. Goldfish
2. How to make good spaghetti



Sherri Coleman

1. About what kind of man I really want to marry, also what kind of career I want to pursue, but right now I love my life!
2. I am sure of going to beauty school and getting my cosmetology license. And also going to college for at least 2 years and getting a physical fitness degree.



Richard Krunker

1. I am confused about my past
2. I am sure about my future



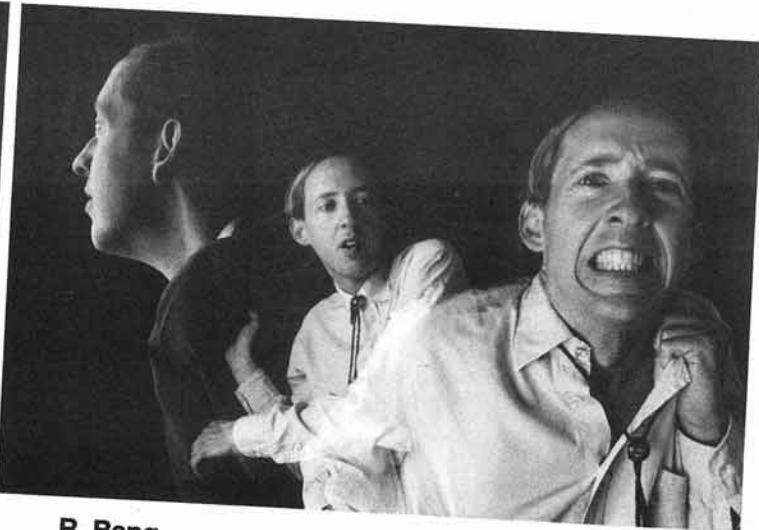
AI-X

1. I'm confused about my lack of delusional mental lapse time that is triggered by the impending crash of your shutter speed
2. I'm sure that if you hold my hand and give me a bowl on the head haircut that I won't kiss like Illya Kuryakin



Marc Berger

1. The meaning of life
2. The meaning of death

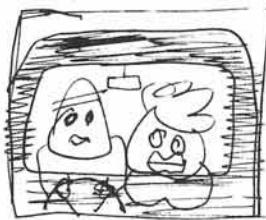


R. Bang

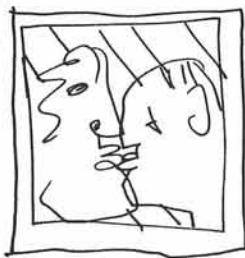
1. My midwestern upbringing
2. The weather

HIM

He pulled over and she got in.



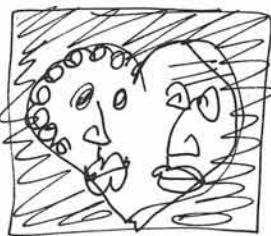
They were talking about the bomb and got horny. They made love and afterwards she said let's go and he said where? and she said out. He lay in her arms and said no we're safe here. He said you're my fallout shelter. You're my fallout shelter, my flashlight, my canned food, my bottled water.



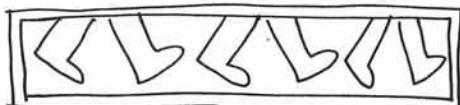
He told her he loved her thorax and she said only insects have thoraxes.



It looked like someone had written on the sheets in blood. They stopped to see which of them was bleeding.

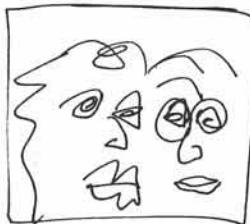


She took it out of her briefcase and handed it to him. It was very metal. Look out it's loaded.



He read a newspaper article about a new model of the universe. Astronomers say the universe is expanding, that everything in the universe is getting farther away from everything else. He thought this sounded true. It certainly was the case in his own life.

and



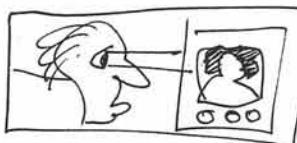
He told her the dreams. In the first one they made love. In the next he avoided her on the street. In the third they made love while arguing. She was upset and this surprised him.



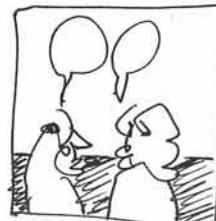
Once when they were making love he looked down at her contorted face and couldn't quite place her. He knew she was someone he loved but wasn't sure who she was. After, she went to the bathroom and when she got back he was certain: she'd been switched. "She" was not "her."



Sometimes when he glanced at her he'd think for a split second he was seeing her on television. He'd feel real cold and shudder and look again, a hard look, to make sure she was really there.



He said I know why you won't go away with me and she said oh yeah why and he said it's because you don't trust me and she said why shouldn't I trust you and he said how the fuck should I know?



HER

David Prowler

It was bad. Real bad. He wondered "what's the opposite of a miracle."



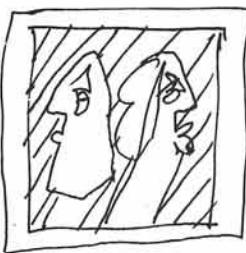
He added up the columns. The costs outweighed the benefits.



She ate her steak and eggs. He said it's over and she said it's not that easy. When he looked up from the salt and pepper she was gazing out the window.



Two weeks later the phone rang.



The letter was from Australia. The stamp showed a fish. She wrote "things happened by themselves leaving no room for me to have much control over them." She wrote "I appreciated you very much."

Where is that letter?



the WASTELAND and the Agents of Change

Rebecca Solnit

The land is a hundred and seventy acres of windswept shoreline, landfill, scrubby brush, dry grass and house-high piles of debris in the southeast corner of San Francisco. The plan originated with sculpture professor Leonard Hunter, and it involves the transformation of the site by a few highly inspired artists into a sculpture park that celebrates the locale and the debris. The Candlestick Point Environmental Arts Project is unique among public park programs; not only is the land a splendid example of what is generally referred to as urban blight — a sort of giant vacant lot — but the park is actually being designed by artists in collaboration with park officials and landscape architects. Usually artists only supply the sprinkles for someone else's cake. At present, there's not much to be seen but the original rubble, and its only occupants the day I visited it were a long-dead seal and a recently dead shark. The artists however, have been out there exploring the site for years, studying its possibilities.

The old model for creating parks was to choose a lovely stretch of virginal nature, "improve" it with lawns, tulip beds, soccer fields and the like, than gently scatter commemorative busts and noble bronze statues over its grounds. Golden Gate park, with its teeming hordes of now unfashionable poets and dull presidents (and a baseball player) is typical. This kind of public art, set down anywhere there's a gap in the foliage, is disdainfully referred to as "plop art" by Hunter and the artists involved in the Candlestick Point park project.

Hunter prefers "site-generated work," which is "shaped by the land and the range of traditions" — by the history and the community connected with the place and by the nature of the place itself. This kind of work is rooted in the idealistic anti-consumer art movements of the 70s: earth art, installation art and conceptual art. The creations of artists working in these genres were not objects in the way discrete paintings and sculptures are, and they couldn't be consumed in the traditional ways. Earth art, in particular, is often geographically remote and relatively immaterial, consisting of rearrangements of the site — mounds, tunnels, pits, paths. Feminist activist art critic Lucy Lippard writes, "The move toward biomorphic, body-related 'architectural sculpture' in the last decade — especially work influenced by ancient monuments or sensitive to the site in nature — seems to have been a reaction against disengaged art objects that can be moved from place to place, but rarely 'belong' to any place."

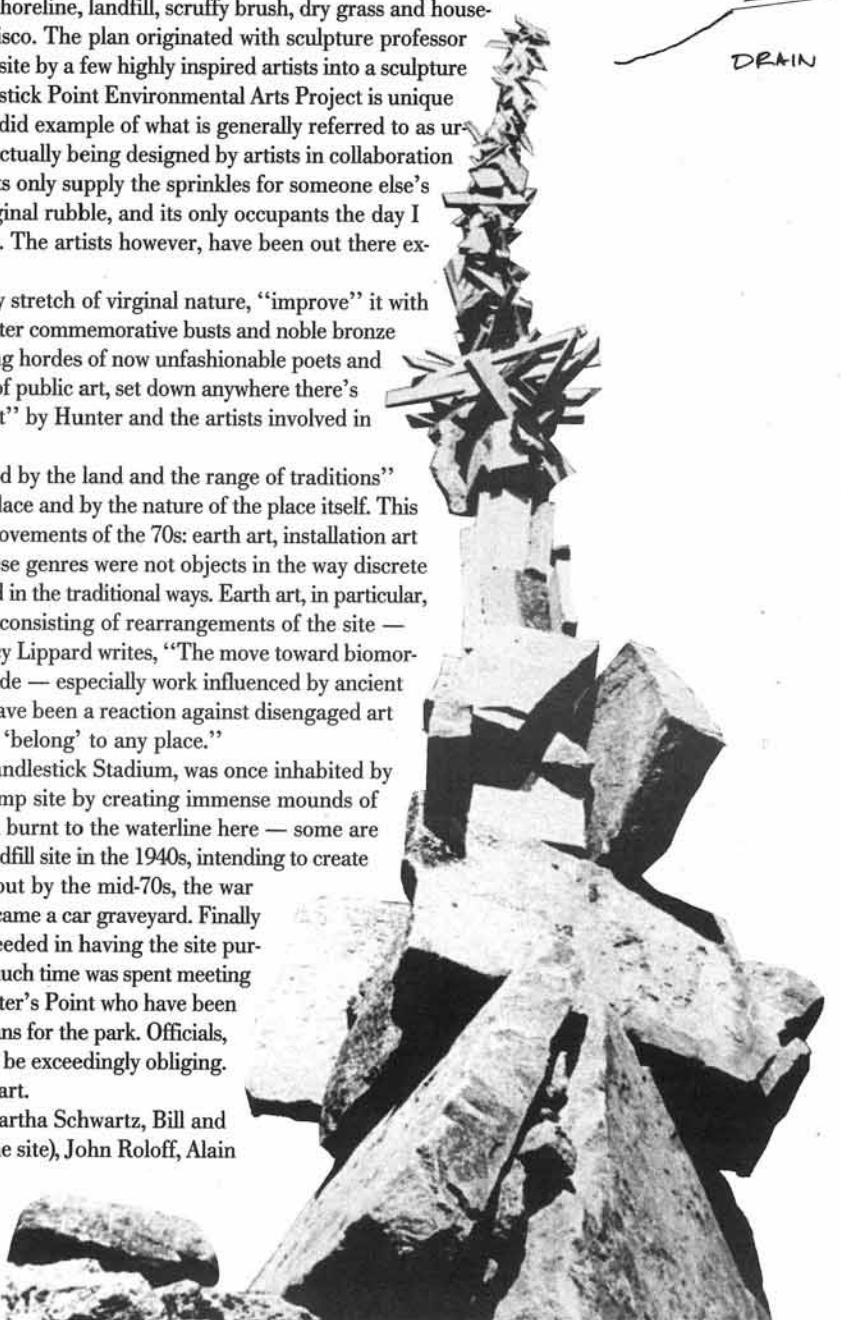
This place, due east of the hideous and widely hated Candlestick Stadium, was once inhabited by Ohlone Indians who established its long tradition as a dump site by creating immense mounds of shells. Later on, old sailing ships were driven aground and burnt to the waterline here — some are still visible at low tide. The U.S. Navy began using it as a landfill site in the 1940s, intending to create more workspace for its nearby Hunter's Point Shipyard, but by the mid-70s, the war business was in a decline, and the former ship graveyard became a car graveyard. Finally California assemblyman Willy Brown and Art Agnos succeeded in having the site purchased and turned into a state park in 1978. Subsequently, much time was spent meeting with the polyethnic and poor residents of Bayview and Hunter's Point who have been surprisingly supportive of even the more obscure artistic plans for the park. Officials, administrators and disbursers of grants were all reported to be exceedingly obliging. The project seems to have been serendipitous from the start.

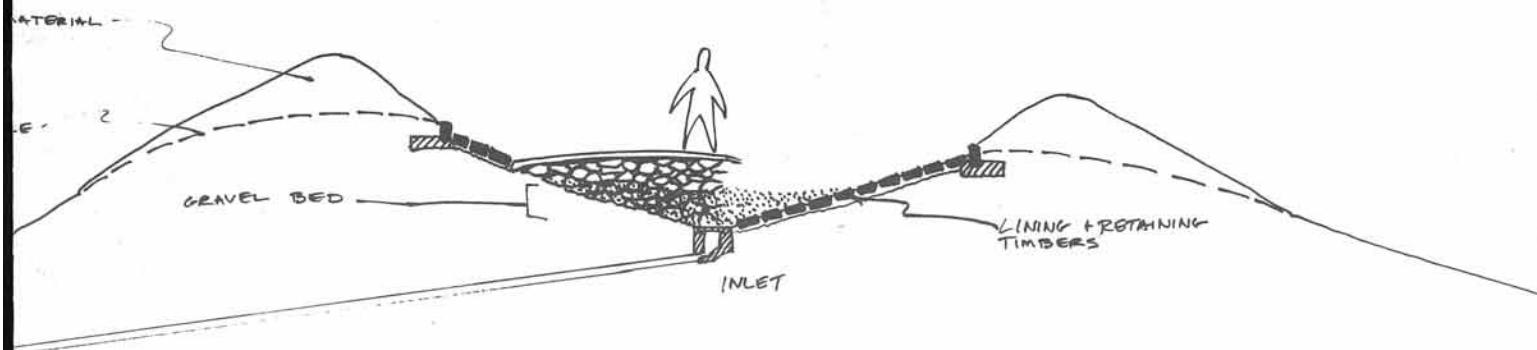
The artists — Lewis Baltz, David Ireland, Lisa Hein, Martha Schwartz, Bill and Mary Buchen (who have already installed a windharp on the site), John Roloff, Alain Gerbault and Douglas Hollis (who is collaborating with the landscape architect) evince an impressive enthusiasm for the site and their proposals. Lewis Baltz has already spent two years photographing the site. The rest are site-specific sculptors and installation artists; they are all still in the proposal and plan stage, after studying the site and its cultural context. Debris is a component of most of their projects; the heaps are becoming precious commodities. One project already approved and underway is a 130-foot spire sculpture with a 45-foot rubble base by French artist Alain Gerbault. Much of his work is exceedingly vertical, and so when

EXCAVATED

ridge profile

DRAIN





“What is the biggest room in the world?” “Room for improvement.”

— joke from a children’s book

the French Minister of Culture gave him a fellowship, he chose to come here, to the land of the Sequoia, for a year. “The life and history of these primeval trees that so dominate the region,” he writes, “resemble that of my sculptures. That is why it is only natural that the idea for an ambitious project should evolve.” Titled ‘Redwood Grove,’ Gerbault’s proposal calls for a series of his scarlet sculptures around the city, including the one that will go up this summer near the entrance to Candlestick Point Park, and another 115-foot-high piece that will be erected in front of City Hall for the September Arts Commission Festival.

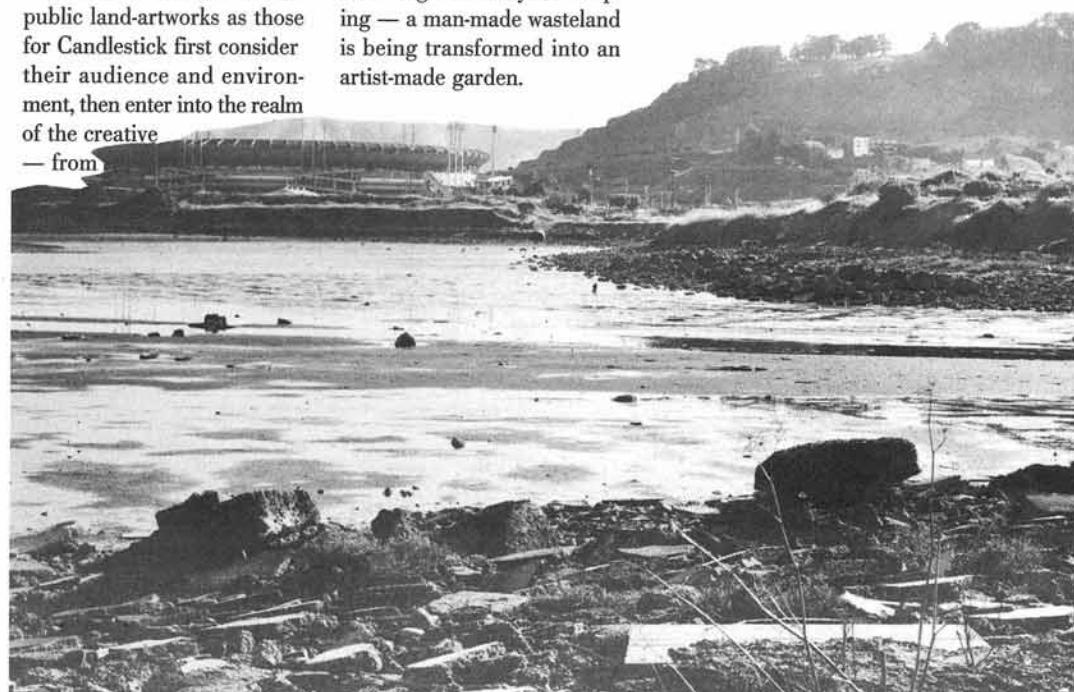
Perhaps the most site-specific works are Lisa Hein’s. One of her proposed pieces is a huge diamond-shaped incision in the ground, surrounded by mounds of dirt traversed by grooves that follow along sight lines to landmarks visible from the park. Another of her proposals is for a series of paths through the rubble. John Roloff, a ceramic sculptor who makes boat-sized forms (including one baked on location and permanently installed at Falkirk Center in San Rafael), plans a work that plays upon the park’s past as an Ohlone Indian habitat and a shipbuilding and burning site. David Ireland, who has plans for a tidal walk (a raised walkway traversable only at low tide) and a monumental gate made of rubble, is a local artist whose major works are collaborations and sites. Primarily known for Capp Street Project, the angular industrial Mission District house he built that now houses installation-artists-in residence, Ireland also restored his own home as a sort of inventive archaeology project. Martha

Schwartz, whose previous works include formal garden motifs done in bagels and nocco wafers, is participating in the overall park design.

The spirit behind this project is as different from the sequestered world of studio art as a plush-carpeted fifth-floor downtown gallery is from Candlestick’s vast, weedy and windy expanses. A private, discrete artwork is primarily a vehicle of personal expression — from the inside out, such public land-artworks as those for Candlestick first consider their audience and environment, then enter into the realm of the creative

— from

the outside in. Rather than being about themselves, these works accentuate or alter qualities already present in the land, functioning as vehicles for perception and interaction with and celebration of the site. In fact, much of what is being changed here are viewers’ perceptions: the land is being marked out for exploration with paths and gateways, rubble is being rehabilitated as an object of contemplation, views are being framed by landscaping — a man-made wasteland is being transformed into an artist-made garden.



Candlestick Point #81, Photo by Lewis Baltz 1986
Courtesy Eaton/Showen Gallery, San Francisco

The Decline and Fall

Of no place special

by Alix Pitcher

On the west end of a small town, a singular structure reaches into the sky. Once and possibly still the tallest smokestack in the world, it now stands alone in a mountainous landscape. The immense buildings that clustered around its base are gone. The roads that carried the trucks up to the complex are fenced off and disappearing. The stack is 587 feet tall. It's made entirely of red brick.

The most wonderful and the most terrible thing about life is that our expectations are so rarely met. When I arranged to visit my brother in Montana, I imagined Anaconda to be similar to the genteel Colorado ghost-towns of our childhood: narrow muddy streets, trim Victorian houses, the merest traces of the mining industry left as a link to the past. These towns, Independence and Tin Cup, have almost faded away entirely — a few velvety boards in an alpine setting. These mines failed when the silver standard was abandoned near the turn of the century, and the technology they left behind has grown picturesque in decay.

Armed with this misconception, I headed to Montana on a bumpy flight that stopped in Bozeman, Billings, Missoula and Great Falls before heaving into Butte under a lead-colored sky. Making our approach, we flew over a giant ragged pit with dozens of equally ragged buildings clustered around it like spectators at an accident. The size of the pit was indicated by the comparative scale of the buildings. Some were 5 or 6 stories tall, but next to the immense excavation they looked like Monopoly hotels. When we landed, an icy wind herded my fellow passengers into a tiny terminal with a sign over the door that read "Welcome to Butte — The Richest Hill in the World." I realized that the "Hill" was actually that yawning hole, and was seized by the impression that I had landed in another world.

The copper mines in Butte had been in operation for some years before the smelter in Anaconda was built in the 1880s. The ore they produced had been shipped to Wales for refinement. With the opening of the smelter, Anaconda and Butte became wedded in a neatly symbiotic relationship: the ore was loaded and raced the 25 miles of the Butte-Anaconda Pacific Railroad to be refined. Once the metal was extracted, it was raced back to Butte and from there to wherever there was a market. At one time, the Butte-Anaconda Pacific boasted some of the fastest locomotives in the west. Although unconnected to any other railroad, it was also outfitted with a number of luxury dining cars in

which one could swill oysters and champagne, while shuttling back and forth at breakneck speed.

Along with most everything else in the area, these dining cars were purchased by a local visionary and megalomaniac named Marcus Daley. Like many men before and since, he had dreams of putting his little town on the map; in this case, the town was Anaconda and during the boom years it looked as though he might actually do it. He brought grandiose architecture and high society to what must have been a remarkably unprepossessing village, and the people there still revere him. He built the City Hall with a tower and a gilded dome. He wanted the streets to be wide and paved and well-lit. He built a luxury hotel, a handsome train depot, and his buddy William Randolph Hearst built the library. It was agreeably imposing.

And so things went, for the better part of a century. The men of Anaconda rose early and made their way to the smelter on the hill. They spent each day breathing air that was heavy with arsenic, a by-product of the refining process. Their wives raised children in Company houses, the children learned to read in Company schools. On Sundays they attended Mass and walked home on the wide streets with names like Elm, Maple, and Hickory. The poor families lived closer to the smelter, in Goosetown. The more affluent lived in stately brick houses set behind tasteful lawns. When they got sick, they went to a Company doctor. When they died, they were given a Company funeral and their widows collected a pension.

In 1980, Arco, the owner of Anaconda Mining Company, closed the smelter. The reasons were simple and practical: production costs were too high and they could no longer compete on the world market. For a time, the ore was shipped from Butte to Japan, while the smelter was being dismantled 25 miles away. This arrangement did not seem as absurd to

the people of Butte as it did to the people of Anaconda. Then, in 1982, Arco closed down the mines as well. They might as well have bombed both towns.

For a multinational corporation with multiple interests, the decision was easy and painless. In the communities left behind, there was an overwhelming sense of betrayal. After 6 years, the atmosphere is still one of confusion and disbelief. Typically, as depression began to deepen in the area, the first distraction was inexplicable violence. A hard-working, God-fearing man came home one night and slaughtered his family with a shotgun. Then he killed himself, which is where the excitement came in. In the eyes of his Eastern Orthodox Church, his real sin was not murdering his family, but in taking his own life, and they refused to bury him. The idea of burial in completely unsanctified soil was anathema to his relatives, who petitioned up various other local churches until the Presbyterians somewhat reluctantly agreed to take him. The whole affair dragged on for months and is still a topic of debate.

During a week's visit, my own sense of disbelief and confusion about Anaconda was only heightened by each new detail, story

heard, fact learned. There is, for example, the arsenic. Ask any old-timer how he feels about the immense saturation of this deadly metal in the area, and he'll probably hawk up a wad of spit and say, "Never bothered me none." (An old-timer, incidentally, is anyone who was born in Anaconda, old man or infant. My 7-month-old nephew is an old-timer. Anyone not born in Anaconda is known as a "boomer" even after 50 years residence.)

Ask an arsenic widow as she sits drinking Manhattans in one of the numerous bars and she'll say, "Well, Henry smoked pretty heavy all his life. Guess it was the cigarettes got him." Ask a young man who's been watching men from the EPA creep around a hillside in protective suits and space helmets and he'll say, "Shoot, used to ride my bike up there when I was a kid. Nothing wrong with me."

And yet there are whole stretches of the valley where no one can live because of dust that still blows down from where the smelter stood. Local farmers have noticed that their crops are doing better and their animals are stronger. They don't mention it very often though, as the prevailing attitude seems to be that if the smelter could miraculously reopen tomorrow, any amount of poison would be worth it. A few activists who have suggested that Arco might be forced to clean up the soil and groundwater have been silenced by apathy.

Attempts to reclaim the land damaged by the industry are haphazard and occasionally bizarre. Near the stack, on the west end of town, a long high hill that stretches from the freeway up into the mountains has been planted with grass. A hill like any other hill, except that its edges might have been laid out using a T-square. It looks like a giant brick covered with old carpet. The short edge, next to the highway, is about a quarter mile long. The long side might be three or four miles. Walking around the side of the hill is like going around the corner of a building. The top is perfectly flat. The hill is made of slag — geological leftovers.

The kind of sporadic thinking that leads to planting a box-shaped pile of leavings without any attempt to sculpt it into more natural form is in evidence everywhere. For no particular reason, the citizens of Anaconda recently decided that they needed a new hospital. Not that there was anything wrong with the old one; it still stands abandoned; the bank president fills up many a happy hour trying to convince boomers like me that it can be turned into a hotel. As I stood shivering in one of its antiseptic hallways, he gave the pale green wall a mighty slap to demonstrate the soundness of the construction. I got the distinct impression that he was ready to give it away — cafeteria, operating rooms and all.

There is a discernable pattern to some of this lunacy. Although Anaconda's main hope for survival is tourism, and tourists will only be interested in those things that are anachronistic and picturesque, the citizens seem determined to root out any pockets of charm like so many bad teeth. They razed the top two floors of the stately Marcus Daley Hotel and left only the ground floor slouching on the side of Main Street. They want to pull down the delicate wrought-iron streetlamps and replace them with the monstrosities you see by the edge of freeways. They have an unbridled passion for suburban mall architecture that they indulge at the cost of lovely old buildings. They generally behave like an abandoned woman whose husband has run

away with a chorus girl; throwing out his clothes, smashing his records, burning his papers.

The few tourists who do come to Anaconda are steered firmly towards the Fairmont Hotel and Development. The hotel is a masterpiece of incongruity; an immense Tahitian hut complete with war canoes and grimacing carved deities. The lobby is festooned with ancient dusty palm fronds. In the bar one can sip canned Mai-Tai from a fake pineapple while listening to a distant Don Ho crooning the Hawaiian Wedding Song. On the day I visited the Fairmont, the bar was occupied by a depressed looking bunch of Forest Rangers. The lobby was full of 12-year-olds who moodily pounded the sides of the Donkey Kong and Ms. Pacman games. In the outdoor swimming pool, two heads bobbed in the choppy water. I estimated the wind to be blowing at about 10 knots. Wind chill had lowered the temperature to 20 degrees.

The development consists of a handful of condominiums and a mouse-brown golf course. The condominiums are crowded onto the fairway, which is also bisected by an access road. I asked if anyone worried that a stray drive might shatter a plate glass door or the windshield of a passing car. The answer seemed to be that A) the condominiums are empty and B) no one plays golf anyway. Driving by a large corral, I asked if there was horseback riding available. Astonished eyes were turned upon me and I learned that the corral is for the *llamas*. I asked to see the llamas, who were small and mangy and wore familiar expressions of bewilderment.

This is how Anaconda hopes to win its share of the Tourist Dollar Pie. Unlike California and Colorado, Montana has only a very small pie, certainly not enough to go around. In-state tourism is weakened by low population; the 1980 census found roughly the same number of people in the state of Montana as in San Francisco County. Montana covers 145,388 square miles to San Francisco's 46. There are about 6 people per square mile in Montana. Most of them don't have any money.

Attracting visitors from outside the state is not much easier. Tourists everywhere are most powerfully attracted to other tourists. Those traveling into the Northern Rockies would rather wait in line to glimpse a bear or mountain goat than encounter one on their own. The lakes near Anaconda are deep and clear and full of fish. They are serene and solitary, and likely to stay that way unless someone sets up a few hundred cardboard fishermen and some inflatable Winnebagos as bait.

Although Anaconda has no mayor and the immense city hall is mostly empty, the town maintains three full-time "Positions in Development." Three boosters, each drawing a salary over \$10,000 a year, concoct schemes and draft outlines of campaigns that will attract people and money. They operate autonomously and utterly without cooperation. Their arguments are lengthy and vituperative and nothing gets done. The town has just created a fourth opening and has received a flood of resumes and inquiries. There seems to be some kind of associative magic involved, as though by creating enough Directors of Tourism the implied but nonexistent visitors would appear.

This small leap of faith is nothing compared to that made by the people of Butte. The closing of the mine was harder on Butte, with a larger population with less to offer by

way of landscape or charm. To make matters worse, enrollment at Montana Tech began to drop as mining technology students went elsewhere to learn their trade. The youthful energy of a college town began to fade, replaced by a pall of helplessness and gloom. So, they built Our Lady of the Rockies.

No one seems to know where the idea came from, but about six years ago a local artist named Leroy Lee finished his design, and scores of helpers commenced rendering his vision of the Virgin Mary in scrap steel. The steel they worked with had been left behind by Arco, and there was a lot of it. They set their sights high — 90 feet high, to be precise. After numerous setbacks and at the cost of tens of thousands of dollars, they finally had an 80-ton hollow statue lying in six pieces in the backyard of Bill's Lumber and Supply. The head loomed beside the highway, startling unwary motorists who rounded the last corner before town.

A road had been blasted to the top of a ridge 4,000 feet above the city, where 400 tons of concrete were poured to serve as the statue's foundation. The Montana Air National Guard donated the use of a CH-54 Sikorsky Sky Crane, and the Lady was hoisted up slice by slice. The head section was fixed into place on December 20, 1985 to the accompaniment of a kind of civic hysteria. One must admit that it was a magnificent, if bizarre accomplishment.

Like someone who has accumulated a 10-foot ball of string and then feels compelled to justify their aberrant behavior, the people of Butte came up with function for "Our Lady" somewhat after the fact. The murky explanation is that the workers decided to dedicate it to women everywhere, but particularly mothers; that it is a "Nondenominational tribute to motherhood." It is simply a very large Christian totem. My theory is that they built it hoping that it would get the mines reopened.

The people of Anaconda are outwardly respectful of this Herculean effort, but a cool stream of skepticism runs through their comments. After all, their smokestack is almost 6 times the height of the Virgin Mary statue. The smokestack needs no motto or explanation. No one feels compelled to light it artfully with colored searchlights, or inscribe a cheery verse at its base. It's straightforward and matter-of-fact, and blatantly phallic. And they're never going to tear it down.

The fluid experience of my visit has begun to gel into images; isolated moments caught like three-dimensional postcards. On Main Street, a thin unwashed teenager stands beneath a swinging traffic light, thumb outstretched. There is no traffic for miles. On Hickory Street, a third floor bay window in an exquisite Victorian holds a sign, "FOR RENT. UNFURNISHED HOUSE. \$200." Dinner at the Copper Club, a small room flooded with scarlet light, a steak the size of a baseball mitt, and three sozzled old ladies in pantsuits who sing love songs and play the electric Keno machines.

On the day I left town, a small form circled the top of the smokestack. I leaned forward against the seatbelt, trying to identify it through the windshield. I could see that it was a bird, small only in comparison with the expanse of brick and sky. "What's that?" I asked my brother. He slowed and glanced up. "An eagle," he answered. It flew without moving its wings, describing a perfect circle. It appeared to be looking for something. ■



Photograph by Heather McCollom

Girltalk

Hoopla galore descended upon S.F. with the opening of Club DV8. Flood lights, rent-a-cops, pushy security people with head-set walkie-talkies, unnecessary waiting lines, and a fashion purveyor in front watching for those worthy of special entry.

Aside from its "classic decadence" interior complete with resin filled cracks on the dance floor sure to catch a few high-heeled dancers by surprise, DV8 has installed one-way mirrors (above and to the left of the stage) so that those in the exclusive members-only club can cast their eyes down upon the unfortunate commoners. Will San Francisco tolerate such elitist tactics?

A redeeming element of DV8 is some of its entertainment offerings, such as SRL's last performance. If you missed it, you missed one of their most fear inducing yet. The underbelly of the bus terminal freeway ramp provided a sound and fire enhancing setting in which the boys could practice their death defying antics.

One of the most fashion conscious art openings to happen in a long while was held at Modernism, home of fashionable art openings, when William Passarelli presented his multi-media mirror theme works. The festive atmosphere continued far after the opening at a party thrown by Susan Andrews and Buddy Rhodes in honor of William. Susan's four-story home was a veritable playland of classy alcoves — grand piano and all.

Extreme Exposure, alias Ermano di Febo, Mary C. Podgerski, et al, ventured beyond their usual fashion photography, visual presentations and slide show to promote fashion shows at Club Nine and DNA.

A curious link can be found between the health of the New York club scene and the survival of The Farm. It seems that the land on which The Farm, some artist's studios, and the SRL complex sit on is owned by the Goode family of AREA fame. As I heard it, The

Farm built up two months back rent owed when it lay low getting some necessary permits for shows. Apparently, Mother Goode was relaxed about the whole matter, but the brothers Goode (Eric, Chris and Greg) desperately need money for AREA which has fallen into disfavor on the New York club circuit, thus The Farm got an ultimatum "10,000 now or else." Negotiations are ongoing. For The Farm's sake we should be sure to visit AREA when next in New York. (Editor's note: for The Farm's sake we should be sure to visit The Farm.)

Our dear FRANK hosted a mighty successful benefit party — "In the Tradition of the Tropicana" — to celebrate the release of this issue. Much thanks is due Amy Greenberg for superior event producing capabilities evoked at the last minute to save the day and give us a new fresh presence at our parties. "Tropicana" offered firey torch singers Betsy Burke, Debra Smith & Diana Alden, social commentators Vice & Jerry, musicians Scott Alexander and Ron Ryder, and Perry Troy, tap dancers The Snacks and Rodney (maitre d' at the Billboard Cafe), 40s fashions modeled throughout the evening were made possible via Bizarre Bazaar. Peachy's Puffs made a charming appearance with snacks and cigs galore.

All contributors gave fine performances and Master of Ceremonies Ed Crasnich smoothly kept the pace. Attend FRANK's next benefit to see a slide show of the photos many guests, including the elusive Ms. Blase, submitted themselves to.

Mark Rennie, marketing maniac of SOMA, owner of the Billboard and Nine, with his hands in Climate Gallery, SOMA Direct magazine and the Eyes and Ears Foundation was contacted by Rose's Lime Juice to model in one of their subculture focused ads. No fooling, the ad campaign has worked netting a turn around in the lime juice market. Ordered a Vodka Gimlet lately? You will.

Tips from Martini: get on Media's mailing list; it has a great film series. Visit HOL/CAM's new store next to NOC NOC, the best neighborhood bar to drive across town for. Sake Martini's and EKU (world's strongest) beer are specialties. Good music by a live DJ, interesting locals; best during the week.

Nine threw a benefit for the survivors of the Bayview fire and a good-bye party for Patsy Cline. It seems Arturo is moving to Toyko with someone special. More folks are rushing to open up yet another huge club in South of Market. This one's EPIC at 7th and Harrison at 25,000 sq. ft. total. It's still in the permit process though. Guess it will fit in just fine with the Giant's stadium due to go in down the street.

Martine E. Blase

SQUARIE THOLES

Gallery Review

Although it is said to be one block long, Ringold Street is actually a very short street, one block short to be exact. Close to the 9th Street end, at #78, is the Mary Address Gallery, a basement space very recently opened by an S.F. Art Institute graduate who has adopted the name of a Gabriel Garcia Marquez character for both herself and the gallery she founded. Although the space is rather hall-like and comes equipped with compact lines of sight, it feels like a place where the unusual might turn up, art bursting its seams, large canvases pushing against the walls, installations tumbling onto



Drawing — Modi Karlson

the sidewalk. Located just around the corner from NINE, MEDIA, and ARTSPACE, the Address Gallery plans a variety of exhibits and installations throughout the summer. Mary Address hopes to provide artists with an environment for experimentation. Upcoming shows: Michael Will, installation - from July 13; Ashley King, paintings and drawings - from August 10; Bill Bury, installation, painting and sculpture - from September 7. Open Wednesday through Sunday, 1pm-6pm. For more information call 558-9638, or go underground on Ringold Street and see for yourself.

R. Bang

Performance Review

The "World of Beatrice," created and performed by the collaborative efforts of Elbows Akimbo, was presented last month at The Lab. The humor was refreshing as was the outstanding music by John DeStefano with Michael Calvello and the strong vocals of Diana Trimble. John, a percussionist who recently traveled to Nepal for ethno-music studies, has composed music for performance artists Ron Davis and Ellen Zwieg and will perform live in August at Project Artaud "Endangered Species" a performance by Lynn Hirschmann and Lisa English. DeStefano is also the founder of the Sound Artist Series at The Lab which has presented Zev and Barbara Golden and will soon present Elliott Sharp of New York. The artist-run Lab, 1805 Divasadero, is currently seeking proposals from performance artists.

Laurie Anderson's first film "Home of the Brave," which she directs and stars in, is a must see. Anderson, the "Godmother of Performance Art," has grown tremendously as a performer since we first saw her with William Burroughs and John Giorno at the Market Street Cinema — which is usually a porn house.

Danitra Vance with the Mello-White Boys recently performed at Victoria Theatre mixing comedy with social satire. We talked to Danitra backstage between shows

while she munched a carrot. She told us that she was a classically-trained actress but that there weren't enough offers so she turned to comedy. Danitra, now a regular cast member of "Saturday Night Live," opened a box of vegetarian sushi saying "It's in the contract." If you missed her show here, try next year at BAM where she will stage "Aquanetta Feinstein on the Beach."

Danitra was brought to the Victoria by producer Roger LaRue and the People's Theatre Coalition. LaRue is someone who seems to take chances and succeed. He produced "Deer Rose" at Project Artaud and will be taking it to Theatre On The Square in August.

The "Glas Haus" event organized by Climate is planned as an ongoing series of parties in the post-modern building at 999 Brannan that was originally designed as a computer showroom. The dance floor is the focus from the four tiers of performance art and installations that rise to the skylight. The event was a harmony of art, fashion and architecture.

Speaking of harmony, a unique blend of Thai, Vietnamese and Chinese cuisine can be found at the First Restaurant on Larkin at Eddy. Try the eggplant, generals chicken, or spicy fish. It's fine food at reasonable prices but go in a group so that you can sample a variety of dishes.

Arnold Iger/Paul Kwan

MR. Nitelife



Dear READERS,

Hello Again. Ah what a beautiful summer... and what a beautiful issue of FRANK #9 we have... Just returned from the East again... First to Connecticut, where things haven't changed in my hometown for the past 100 years or so... The stores got cuter and more colonial looking, and now there's virtually no litter there... even the house where I was born is still preserved... It was converted to an old fashioned ice cream parlor... The beautiful white dogwood trees, the pastel lilac flower bushes, the crimson shiny leaves of the maples, and the new mowed lawns made Connecticut a postcard vacation... Under the aforementioned conditions I was convinced I should catch up on some daydreams before going to New York City... there is no opportunity to ease into it... fast living people insist that you keep up.

Night fashions here consist of basic black and predominantly colorless designs except for an occasional gold painted fabric or some red lipstick on pale white skin... Yet I did go to some fun new places and I saw many friends who are now living there, but this vacation was one for dining... and shopping... and dancing... which I indulged myself in despite the hot weather... When I returned from New York it seems as if the nice weather and people followed me back to S.F., like underground celeb JOHN SEX... who commanded a fabulous NITE IN NEW YORK show at the OASIS... With an all

star cast including Miss Kitty and Patsy Cline (who leaves us for a tour in Japan)... Seems like my work has been taking me all over the Bay Area with so many parties. I hope you did not miss the FRANK Benefit on June 14th. I talked to Bill Graham on the phone last week and some of his shows coming this summer are PIL, DEPECHE MODE, and ART OF NOISE... also talked to MARK RENNIE of NINE, who assures us they'll be around, despite rumors of a transfer of ownership... other club owners talk of expansion... The OASIS will bring some eclectic changes to SOMA in early July in the form of

BRAD RYTZ, designer, moans "EEECCCHH," JAY CRAWFORD, musician, muses "bombs away," STEVE WHITE, record sales/musician sighs, "Oh Really," RACHEL LAGUNOFF, teacher, wonders if the letters SOMA stand for "So much attitude"... I guess there's a message here... to quote my friend GRANDMASTER FLASH, "It's like a jungle sometimes, you know it makes me wonder how I keep from going under" Have a safe and happy and healthy summer... yours... Mr. NITELIFE

Mr. NITELIFE
Raoul Thomas

P.S. Need a Summer job? Jennifer Jones of Club DV8 says they are still taking applications for all positions... Please send any news, party invites, club info, and 'gossip' to Mr. NITELIFE c/o 74 Delmar St. S.F. 94117

P.P.S. Great shows past and future at the 181 club — the past was the Fish-Ford Happy Hour Show with such stars as Liz Taylor, Cher and Imelda Marcos — the future — Jane Dornacker and Carol Doda singing together to benefit the homeless.



Photo — Sarah Vogwill

FRANK Interview

People who hear gamelan music usually fall in love with the sound of it, the look of it, the feel of it, and the very idea of it. It would be perfect as extraterrestrial music: utterly foreign, possibly superior to Earth Music, and strangely beautiful. Gamelan is the Indonesian orchestra made up of an array of gongs and metal xylophones, plucked and bowed string instruments, flutes, drums, and singers. The music is composed in layers of patterns interlocking with each other.

New music composers looking for revolution in the stuffy concert music scene are fascinated by ideas suggested by gamelan (pronounced *gahmeh-lahn*.) Imagine if the San Francisco Symphony members played everything by heart or by ear, abolished the conductor and led themselves, and encouraged the audience to wander among them on stage.

Jody Diamond is one of the leaders of the American gamelan movement. She has taught and performed for many years and is now composing wonderful pieces that put together Javanese and American elements with great skill. I came to talk with her in the gamelan room at Mills College.

FRANK: What is intriguing about gamelan?

Jody Diamond: You get an inside look at a completely different organization of the universe from the one you grew up in: a different sense of time, a different sense of tonality, a different sense of melody, a different sense of pitch, a different sense of possible relationships between yourself and the things moving around you. It's more than just playing another music. It's a metaphor for being able to have a completely different world view than the one you were in. And once you've experienced another world view, then you know that your own is not reality, but one vision of reality. That enables you to look at any number of visions of reality after that.

FRANK: When did you know that you were hooked on gamelan?

J.D.: Oh, probably about the third or fourth time I played. This was at Cal Arts (California Institute of the Arts) in 1970. One of the teachers taught me this piece, Bimakurda. And it had this long gong (one complete cycle of the basic melody) that's really beautiful. I was kind of memorizing it and all of a sudden — I can still remember — I was

seventeen — I was sitting there and all of a sudden the instrument was playing itself, or it was playing me. Or something. It wasn't like me making music and remembering the notes; it was the whole form fitting together in this melodic development.

FRANK: What was it like to play music in Java?

J.D.: Well, one of the times I went I got to play in a village outside of Solo called Bekonang with a gamelan group that was there. One of the things that is important to understand in the experience is a little about Javanese time. You know, you've got 20 or 30 instruments and they're all playing in different relationships to each other... as one level gets slower the other one gets faster, and so the slower the underlying levels get, the faster the melodic, decorative levels get. There's this sense that time really slows down but that the internal or musical activity becomes almost frenzied.

There's a modal progression through the evening. You start with lower pitched things, more refined, austere pieces. Then you move to pieces that are in the central range, and there's more joking and more talking and more variations. Then you move to pieces that are in the third range. Those are the highest pitch and they're a lot faster. Each piece is about 45 minutes to an hour. I'm talking about something that starts about eight or nine at night and might run to about four in the morning. It's almost continuous nonstop playing the whole time. There are little breaks where food comes out or everyone drinks something, but mostly it's this giant room full of people sitting at their instruments.

FRANK: How do you go about composing?

J.D.: I have quite a few pieces that are Western melodies set for gamelan. I want Western audiences to hear gamelan the way that I think the Javanese hear gamelan. I used to find it really frustrating that my teacher would say, "This piece is this way because of the feeling." Well, who has this feeling? Just Javanese musicians.

That was fine when I was content to be mystified by the tradition and feel like an incomplete student. But when I wanted to feel like an adult in my own right then it wasn't fine anymore. I thought, how can I create gamelan music that I can have the "feeling" for and understand at its deepest level? So what I would do is take this Western melody and sing it over and over. Then I would play different instruments while I was singing it until I found a shape of a balungan (melodic framework) on the instruments, and I would arrange the other parts in relation to that. My hope is that when the audience listens to them they'll say, "I know that melody. I know that piece."

What I want to do now is make a piece for gamelan and electronics that will use a switcher box with eight channels going in, and eight channels going out, but in between, the computer controls all the switching. The idea for this piece is to have each player just tremolo (roll) on one note and for the computer to construct the piece. When you look at the stage you'll see these people barely moving and hear just a mass of sound. But when you listen to the speakers, a piece will come out.

FRANK: The Indonesians should get a kick out of it. (The piece will be performed at Expo '86 in Vancouver, where groups from Indonesia will also be performing.)

J.D.: I think they would get a kick out of it. (She laughs)

FRANK: How do you see this fitting into the new music scene?

J.D.: I think the idea of "world music," that is, the respectful studying of musical traditions not of one's own musical culture, was a really profound idea. It was as profound to music as the women's movement was to our society. And as obvious and as inevitable. Saying all music is valid, all music has something to teach us. I like to think that it's now a given, the same way we like to think that women's equality is now a given, but of course it isn't always real.

I'm around a lot of people who still don't know how to listen to a music that's not their own, who still

think of savage music and cultured music. I see gamelan as being able to bridge the gap between Western and non-Western music because it's so concrete and approachable. People can actually be in it — the beginning levels are not as technically demanding as some other musics. And thereby come to understand that all musical systems are just that — not real music and funny music.

So I see what I'm doing as very much part of new music, and I see world music as part of new music in the same sense. By completely widening the possibilities of what music is about, and of what musical ideas one can conceive and perceive, the whole human race moves forward at the same time.

One of the moments that really consolidated my commitment to composition was standing in Daniel Schmidt's living room a couple of years ago — it's filled with all these gamelan instruments that he built. I was just looking around, and here are these gongs that he designed, and brass instruments, and things that look Indonesian, but really, they never existed before. All of a sudden it hit me that this entire room full of instruments, plus all the music that he composed, plus everything that I played on those instruments — that there existed just by the force of his own creative will. That he caused those things to be a reality that didn't exist before. All of a sudden I thought, Oh, that's what I want to do. That's what I want my gift to the world to be — to create things that never existed before. I just think that's a great act.

Alexis Aldrich

Jody Diamond is the founder of the American Gamelan Institute. Tapes of new gamelan music and a magazine/journal, *Balungan*, are available through the Institute at Box 9911, Oakland, CA 94613. Tuti's Dutch East Indies Restaurant (368 2nd St. in Oakland) has gamelan and other live South East Asian music regularly on Sundays. A class in gamelan is open to the public on Tuesday nights at Mills College in Oakland. For information call: 654-1385.

The City & The Mountain (Desire) Harvey Stein

I'd left the city. Had enough
of my pink-haired girlfreind Sue,
those frizzy streaks of pink.
Her painted dagger fingernails no longer thrilled me,
those satin thrift shop miniskirts, ripped out hems
climbing her thighs.
She was double-jointed, pumped and pivoted
like a strange machine, woman of the future
that she was, was a slave
of the primary colors (and their metallic hues),
her body was her canvas, her clay, she was ART —
but I was tired.

The buildings crumbled lower at the edge
of the city, the smell of sudden raw dirt
and the low static of plant thoughts —
the highway left the busy grids of intergalactic commerce
and poured, like a long sigh,
into the green zones.

The mountain was listed as #47 in the books.
Not under the influence
of the climate control towers,
the mountain was the ancient flesh, the radiant mineral
of inner space I needed to hold close now.
The lower flanks were sad though, a ghost harvest
of spruces and cedars, sawed off just above the roots,
the immense pain of the land.

But then higher into the snow!
On foot now, up and away,
trees safe here, wrapped in crystals from the sky,
walk on water, depths of it, the ridge winds upward
until finally cracking out of the whiteness, the crusty peak —
a few rocks, yellow lilies uncurl from warm soggy tundra,
looking down, out of focus mists cool the loins
of nearby slopes, up — the sun, that faraway furnace, sweeping
into the top of my skull, bathing my brains,
then breathing slowly out my eyes, a long relaxed sigh...

children's books

continued from page 20

boredom. (In adulthood, there is a preponderance of boring people and boring jobs, but that's hardly blissful, it's, well, boring.) This is a great loss, not only for its calming influence, but because those great empty swathes of time allow for well-wrought thoughts. It's a terrible injustice that the only time of our lives in which we have time to have great ideas is the same time that we are of such short stature and unrespectable appearance that nobody will take us seriously.

There are, however, a way to regain remnants of children's time, and they are children's books. If you read as a child, reading the same books as an adult will allow you to sink into remembrance of things past. If you didn't read as a child (some perfectly nice people didn't), children's books will give you a sense of that lost time, and you will have the added advantage of not knowing how it comes out.

The following are the most lovable children's books — the most impossibly dated, the most delightfully unreal, the most dazzlingly imaginative — the ones that everyone should read. There is a proliferation of books about enchanted and magic subjects; it's a standard fixture in the genre and reveals the close ties that the best children's books have with Celtic and Germanic (and for that matter, Mesopotamian) epics and folktales. The similarity is not mysterious: just as early epics usually feature a supernatural hero successfully battling demons and evil forces, the heroes of children's books elude parental power with their secret magic lives. Those

who scorn magic-y books are missing a delightful frisson; they will also be unable to think of three wishes in an emergency, which is a great failing.

The Edward Eager books — these are by, not about, a man named Edward Eager — are the most vital children's books. Their respective titles, I notice for the first time, sound terrible written down in cold ink; they are *Half Magic*, *Magic by the Lake*, *Knight's Castle* and *The Time Garden*. There are another three or four, but as I recall, they seem to have been mostly about children doing good deeds and being stupid enough to think they were magic. Edward Eager has a jumpy, practical imagination; his characters always find just the talisman that you would choose if you could. *Half Magic* is a lovely story about three sisters and a brother who find a charm that gives them half of whatever they wish. There is great consternation before they learn to wish for everything twice — for example, Martha, the youngest, idly wishes that Carrie the cat could talk, so poor Carrie the cat is condemned to half-talk:

"Carrie was still there, pacing the floor, lashing her tail and muttering a horrid monologue.

'Idlwild bixbax,' she was saying. 'Grom-paw, Foo! Oo fitzwanne talkwitz inna fitz-place annahoo?'

"She seemed to be trying desperately to express herself. It was agony to watch and still worse to hear."

Edward Eager's benevolence and gentle scorn for the ways of adults make suspension of belief easy. These are books to read one

— but . . . even here, certain chords haunt me, iridescent night sounds imagined, upper harmonies altered to create seeds of tension in the root notes below, anti-government graffiti rattles walls in ultraviolet caverns as young throats open slowly to scream REVOLT! in the night — and now I'm shooting back down, to here, it's too pure here, power lines converge as image frequency increases, at the same time gaps of meaning stretch wider, wider, but no problem — I'll reach her soon, once again in electric shadows, we'll be at it all night as she takes those long black and red-splattered nails and with thin eyes and teeth grinning snaps and pulls and slashes a sharp angular music from the taut-wound strings of my heart.

The Abstraction

Dashka Slater, 1986

The dog lopes away
the owner's voice gets
higher the pitching dog the
wavering voice Come here

Come here don't you
talk back don't
you sass me why don't
you mind? The dog hears

the voice but moves in
the delirium of running the pounding
and reaching of paws, the moments
of floating, the momentum and

disobedience Again the sliding
door comes off its runners
As I apply more force I
veer farther off course.

after another, lying on the couch in afternoon heat; they must be read about 20 times for full appreciation.

The E. Nesbit books such as *Five Children and It*, *The Phoenix and the Carpet* and *The Enchanted Castle*, are slightly more refined books about the same delightful topic. They were written in the nineteenth century, so there are teas and governesses and whatnot, but there is also a bizarre Celtic/medieval imagination illuminating these books. For example, in *The Enchanted Castle*, a ring endows invisibility on its wearer, but it also allows the wearer to see the whole world of the invisible, in which marble fauns rustle through overgrown gardens and statuary serpents come alive to slither through fountains. The Nesbit children are more genteel — more worried about honesty, etc. — than Edward Eager's children, but they were written in the nineteenth-century so they can be excused, and one could endure worse to be admitted to E. Nesbit's dream-world.

The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis would seem to fit right in here, but I balk. They are the most wonderful things in the world until one turns 14 and realizes that Lewis only wrote them to convert innocent children to Christianity. It's shocking to read them again as an adult and realize that Narnia isn't fantasy, it's an *allegory*. Its utter manipulation made sweet, and should be read jaundicedly, if at all.

The Secret Garden, written by Frances Hodgson Burnett in 1911, is a delicate story about gardens and flowers. Distinctly a girl-book, it caters to the universal desire for a secret hiding place, but also to a specifically

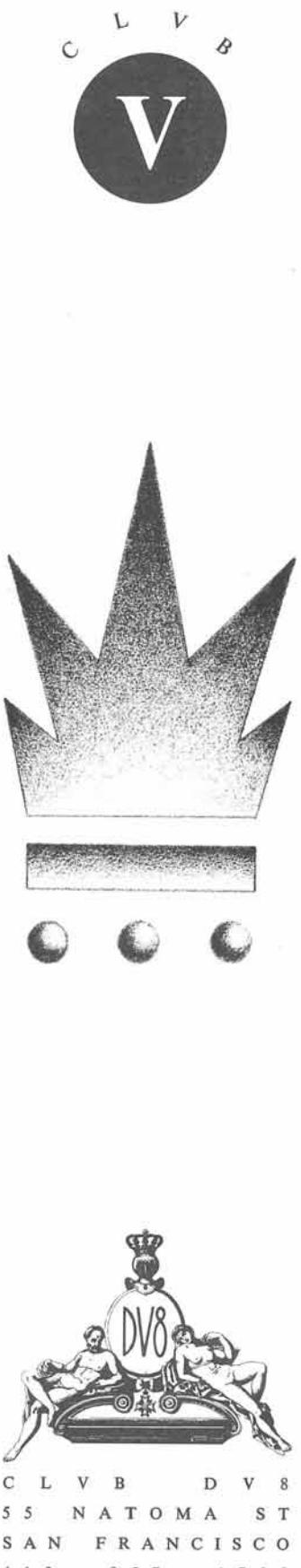
female interest in gardens with lovely roses and vines and robins and squirrels and little paths and flower beds. It's a nice book to read in the bathtub — you sink into warm water as you read of cold Yorkshire winds and immerse yourself in the bath of the past.

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, by E.L. Konigsburg, is an undelicate, loud story that has just escaped complete destruction at the hands of elementary school teachers, who, one and all, feel obliged to read it aloud (in unremittingly modulated voices, no doubt) at story hour because it isn't racist or sexist and its title sounds pleasingly educational. It is about a brother and sister who run away from home to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (anyone who has been a child since 1967 already knows this.) They get to sleep in a sixteenth-century bed and take baths in the fountain in the restaurant. It's a great idea. Everybody wishes that he or she had thought of it. Everyone I know who has read it (the phrase is almost redundant) has a runaway plan for exigencies, which is very practical.

Finally, there are the classics: the mad, Kantian sprint of *Alice in Wonderland*; the soothing, gentle *Wind in the Willow* — perfect for colds and rain; and *Charlotte's Web*, another book that was almost slaughtered by elementary school teachers, but which has since regained its original purity as a lovely Golden Rule fable. Though different, all of these books are delightful; they share an ability to convey the sense of long, silent, dusty afternoons spent in another world.

Annie Barrows

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