FRANK

MAGAZINE

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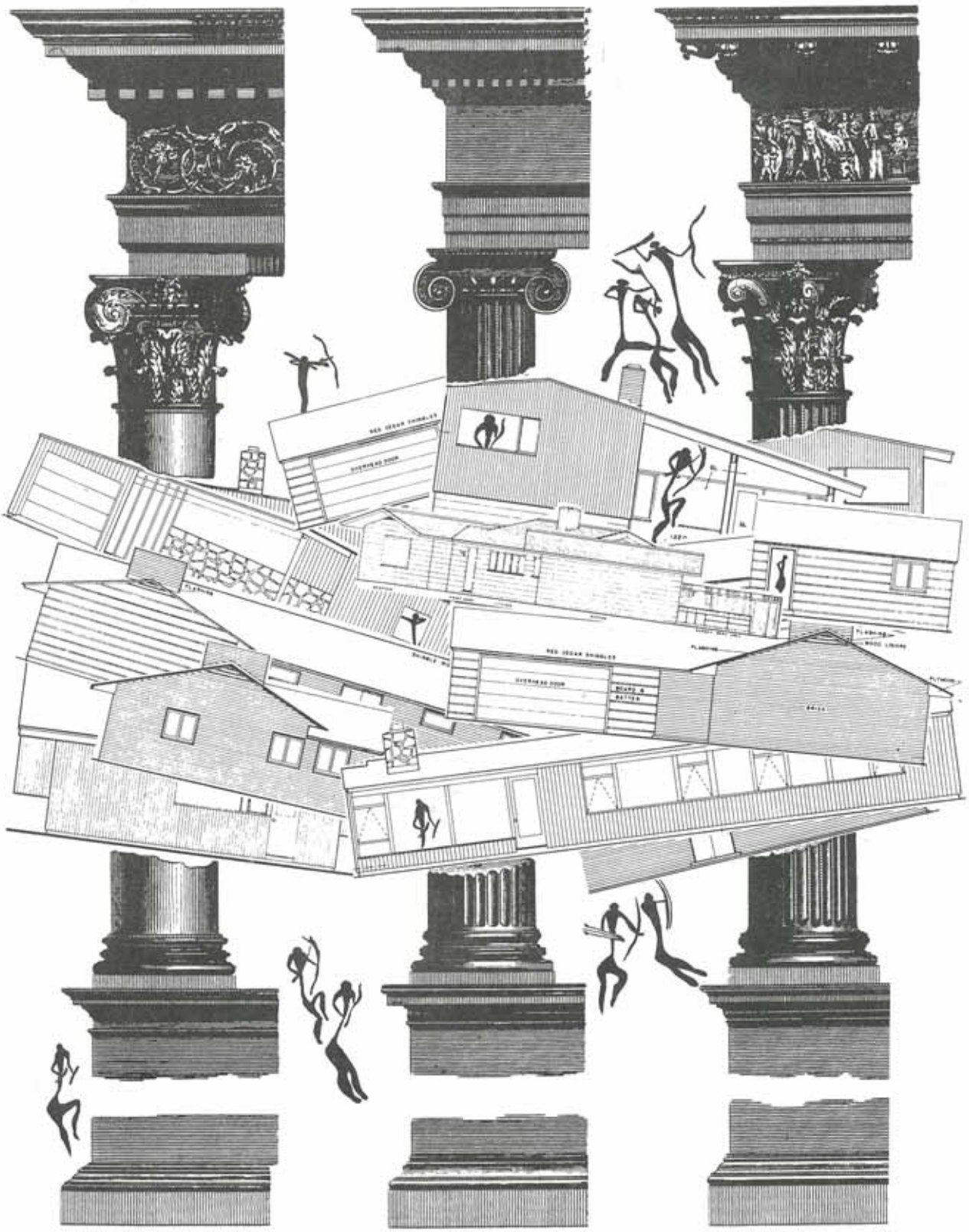

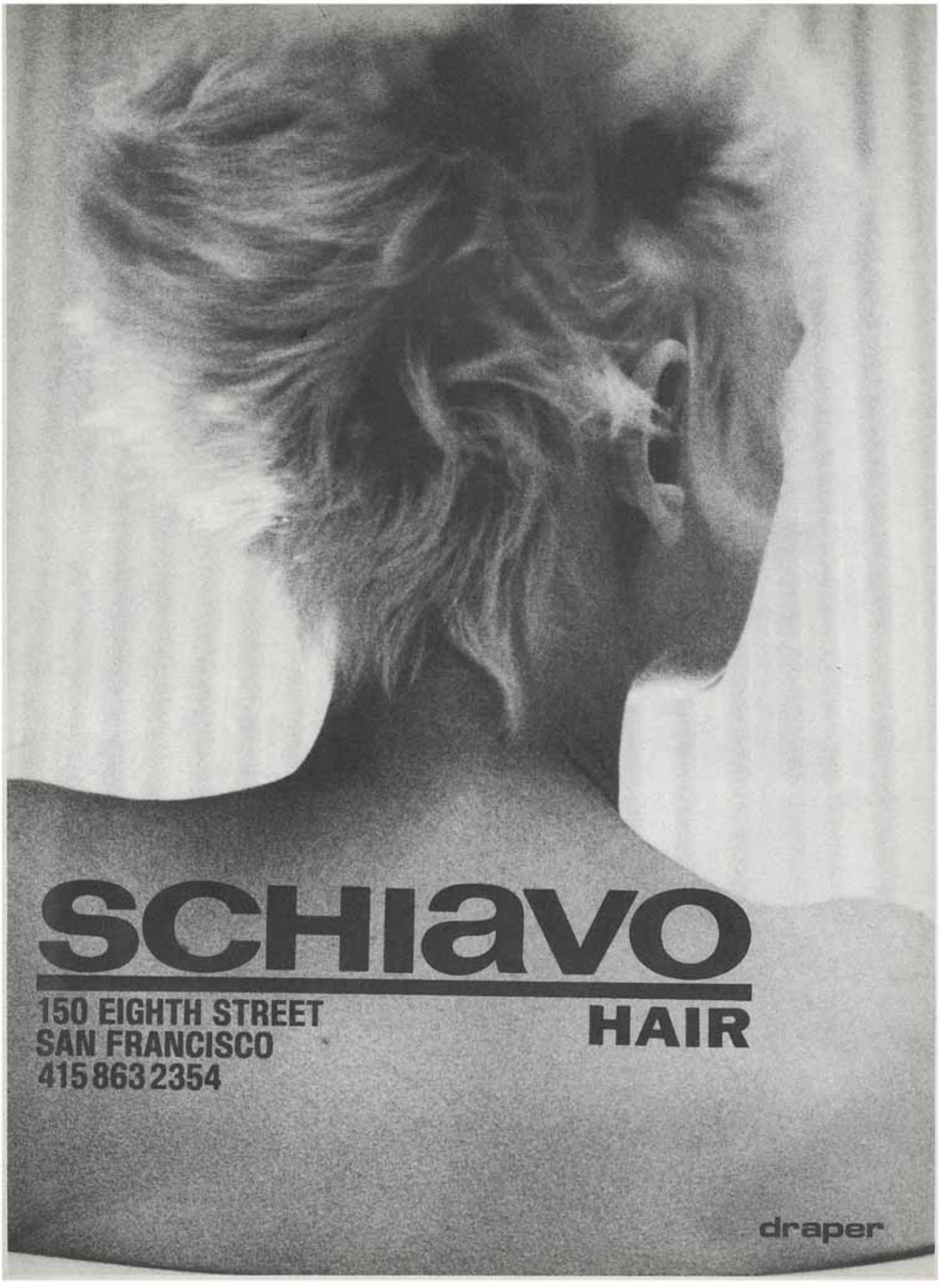
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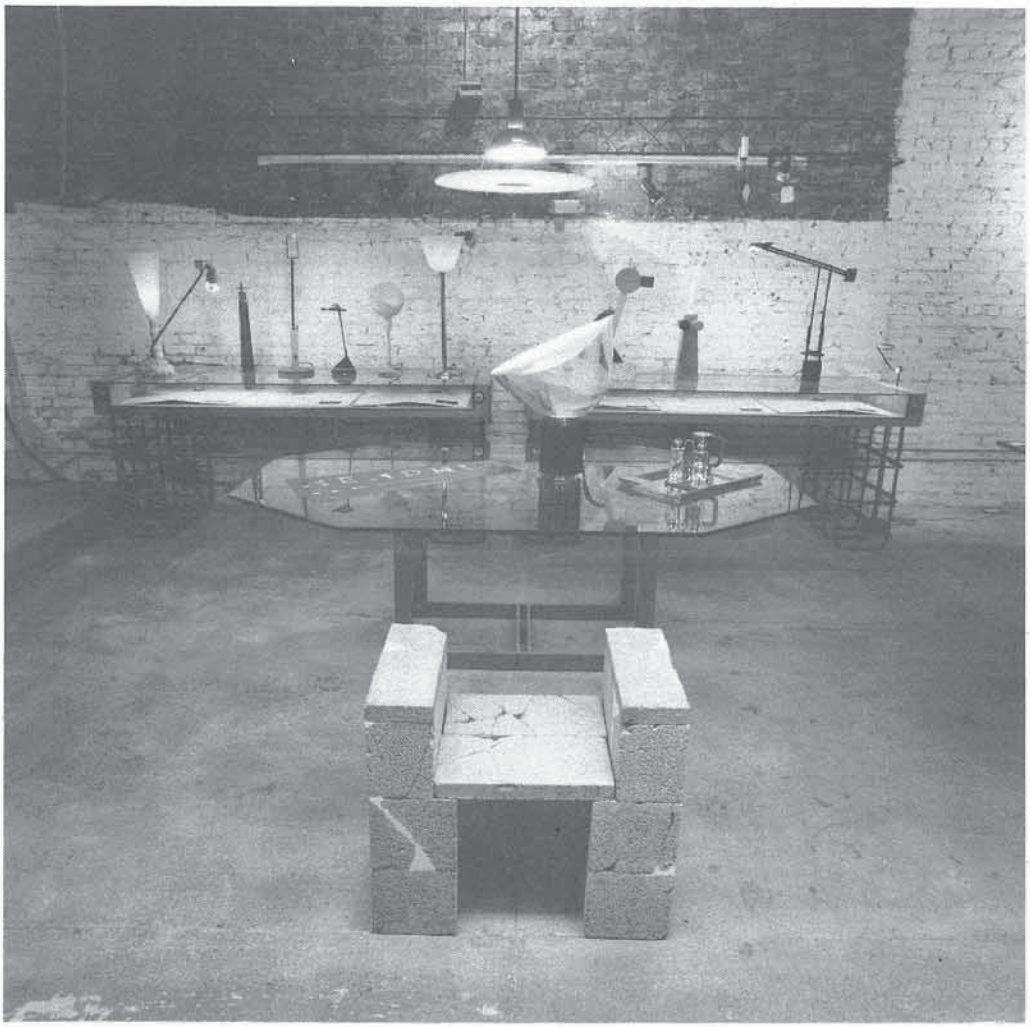

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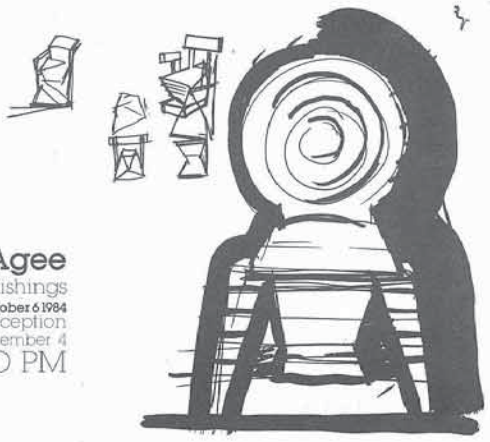
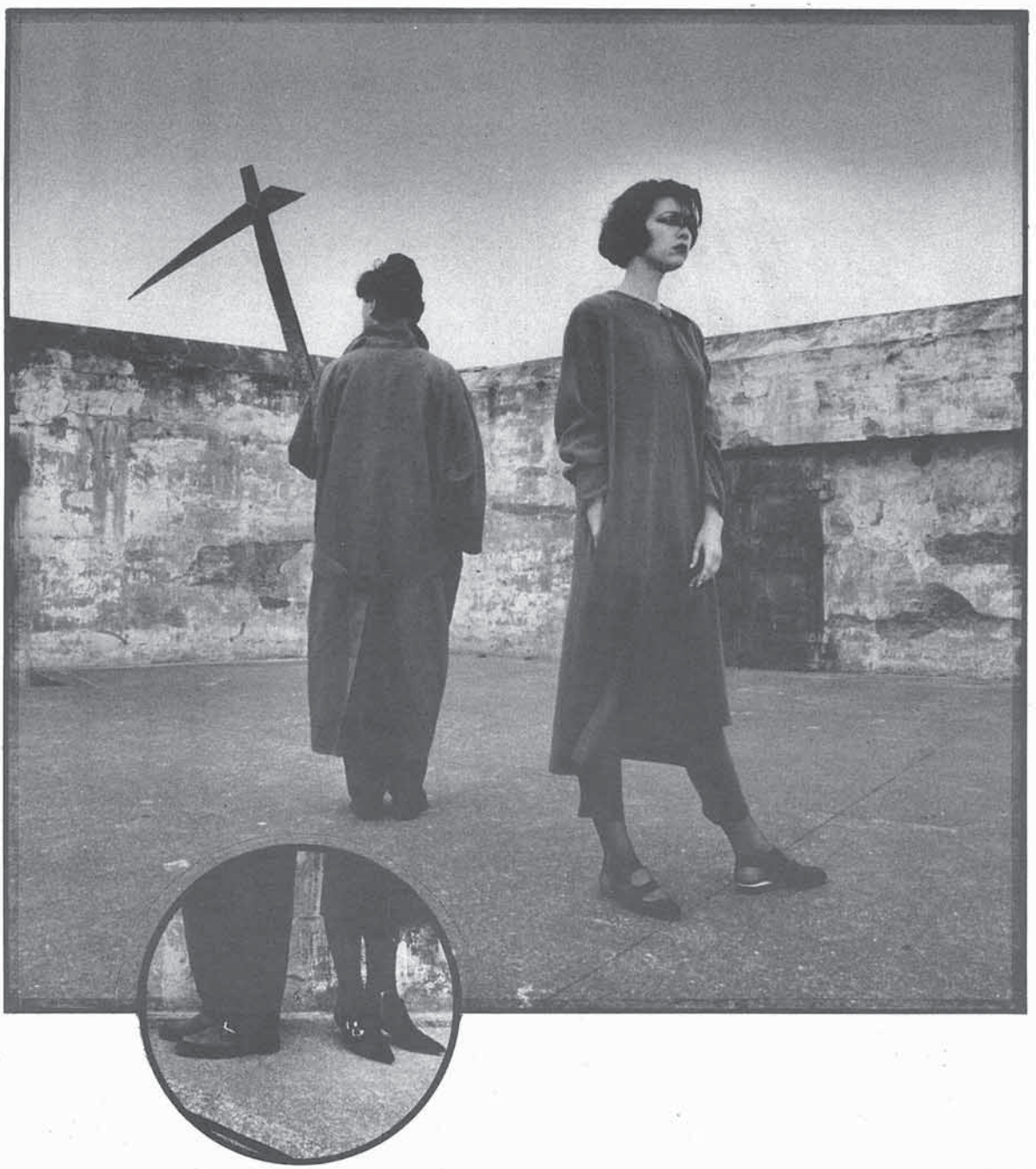


Philip Agee
Protea furnishings
September 4-October 6 1984
Opening Reception
Tuesday, September 4
5.30-7.30 PM



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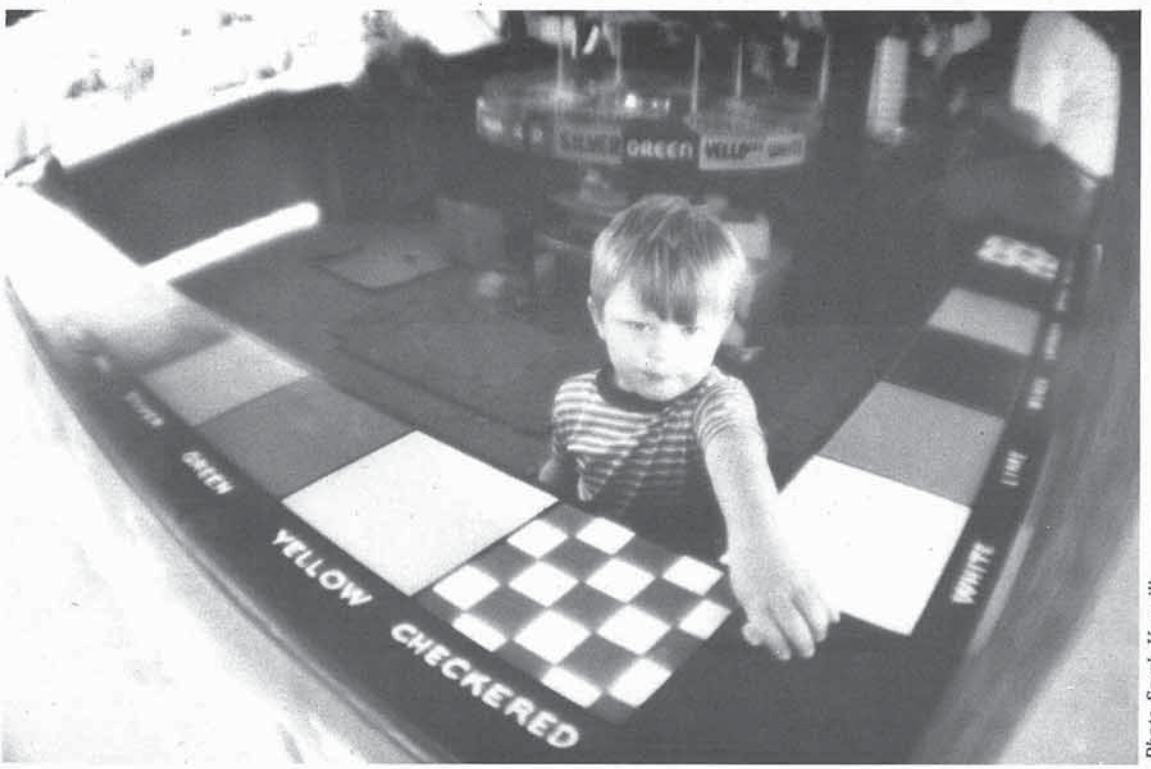

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FRANK x3

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FRANK CORRESPONDENCE

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Dear Frank:

A few words about my summer vacation...

London will never cease to amaze me. It is an ancient yet modern city. They take their time doing things there. They are just now installing touch-tone public phones and they don't even beep when you press the buttons. I spent 15 minutes in Victoria Station thinking this phone was broken before I "twigged" (caught on) that the phones don't beep. But that's why I love London so much.

This time around London definitely seemed more nervous to me. The "vibes" are not as pleasant as they used to be. This was my third trip there in 6 years and I lived there for one of those years, so I feel I know the place pretty well. People seemed more stressed. There were not so many happy faces. The weather was hot and muggy and oppressive. People are finding handguns and using them. While I was there at least two people were shot at in store robberies. This is not typical of London, at least the London I knew. People are less kind to each other. I think Londoners are finally getting angry and starting to express themselves. The English were so easily stepped on; I think they have reached the point where they're not going to take it anymore to use a phrase from some of their best-loved sons, The Who. People who live outside the city see the rising tension more than those who live in London. And that's exactly why they live outside of London--to be outside of London. "England" is outside of London. London is a heat furnace. Hell is Oxford Street. Heaven is a club. John Peel is still on Radio 1. What is Tony Blackburn really like like? Will we ever know? Coronation Street is still on the tube. Channel 4 Breakfast TV is a joke. Pubs.

Pubs are a world unto themselves. Pubs in London are a haven from the tortures of daily life. And most Londoners are in pubs daily. Drinking is the national past time. Hanging out in pubs with friends and rock stars is fun. That's part of being in London. There's no place like it. Fashion rules. Music rules. One lives to have the right haircut, shoes, dress, trousers. The right TV show is " The Young Ones." You'll never see it here. Not even on PBS. You don't get it here like you get it there. If you haven't been there, get there.

Cheers for now Frank,
Signed V.L.

From New Mexico

My favorite desert plant, although worthless, and even a menace, is the tumbleweed. In a landscape where caution is the key to survival, the tumbleweed is a ridiculous character, spurting out of the ground, producing thousands of spindly little branches. armed only with absurdly minute prickers, and grasping the dust with brittle half-hearted attempts at roots, they grow and die by the thousands. While alive, they are difficult to uproot, their stems breaking off just above the ground, where the roots will produce another plant in a year or so. They are bone-dry even when alive, and become a threat to all the things in the desert during the violent lightning storms of July, when they catch fire and become moving firebombs as the wind pulls them from the sand. The early farmers in New Mexico learned to hate and fear them, and even today, their presence on a piece of land is a symbol of neglect, irresponsibility, poverty.

And yet, I can't help admiring something about them, particularly during the late fall, when the steady wind blowing east begins to pull them across the state in huge herds, flocks, convoys. They dance into the air, bouncing and leaping in order to cross the interstate, hitch-hiking on the tops of rigs heading east to Texas and Louisiana, north to Colorado and Montana. They are carrying millions of tiny seeds, dropping them randomly across the broad expanse of hostile land, in drained swimming pools, on tarmac and asphalt. For the first half of November, these refugees are everywhere, slowing traffic, enraging the tidy-minded. Perhaps what drives them across the desert in such quantities is some nameless vegetable fear, but when I see them on the move, I imagine a spirit consumed with the joy of travel, to what may be a kind of promised land.

A.

NOTES ON FRANK

Issue No. 2...I must say that physically it's a great improvement over your first issue. It looks more professional. But I really missed the writing, in particular the poetry. I suppose you know your market much better than I do, and I can understand that people these days would prefer to buy things they can look at, but I guess I'm old fashioned in that I always look for the reading matter. I was interested in the article on Xerox Art. I studied in Cambridge under David Akiba who was then involved in Xerox Art. He was widely reviewed--ecstatically reviewed with one reviewer referring to his work as the visual equivalent of Kafka's writing. D.K.

The thing that struck me about reading Frank x2 is that there was nothing hard in it. I suppose what I'm really trying to say is that its now hard for me to separate art and politics. I always wanted to make one point about an article in Frank about *The State of* XXXX *Art*. You can never be free from corporate power until you get rid of the corporate name and association, just a thought.

A. C.

From London

I'm now a member of Community Copyart, a workers co-op funded by the GLC. It's exactly the kind of group I envisaged working with, a lot of hard work but anything we can do to break down the walls a bit is fine by me.

The tide has turned in Britain. Thatcher has begun to make a downward slide that won't end until she goes. A miner's strike for 18 weeks, a national dock strike, left-wing, the life of the GLC extended by a year so far, new police bill coming into force next month--very repressive measures and loss of civil liberties which tells me that they are scared and are preparing for the fight on the streets. This is not as far-fetched as it sounds. Anyways, the cracks are widening and copyart will be there.

Al

From EUROPE

In my recent travels I've noticed something. When I remeet people I have known in previous years--the shock I get upon seeing their faces, their bodies, is not that they've aged, but rather that they have become more essential. Some of the nonsense in them has been dropped. The lean, spare, essential parts of them have been retained. I must say, I like the faces of people better as they get older. It says more about who they are.

L.

A few things you might like to know:

From Italy

1) The benches in Italian churches all seem to slant forward compelling the seated pilgrims toward prayer in the kneeling postion.
2) Every third or fourth person in Italy wears a uniform.
3) Every city block is equipped with its own shrine.

L. J.

From Mexico

1) Mexicans (both men and woman) dote on children. There are candy shops, dulcerias, strictly dedicated to fabulosa birthday parties for children. The society pages of the newspapers carry photos of the parties of five-year-olds with the birthday girl posed like a miniature bride atop a wedding cake.
2) Coke, or as we say--Coka, is always in bottles, though rarely cold.
3) The Mexicans view of food so surpasses the American. One is never far from hot, delicious, cheap food, even at the bus stations. There are taco carts everywhere though our favorite is sliced mangoes on sticks and cups of sliced fruit and cucumber with coarse salt and hot sauce sprinkled on top.

B.

Dear FRANK,

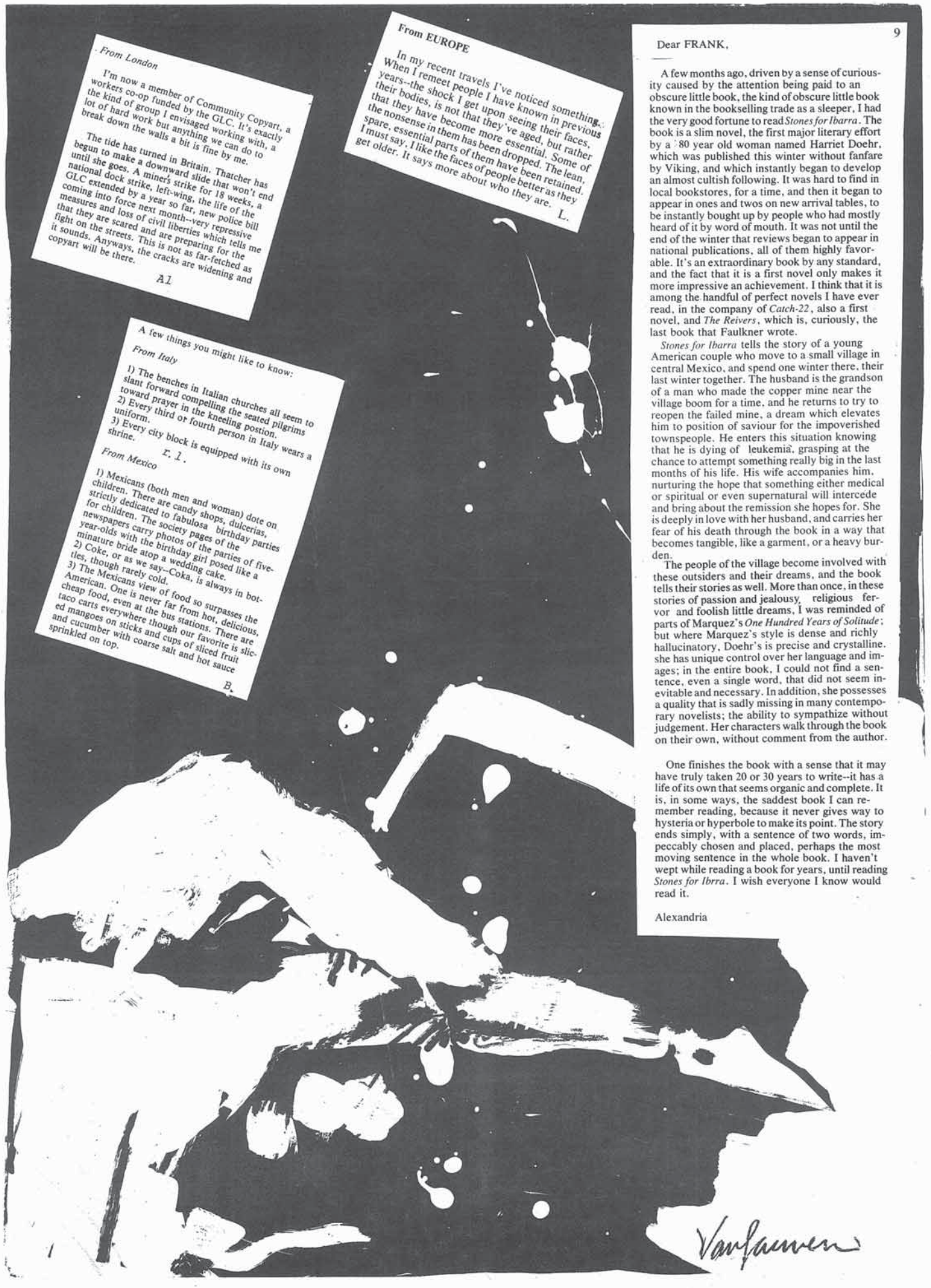
A few months ago, driven by a sense of curiousity caused by the attention being paid to an obscure little book, the kind of obscure little book known in the bookselling trade as a sleeper, I had the very good fortune to read *Stones for Ibarra*. The book is a slim novel, the first major literary effort by a 80 year old woman named Harriet Doehr, which was published this winter without fanfare by Viking, and which instantly began to develop an almost cultish following. It was hard to find in local bookstores, for a time, and then it began to appear in ones and twos on new arrival tables, to be instantly bought up by people who had mostly heard of it by word of mouth. It was not until the end of the winter that reviews began to appear in national publications, all of them highly favorable. It's an extraordinary book by any standard, and the fact that it is a first novel only makes it more impressive an achievement. I think that it is among the handful of perfect novels I have ever read, in the company of *Catch-22*, also a first novel, and *The Reivers*, which is, curiously, the last book that Faulkner wrote.

Stones for Ibarra tells the story of a young American couple who move to a small village in central Mexico, and spend one winter there, their last winter together. The husband is the grandson of a man who made the copper mine near the village boom for a time, and he returns to try to reopen the failed mine, a dream which elevates him to position of saviour for the impoverished townspeople. He enters this situation knowing that he is dying of leukemia, grasping at the chance to attempt something really big in the last months of his life. His wife accompanies him, nurturing the hope that something either medical or spiritual or even supernatural will intercede and bring about the remission she hopes for. She is deeply in love with her husband, and carries her fear of his death through the book in a way that becomes tangible, like a garment, or a heavy burden.

The people of the village become involved with these outsiders and their dreams, and the book tells their stories as well. More than once, in these stories of passion and jealousy, religious fervor and foolish little dreams, I was reminded of parts of Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*; but where Marquez's style is dense and richly hallucinatory, Doehr's is precise and crystalline. she has unique control over her language and images; in the entire book, I could not find a sentence, even a single word, that did not seem inevitable and necessary. In addition, she possesses a quality that is sadly missing in many contemporary novelists; the ability to sympathize without judgement. Her characters walk through the book on their own, without comment from the author.

One finishes the book with a sense that it may have truly taken 20 or 30 years to write--it has a life of its own that seems organic and complete. It is, in some ways, the saddest book I can remember reading, because it never gives way to hysteria or hyperbole to make its point. The story ends simply, with a sentence of two words, impeccably chosen and placed, perhaps the most moving sentence in the whole book. I haven't wept while reading a book for years, until reading *Stones for Ibrra*. I wish everyone I know would read it.

Alexandria



San Francisco

Susan Arick

San Francisco occupies a curious territory in the art world: while a certain abstinence from the mainstream has given rise to a potent variety of creative deviances, the community itself always looks elsewhere, usually with a safe amount of hindsight, for what consitutes validity among its own artists.

Take for example our Museum of Modern Art, which defends its stature with a priceless collection of historically validated photographs and virtually disavows other forms of art until other museums have pioneered the way. A good case in point is the current Biennial, an excellent show to be sure, but one which certainly takes its cue from New York, and about five years after the fact at that.

The more immediate venues, the important commercial galleries, systematically turn down work until the artist has achieved recognition, again almost always on the terms of that most holy of holy art meccas: New York.

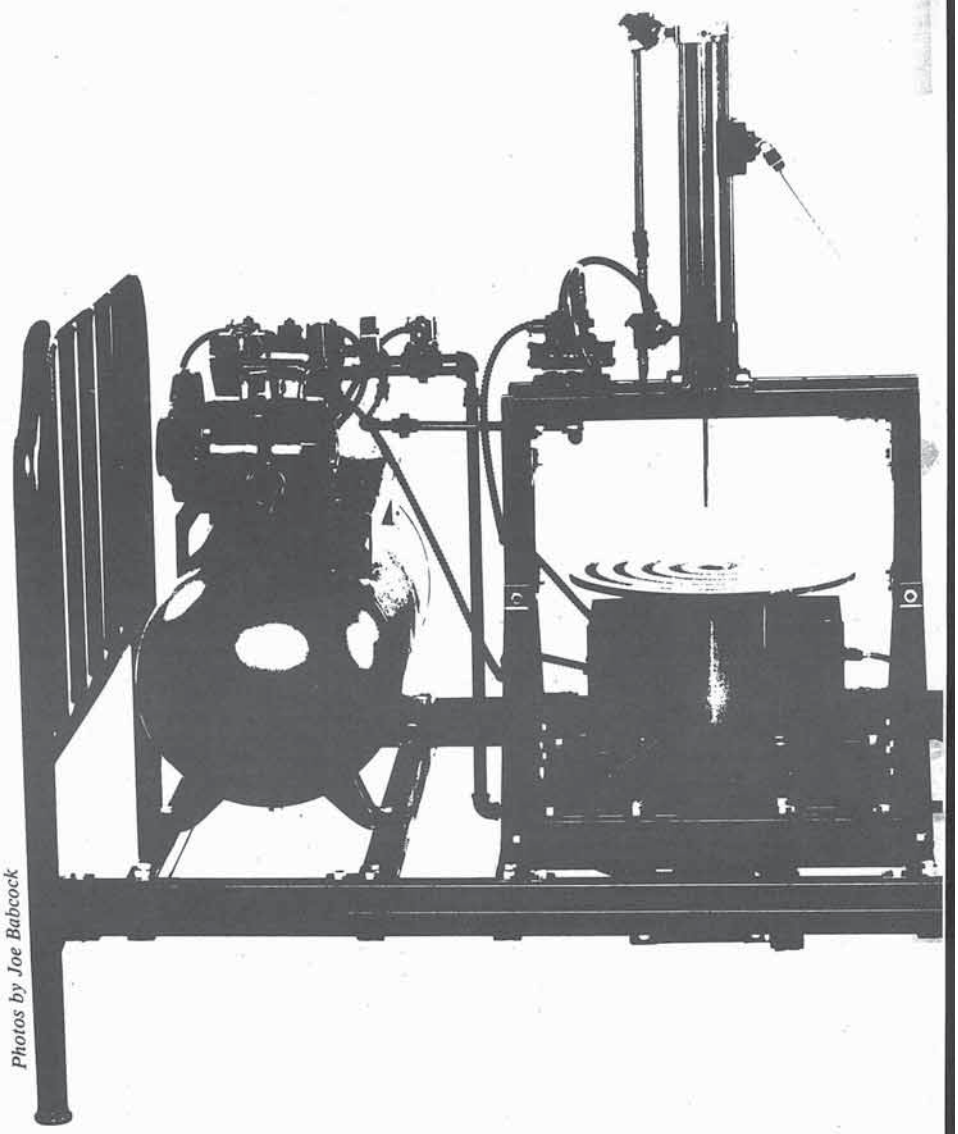
While in the past San Francisco has held a certain attraction for artists who choose to refine their sensibilities outside of the mainstream, many are finding that they can no longer even do that. With increasing gentrification and the upgrading of South of Market, where artists have been able in the past to find good spaces at cheap rents, it is becoming too difficult for an artist to live here and work without succeeding financially. And with the galleries and museums aspiring to a set of definitions provided outside the community, the artist cannot even use San Francisco as a stepping stone for his career. So what are they going to do to get their work recognized?

SF/SF: San Francisco Science Fiction was one answer to the question. Organized by artists Paul H-O, Nat Dean, Jo Babcock, and Robert Atkins, SF/SF was a natural progression from the N.O. (National Offense) show staged two years ago. That even created enough momentum for the group to keep pushing, this time with a loosely defined science fiction theme set in the year 1984. The artists set about gathering proposals from the local community and landed the Arts Commission Gallery for the month of June.

Beyond the curatorial premise was the underlying motive of bringing together this large community of artists, some successful at marketing their work, others not, and still others who don't care to; helping to bridge the gaps of age, sensibility and reputation that so often separate them.

True to the confusing pluralism of the times, SF/SF emerged as a maze of paradoxes and juxtapositions that alternately shocked and amused. It was a big, stinky, noisy blob of a show with periodic references to more traditional artistic concerns. From the front of the gallery one could see the thing in its entirety, but even walking through it a dozen times one could percieve no beginning or end, no consistency of viewpoint, no clear cut aesthetic. Machines vied with one another for the biggest noise, yet sometimes the cacaphony blended together to create this strange kind of music. A larger-than-life male monster loomed over a delicate glass piece; machines that spit, splashed green ooze and jumped into the air spewing gasoline fumes sat next to a meticulously refined musical instrument, a sort of latter-day harp that activated itself through sensory devices. One piece, a glass tube enclosing painted chicken wings, broke its seal and sent a putrefying odor throughout the gallery that drove visitors away. Stationed throughout the gallery were canvases of quite good quality, embodying one of the most traditionally cherished of all artisitc magics, the painter's hand.

While deviant in both style and content, SF/SF still has aspirations beyond the installations at 155 Grove St. The organizers landed a venue in, you guessed it, New York; where the show will travel in September. Manhattan's Clocktower Gallery is considered one of New York's most provocative alternative spaces, having served the reputation of many artists both here and abroad. With a general lack of funding from the local community, the artists themselves will foot the bill for getting their work there and back.



Photos by Joe Babcock

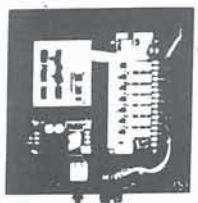
I spoke with a number of artists involved in the show on the subjects of gallery representation, alternative exhibits such as SF/SF and the situation of critical patronage. The following text is excerpted from these conversations.

PAUL H-O, one of the exhibition organizers, operates a framing business, and works part time at the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco as a framing technican.

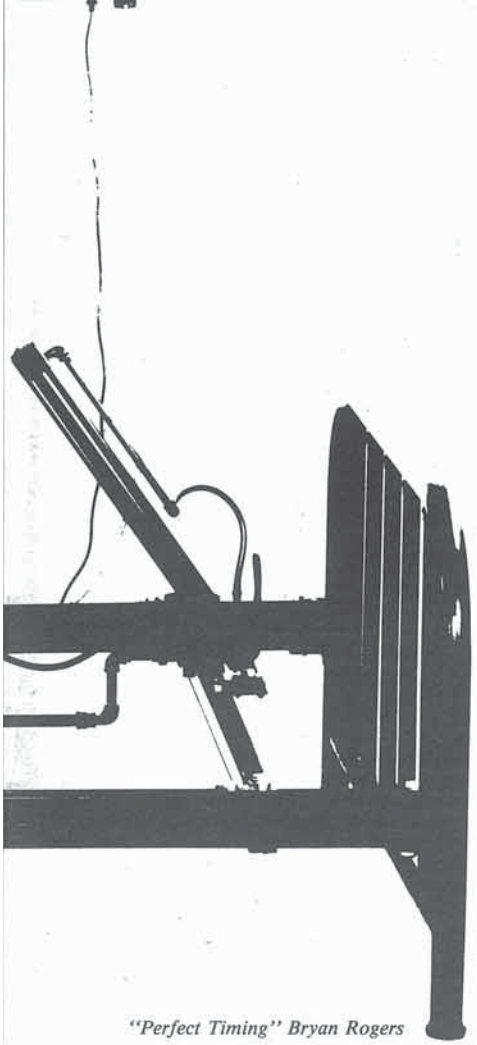
Q: Do you have a gallery?
A: No.
Q: Would you want one?
A: I'd like one if they were going to treat me right. I was in a gallery for a couple of years, the Soker-Kaseman Gallery, As soon as I got it, nothing was happening anymore. Don Soker didn't think my work would sell, but he thought it was good enough to put me in the stable. I wasn't going to sell, so he couldn't affort to show me, because he had to make money off his shows. I couldn't have a show until I sold some work, and I couldn't sell some work until I had a show, so nothing happened. I always work on my own anyway, because I don't see shows that do much. Usually the ones I like the best are artist inspired and artist organized. But I'm sure there's a gallery out there I'd be willing to work with...Ronald Feldman, maybe...nice space!
Q: Did you do something specfically for the exhibit?
A: No, I didn't but my work is oriented to that theme anyway and it has been for a long time. Since I was the one who wanted to do the show in the first place, it was pretty easy to fit my work in...I had no problem with the theme.
Q: So you're basically saying that you organized the exhibit around the desire to show your own work?
A: Yeah, well, I figured that if I got enough illustrious people in it, I could pick up on some of their left-over patrons! I think I did O.K., too...

BARRY NELSON, who used to support himself selling prints to corporations, now supports himself by working as a courier.

Q: Care to tell us a little about the corporate art scene?
A: I was selling to corporations for 10-12 years. I sold about 5,000 prints over the years, and didn't change much. There was a decline in my



Science Fiction



"Perfect Timing" Bryan Rogers

If you think of the 20th and 21st centuries, it's the age of technologies, the age of information. Food is more expensive and VCRs are getting cheaper. So there's going to be a time when people can videotape their own starvation.

art, but it held out pretty well.
Q: How did you happen to phase out of it?
A: I got bored with making prints. I was selling them and it was very easy to print them and make good money. I mean, I enjoyed doing those prints I did for corporations. I didn't really consider it corporate art right from the start--I considered it plain art. But after you do it for so many years it just becomes this thing of making a product--you have to sell them to the same corporations...So you just start thinking in terms of color schemes...I guess I got tired of having to do that.
Q: So hopefully, you're pursuing other things now...
A: Yeah, right now I'm pursuing being a courier! I guess I'm experiencing the working world, what everyone has been talking about all this time...
Q: Has that done anything to your point of view as an artist?
A: Now I see landscapes, lots and lots of landscapes...
Q: Did you do anything specific for SF/SF?
A: Yeah. When the word first came out, I guess it was last August, I decided to start painting space ships...images start to come out more readily when I paint...I guess because of the immediacy of it, so I started putting in these kids who are fighting the space ships off. I guess that was the last painting I did before I started working...Now I don't have time for art.
Q: You don't have time for art?
A: Not yet.
Q: Do you want to have time for art?
A: Not yet.

JO BABCOCK, one of the exhibition organizers, works as an electrician.
Q: Do you have a gallery?
A: No.
Q:Do you want one?
A: It would be nice. I went around, looked a lot. Now it seems more exciting to be producing shows and being involved in what's going on than just having someone represent me. I'm not really worried about getting product oriented, you know. I was in the Terminal Show in New York last October, and I've had very good chances at very alternative situations where you get a window in New York. Someone knows about windows, or there's an art group that sponsors or facilitaties certain situations. If the proposal is good enough, you get into these things and I've found that really exciting. Of course, the show that Paul (H-O) and I did in 1982 (N.O. Show), that was a big thing for me. We got this space on Valencia. Some people were living there and that was deteriorating at the time. Grants were applied for, but the structure was fucked up, so doing that show, as a sort of response, was rally good, It really put a lot of people together and through a good nucleus of people, you learn a lot. Doing SF/SF, Paul had this idea and because we had the N.O. Show behind us, we had the confidence and the experience to really pull it off.
Q: How did your work fit into the theme?
A: I did a site specific installation, which has, I guess, more of a Buck Rogers appproach. My piece had technologies in it, but it seemed pretty related to 1984 only. I've been making these camera obscuras for years now, and when I saw that front window facing City Hall...well, it was just such an opportunity to turn City Hall upside down. It felt really good.

JEFF GOODMAN is a local painter represented by James Turcotte Gallery in Los Angeles.

Q: Is your gallery important to you?
A: Sure it's important for comfort. I have this gallery in Los Angeles and I feel good about that. I'm living here and I feel I should have some representation here for that reason.
Q: For validity?
A: No, not for validity. Just because it makes me feel better.
Q: How do you feel about SF/SF?
A: I like the idea of these crazy shows. It was very exciting...this was just one crazy piece that I couldn't spend that much time on if I was doing it for a gallery.
Q: So you did this piece specifically for the show?
A: Yes, I did it for SF/SF.
Q: And you feel you worked more freely?
A: Oh, sure. I wouldn't do something like that for a gallery right now, though maybe someday I could. SF/SF was just this crazy show with crazy people and ideas in it...for me it was like a prize fight, getting out there and fighting with other people's ideas. Unlike a gallery, where you have the name, a more homogenous image. I mean, lets face it, there was a lot of bad boyism in SF/SF, you know, a lot of messy stuff.
Q: Did all that messy stuff bother you at all?
A: No, it sort of opened things up. It's like I began thinking, what if the perspective just exploded, and then I could be free. I guess that's how my work fit in with the theme, it's just open-ended.

PAUL PRATCHENKO is a local painter who shows with Braunstein Gallery in San Francisco and Gallery K in Washington D.C., and teaches at S.F. State.

Q: Are your galleries important to your career?
A: I don't really know. As far as money goes, not all that much. I think maybe your problems really start when you get a gallery. I don't mind selling art. I have nothing against it. Every one I sell, I can do two or three more. On the other hand, I don't expect much from it.
Q: Did you put a lot of work into getting a gallery?
A: Yes, I put a lot of work into it. I took slides and worked around this town for 15 years. No one would take it. Then I had a show in Washington, D.C. in 1974 that sold out before I got there. Then everybody was interested. So I showed at John Berggruen for 6 months. The Surgeon General's wife came out from Washington, D.C. to buy a piece of mine. Berg-

gruen pulled it out, the woman said she wanted to buy it, he said, well if you like this, you should buy this, and he pulled out something by another artist. I took my work out of the gallery the next day. Ruth Braunstein took it. I think for this town, it has to happen elsewhere first. Or you can go with Berggruen, who keeps 40 artists on the racks.

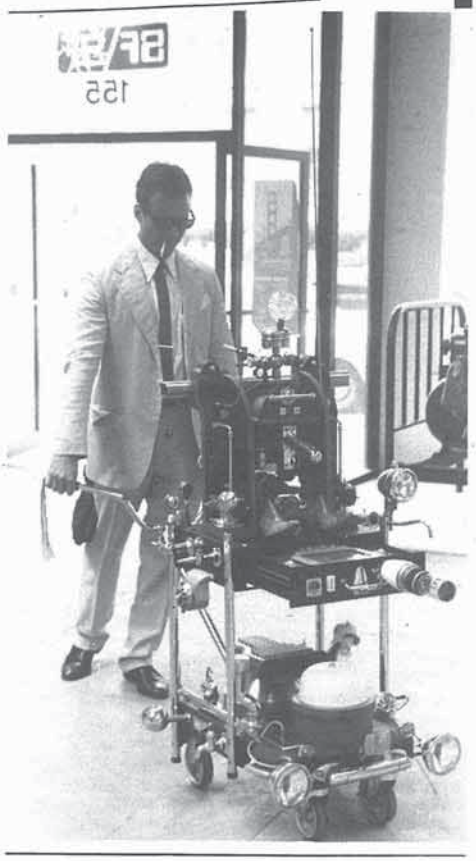
Q: How did you percieve the theme of the show, and how do you feel your work fit in?

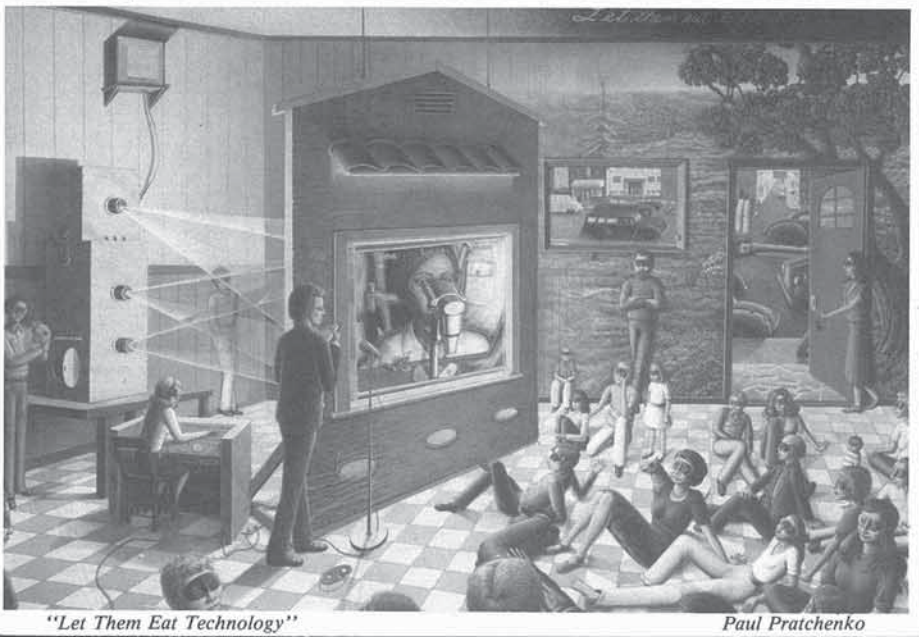
A: I did nothing special for the show. It was something I already had. But I think the themes I work with fit in. Painting and sculpture are still in the 19th century. If you think of the 20th and 21st centuries, it's the age of technologies, the age of information. Food is more expensive and VCRs are getting cheaper, So there's going to be a time when people can videotape their own starvation. As far as SF/SF goes, there was an honesty about that show in that people generally didn't glorify their circumstances. They used the stuff around them. Instead of going to Mount Parnassus for inspiration, they went to the back yard. I like the show, especially the use of ideas, which is something art has nothing to do with recently, at least in this country.

(At this point, the discussion becomes more of an open conversation)

Q: In terms of the critics and the general public, how do you think SF/SF was received?

A: I think we had as much of a response from the public and the art community as we could possible hope for. I mean the show averaged over 100 people a day right until the end, and the opening event brought out a lot of people who normally stay away. So that was really positive. But we had this problem on a large scale that most of us have personally, on a smaller scale when we show work, and that is the question of how the art media is going to take it. And they responded in a pretty predictable way. I mean, how could *Artweek*, which is admittedly a pretty slow-paced and academic journal, but it is, you know, the only weekly outlet for art community, ignore us? I really feel that their complete inactivity on behalf of a show like this, which generated such a tremendous response from the community, was a way of saying, 'we don't want to take you seriously'.





"Let Them Eat Technology" — *Paul Pratchenko*

They had even actively committed themselves to covering the performance by Survival Research Laboratories (Produced by SF/SF at Fort Mason Center), and when Mark Pauline calls the critic who was supposed to cover the show, the guy says he didn't even go. What is that supposed to tell you?

Q: What does the lack of response from a journal like *Artweek* mean to you when you admit they aren't operating on the same level as you are? When you look through their paid listings, you know who is going to get the coverage, so why are they so important?

A: Well, it's history, it's a place where things get recorded. And because there isn't anyone else around doing what they do, it's the only common carrier of this type of information. Let's face it, it's a stamp of approval, it carries weight with those who could give us the sort of recognition we need to, you know . . .survive. I feel they have a responsibility to do something that they aren't really doing. But look, how many of the artists in this show have been covered in one way or another in *Artweek*,but can't lend that previous acknowledgement to show like this?

JB: Well, we did get coverage for the show elsewhere . . .The *Examiner*, which never covers anything like this came out with something the day of the show. We got things in the *Bay Guardian*, *Focus*, the *Mercury News* . . .

Q: Which is good for the local media. But what about those who we feel to be the more important critics in town, the ones who correspond for art mags? Do you feel that perhaps there was something threatening about this show for them? Because I do . . .

H-O: I don't think it was because of lack of interest, because they were all there . . .

Q: Well then, why didn't they cover it?

H-O: Because we didn't give them any money, that's why!

PP: My perception is that critics review shows for the advancement of their own careers. If you follow the reviews of any artist, the younger he is in terms of his introduction to the art market, the less favorable his reviews are. Then as the artist gains acclaim, the critic will give a more and more favorable review. I think art critics want to be read, and if they write about unknown artists, what does it do for them? There is safety in history. No, I don't think you could bribe them.

JG: I think one reason they might not cover it is because it's a difficult show . . . there's so much going on . . .

Q: What does that tell you about the caliber of writer who represents this community?

JG: I think that's a really good point, because as soon as they take it on, they get into this strange situation because a lot of the work has this edge to it that cuts. I mean, you could write about a lot of shows without really committing yourself, but SF/SF had this sort of edge to it . . .

Q: I think that is probably is true. When I began to write about the show myself, it became this rather time-consuming thing, because there is so much going on, so many different levels, and a lot of inconsistencies. It's hard to establish that hook, that crutch that you usually rely on when you cover a show.

H-O: But don't you think that a lot of it has to do with the traditional neglect paid to artists in this community? They don't have enough confidence in the local arts community . . .

Q: Or in themselves, perhaps?

JG: You want to know what I think? I think the critics in San Francisco are afraid to say what they want to say because they are afraid of being shot down in New York.

H-O: The local correspondent for *ArtForum* told me that she wouldn't write about the show unless she liked it . . .

Q: Isn't that putting aside the role of the critic?

H-O: I guess what it comes down to, is that if she does a story for *ArtForum*, it's going to get read in New York. And if she writes something good and the show gets panned in New York, then she looks ridiculous. And if she writes something negative about the show and it goes over in New York, then she looks ridiculous. So if she doesn't write anything, then she's safe.

JB: So there are a lot of situational pressures facing someone like that, that really has nothing to do with anything but their own career.

H-O: Well, when there is so much going on, and so many people responding, why does this situation have to exist?

While that question will probably take a long time getting answered, the fact remains that events such as SF/SF can begin to make a difference. If artists can band together to create their own momentum instead of competing against one another for recognition and allowing themselves to be pampered by a system that seeks to exploit them for its own gain, then maybe, just maybe, they can begin to confound that system and effect a real change. Hell, it's worth a try.

□ ○ □

Susan Arick is a writer living in the Bay Area, who has, among other things, been a former correspondent for Artweek. *She is currently pursuing being a waitress. She acknowledges James Scarborough for his help on the interview section.*

June

Marcia Cole

June's dreams are fantastic. I guess it's because she's been sort of forced into this practical way of life that she dreams so. In her latest dream, she tells me, she is searching on a beach in Spain. It is a dark night but when she bends to draw something from the sand, she knows not what, light overthrows the scene; ocean; sky; sand glimmering like cut glass and her friends are all around her.

June likes to show her daughter how to play so we're sitting on the floor rolling the balls from the pool table back and forth to each other. I don't know what to say after she tells me this dream. Sisters are strange. Anyway, Melanie isn't really getting into the game so I roll my colletion of balls for the fireplace wall. They smack against the brick and Melanie laughs. She chases after the balls and brings them back to me. I start to repeat the process when June calls out to me.

"Robert!" June says, "You could wreck something. Show her how two can play together."

The snow has been falling in exuberance for hours, the breath of december is blowing it into drifts of frozen, cresting waves, when I open my eyes and June turns abruptly from the window to face the t.v. A thin, bespectacled and balding man is sitting cross-legged in a lounge chair with his thigh hoisted to the camera.

"It's from thinking too much," he says. He appears to be slouching in his light gray suit as the capital-lettered banner runs across his suit. "LATEST SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND TRAVELERS UPDATE NEXT."

"Have they announced the forecast yet?" I ask June.

"It's from thinking too much in one direction." The man on the t.v. says. The camera focuses on a chart with a thick black line that zig-zags, slightly, from left to right across the screen. June sits down on the ottoman and I get up to replace her at the window. A gust of wind, penetrating even the thick brick walls of this ancient farmhouse blows a fine, dusty-white tornado that appears to skim the frosty land like a ghost walking on water. It makes me shiver.

"Have they said anything about the morning forecast" I ask again. June is listening to the dull man's proposal for a balanced budget.

"Not yet." June says without turning from the t.v.

"An equal emphasis on all factors in society," the man is saying when I ask June if she wants me to start shoveling the driveway.

"I don't know." She says. Her voice sounds very irritated, and I'm guessing it's because she gets up early with her daughter and now it's nearly two a.m.

"Weighing, evenly, all demands upon the same resource." The balding man drones on in his monotonous dialogue.

"You paying attention to that bore?" I ask. June swivels around on the ottoman and looks at me menacingly. I'm sure it's because she's nervous about getting out of here, but she says, "Can't you think for yourself this once?" She looks and sounds strained. She turns back to the t.v. I watch out the window for a while trying to decide whether or not its worth it to start shoveling the driveway. Of course, on the one hand, the snow could pile right back up, cover the car wheels again. But how much can it snow in three hours? If we start for the airport we'll have to leave soon. I turn to ask June what she thinks. She is watching the man on t.v. with an accusing eye so I check myself and go to the kitchen instead. The snow looks pretty bad from here too, so I get a glass from the dishwasher and pour myself some eggnog.

"The only way June could come for Christmas was to promise to have the baby back so her husband could take Melanie to his parents in New Hampshire for a belated celebration. He said Melanie wouldn't know the difference and it didn't matter to him if it wasn't really Christmas Day. He plans to re-enact the whole thing. Get up at midnight and plant gifts under the tree, Christmas stockings, the whole works just like when he was a kid. He'll make it just the way it was for him when he was growing up.

"Won't it seem strange to Melanie to go through that whole thing?" June asks me.

"I don't think she'll know what to make of it," I say, watching the edge of the road. I'm driving with the right hand wheels on the gravel shoulder for more traction. A plow has preceeded us, we're lucky to have come this far.

"If Melanie won't know the difference why go through it all?' June asks, looking over at Melanie asleep in the back seat with my coat thrown over her for a blanket.

"Yeah, now that you mention it. Why not just open presents, have a nice dinner and play around for a while." I'm concentrating on the road. The snow has let up a little but I don't want to take my eyes off the road. It's like playing outfield when a fly ball's in the air, your glove poised to take it all the way home.

In front of the terminal I pull up to the entrance and put the car in park. June asks if she can use my coat to carry Melanie inside and I say sure. I'm just glad, and surprised, we've made it. The parking lots are cleared as well as they can be with the snow still falling and all. I'm lucky to get a spot real close so I don't have far to walk without a coat. I leave the car running while I get the suitcases out of the trunk. I set them beside the door then get back in the car to warm up a minute before carrying them inside. June meets me at the ticket counter.

"All flights are delayed." She says smiling. "We just have to wait a little while." She is so relieved I can see it with my own eyes. Brushing snow from my hair she laughs and asks me if I want to get something from the cafeteria.

June has a cup of complimentary coffee and a doughnut the airline has provided for stranded passengers. A long time after I've finished the pancakes and sausage I also have a cup of free coffee. We're sitting by the window watching the emergency lights of the trucks as they work to clear the runways. The snow looks beautiful. "It's so Christmasy," I say.

June tells me about another dream she had. She said that she was in a boat with her husband and Melanie when it somehow turned over. The baby fell below the surface of the water and June could see her sinking to the bottom. For some reason June couldn't understand, her husband was unable to help so she dove down herself, after the baby. On the silt floor she reached for Melanie's hand and as soon as she touched her one small hand the other lifted with a torch and together they rose to the surface. A beam of light was shinning through the water. I smile at June. There is something I want to say to her but I don't know what so I just smile and begin to feel it's better that way.

"When we got to the surface, I realized that he couldn't comprehend the baby. He couldn't comprehend me either. He wasn't in any danger or anything, he was just there and very removed from us." June looks out the window. "He couldn't even comprehend himself." When she looks at me again she's smiling but I can tell it's a different smile. I don't know what it is but that's what I can tell, the difference.

June and I are still sitting there in the cafeteria with our coffee when they announce a flight. It's not June's but we hurry to the gate. Seated in the first row before the large glass window, I'm holding Melanie while June is in the bathroom. I'm sitting there and I can see the plane. It is moving slowly from the terminal. It looks so powerful moving so slowly like that through the snow. Before long it is out of my sight. I cannot see the plane any longer but I'm sitting there and I know that it is moving down the runway now, gainning speed and right at this moment I can see it as though it were there before my eyes. The balance, thrown, the speeding plane lifting off the cleared, flat space, for air.

JEFFERY

NEWBURY

Eccentricity

Paintings at Reverand Finster's home

Folk Art from the South

Alan Winkler

I just got back from a trip through the deep south searching out folk artists and eccentrics of all kinds. I traveled with a friend who had over the years assembled a list of people and addresses to be visited at all costs.

We drove into Mississippi on small little roads searching for the creative artists, the kind of people who fill their back yards full of sculptures or paintings or collected junk. As we drove along I kept my eyes wide open and sure enough spotted a funky looking place with crude paintings on tin nailed up all over the place.

We pulled over and went to check it out. Miss Mary T. Smith came out of the house and was so happy that anyone would stop to look at her work that she giggled like a little child. When she saw how much we liked her paintings she ran back in the house, got the hammer and started pulling down her paintings to give to us.

"I'll make more," she said as she struggled with the hammer and nails. She was 82 years old and had begun painting two years earlier at age 80. She painted as a way to communicate with all the people passing by on the road and to give her something to do with her spare time. She painted Jesus and God and the devil and also pictures of people with candy and all sorts of things. We were pleased to have some of her art given to us, as we found her to be truly a special self taught woman artist.

We drove on and headed towards a house way outside of a small town, very hard to find, where a man lived who had built a one-of-a-kind bicycle. It was made for traveling and had every available feature for your comfort while pedaling the machine. It had a fan if you got hot, and a heater for the cold. A tape deck with special tape ejection system so you don't have to fuss around while traveling looking for the right tape. You just push a button and they come flying out right into your hand. It also has a table that folds out of the bike so you can eat (a freezer-refrigerator included) or drink out of the thermos, or read from the library as you ride, or talk on the the special CB radio he installed on the handlebars. There are machines to tell you the wind direction and velocity as well as search lights and turning lights and a cigarette machine and a candy bar holder and speedometer to tell you how fast you are going, although with all that stuff on the bike it is very hard to see where you are going, let alone to get the thing moving.

This vision of the perfect bicycle was inspired by God but created by this man way out in the Mississippi delta. It took him years to make it and he wants $50,000 for it, no less, and it's worth it. Even though he couldn't ride it, and nobody has ever ridden it, the right person will hopefully come along to purchase this unique bike, so he can continue to work on his flying bicycle using some sort of helium device. We thanked him and left.

We saw good paintings everywhere we went in Mississippi, on dry cleaning stores, on windows of churches;all hand painted signs. There were especially a lot of paintings on the sides of bars and honky tonks; paintings of beautiful, sexy women and handsome suave men. Driving through the south was like going to one continuous folk art show. We slept in our van everynight, clearing out the art we purchased from the artists to make room to sleep. Everyday we had an agenda of people to visit; we hunted them like private art investigators.

I noticed in a quilt catalog that many of the quilts were done by older black women living in Yazoo City, Mississippi, so when passing through we asked around and within a couple of minutes we were at a house being invited in to view the spectacular quilts of an 85 year old quiltmaker. The quiltmakers were pleased to sell us a quilt top (unquilted) for $35. My friend was collecting all this work to put an art show together so we also stopped at antique and junk stores. In one little shop we got an old voodooish doll hand made by an older black woman. They wanted it out of the store and let it go cheap, a couple of bucks only.

Eventually we got into Alabama and Georgia and every day was truly an adventure. In Summerville, Georgia we spent the day with the incredible Rever and Howard Finster, who works all day long building his folk art church, doing the construction himself. It is already five stories high and looks like a wedding cake.

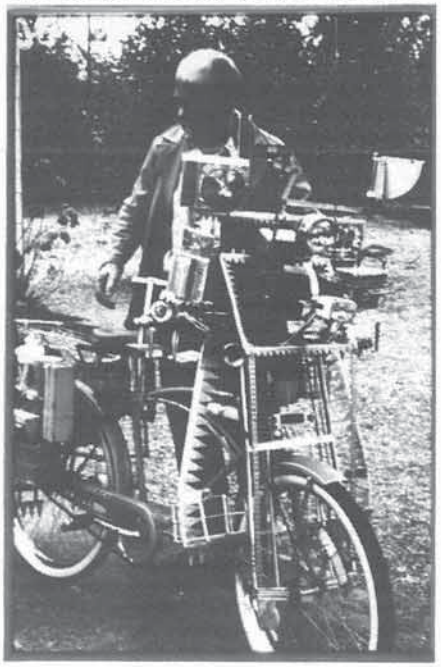
She painted Jesus and God and the devil and also pictures of people with candy

At the end of the day's work he begins to make art, and continues on all night long. He doesn't sleep at all.I don't think, unbelievable energy for a man in his 80's.

He's been working on art since 1976 when the Lord told him to get working on his Paradise Garden Project. He also has many other projects going on as he is a very inspired artist. He signs his works "Reverand Howard Finster, Man of Visions" and he numbers his paintings and sculptures which by now are up to almost 3000 pieces of art in 8 years work (about one a day like the vitamins).

His place in Summerville, Georgia is a real trip and should be a must see spot for anybody cruising around in Georgia, or just interested in seeing the real thing. His work is for sale; he needs money to continue his folk art church, and he is world famous, selling his things all over the place. Still he enjoys visitors

The one-of-a-kind, $50,000 bicycle



and once in the town of Summerville, he's not too hard to find.

In fact this country is filled with creative people, people inspired by one thing or another, or just retired folks with some time on their hands and some energy left. We met one guy, retired for 2 years, whose yard had in it over 200 large whirlygigs blowing like crazy. I've never seen a sight like it; there were so many and all different, some made out of bicycle wheels and others out of simply made propellors, and some had people on them. Really exciting stuff.

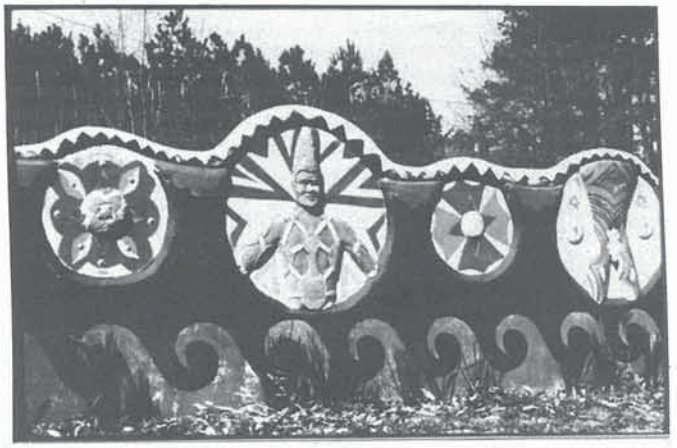
It was somewhere in Georgia that we went to the home of Saint Eom. His name was Eddy Owens Martin, but when he was 30 years old he had some visions, and took the 1st letters of his names and called himself Eom, and has been known as Saint Eom for the past 50 years now. He ran away to New York City from his childhood Georgia home while very young. He became a male prostitute to support himself, and studied mystical religions and made art. One day in 1930, he had a vision to return to Georgia and the next day he was on a bus headed home to mama. He lived at home for a few years and when his mother died he started to fix the place up wildly, painting it very colorfully and building brick walls on the land and covering them with cement statues and figures and symbols and bright colors. He'd taken in unemployed people in the area to live there for free if they helped him to complete his vision. Through the years he has had lots of helpers and he's accomplished an enormous amount, but he's still not done, even after 50 years of work. The place is incredible to visit, like being in a different world.

After St. Eom we visited Jimmy Lee Suddith who is a very happy black man, in love with his wife and his life. He doesn't like to go too far from home, so he makes art by going out the front door and working right there. As he has little money, he uses mud from the ground, mixes it with sugar to make it stick to a board and calls it 'sweet mud.' He makes a picture out of brown and black mud, then goes back into it with leaves and grass to get his green, just grabbing some nature with chlorophyll in it and rubbing it in the picture for color. Now that's really being a creative artist.

My advice to other travelers of this same folk art persuasion is to take the small little roads to get places, the scenic roads where life is still alive and people are still friendly and real, rather than saving an hour or 2 and doing the ever-boring interestate routes. Its great when you're in a hurry, but it takes its toll on your brain. The littler the road the more exciting and interesting the trip. This is what I've been finding out.

Reverand Howard Finster's Folk Art Church

A wall surrounding the home of Saint Eom



Photos by Alan Winkler

Editors's note: As part of his mission, Alan Winkler asks anyone who knows the whereabouts of any wild folk artist or creative kooks to send him some information (Newspaper clipping or address) so he can check it out.

Alan Winkler
Eccentric Art Headquarters
1663 Belleview Avenue
Kansas City, Missouri 64108

Winkler, who lived in San Francisco prior to moving to Kansas City, is the artist who did the window displays in the old J.C. Penny's Building at 5th and Market. From 1979 - 1982 he kept the adjacent sidewalk interesting with his displays of clay statues, paper mache dinosaurs, 12 foot tall figures of people, animals and buildings, scenes made of fabric, paintings and just about everything else he could find to stick in there.

fab furniture
FAB FURNITURE
Fab Furniture

ATOMIC FURNISHINGS

The Atomic Age, late 1940s to the early 60s, was a time that Luther Blue of Atomic Furnishings calls the quintessential period of furniture making. Although his showroom features the total "Fab 50s" look, Blue says he's not dealing with escapism. "I'm not looking to return to the past. The naivety was fabulous, but you can't go back. Besides I was just a little kid, I don't even remember. I just buy things that I like, furniture that has visual as well as functional aspects.

I'm not interested in what's happening now in design because the atomic designers have already gone to the heart of the matter. Contemporary designers use some of these aspects, like color, but that doesn't cut it. There is no more pure principle, instead it's just a matter of getting it out quick while there's still a trend.

Blue's showroom is filled with fiberglass chairs, lava lamps, molded plywood furniture, wrought iron shelves and lamps...what has been called the "California Look." Blue has done some of his hunting in Southern California. There the sudden, post-war growth brought an influx of young couples who furnished their new homes with inexpensive and functional furnishings produced by designers such as Charles Eames. Beyond the visual appeal of the furniture is the beauty of designs that were intended for inexpensive, mass-production.

"There was then," said Blue, "a philosophy that the right form is the one that makes the commodity right for the job. But this doesn't hold true now. No longer does form follow function in furniture, music or anything else."

Blue, who says he deals in anticipatory strategy, is branching into the post-atomic years with purchases of 60s modular, op-art shelving units and furniture. He is also expanding into clothing and a new name —"Holiday House." The store will have atomic furniture and clothing in a total environment, what Blue calls, "the kind of place you'd love to live in but know you could never get together and do it."

R.Biggs

photos Jeannie Zimmerman

FURNITURE FROM LIMN

Furniture as art is accelerating in the artist community if not in the public market. In San Francisco there is a growing community of artists making furniture. This is despite what Dan Friedlander, one of the owners of LIMN furniture showroom, describes as the dichotomy between the artist's labor to perfect a one-of-a-kind piece and the price the public is willing to pay.

"It's the same as purchasing in America goes in other areas; there is 10% of the people who look for high-design while the other 90% goes for non-challenging, patterned ways of choosing things."

Friedlander describes the decision-making process at LIMN as being guided by a somewhat "eccentric philosophy. We challenge, not taste good or bad, but what furniture can be. The showroom has the daring artists as well as the monumental designers who have changed the way furniture is looked at."

There is a distinction to be made between artist and designer who creates work that is, like the artist's, visual and functional but is also constructed to be re-produced. "First Chair" by Memphis, a group of designers from Milan, is one of the few designs that is being re-produced out of the group's 140 piece body of work.

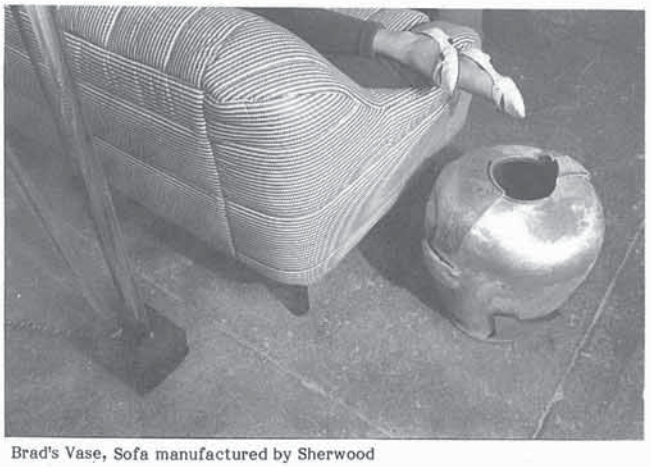
Friedlander, who also has a furniture-making shop, describes himself as more of a designer. "At the shop we specialize in problem-solving. We look at the project and think what (form) could it possibly be? What we like to do best is to explore and do research. This is costly, takes a lot of time and is done without an end-user in mind. It's difficult but we ask ourselves if we don't do that, why do any of the rest of this?

"San Francisco is getting known as a really hot place for furniture artists and designers. We've recently had four national shows contact us for a list of local furniture artist/designers. Friedlander describes Philip Agee, who will be in a show at LIMN this fall, as the essence of the artist as furniture-maker.

"He takes on a project, a challenge and spends lots of time on research, design, construction and then when that piece is done rather than continuing on a similiar project he goes on to something different. He will sometimes spend months on one piece. Then when he has a show people see a year's worth of work in the corner of the showroom and they say "Is that it?"

R.Biggs

Side Table by Maruyama/Adam

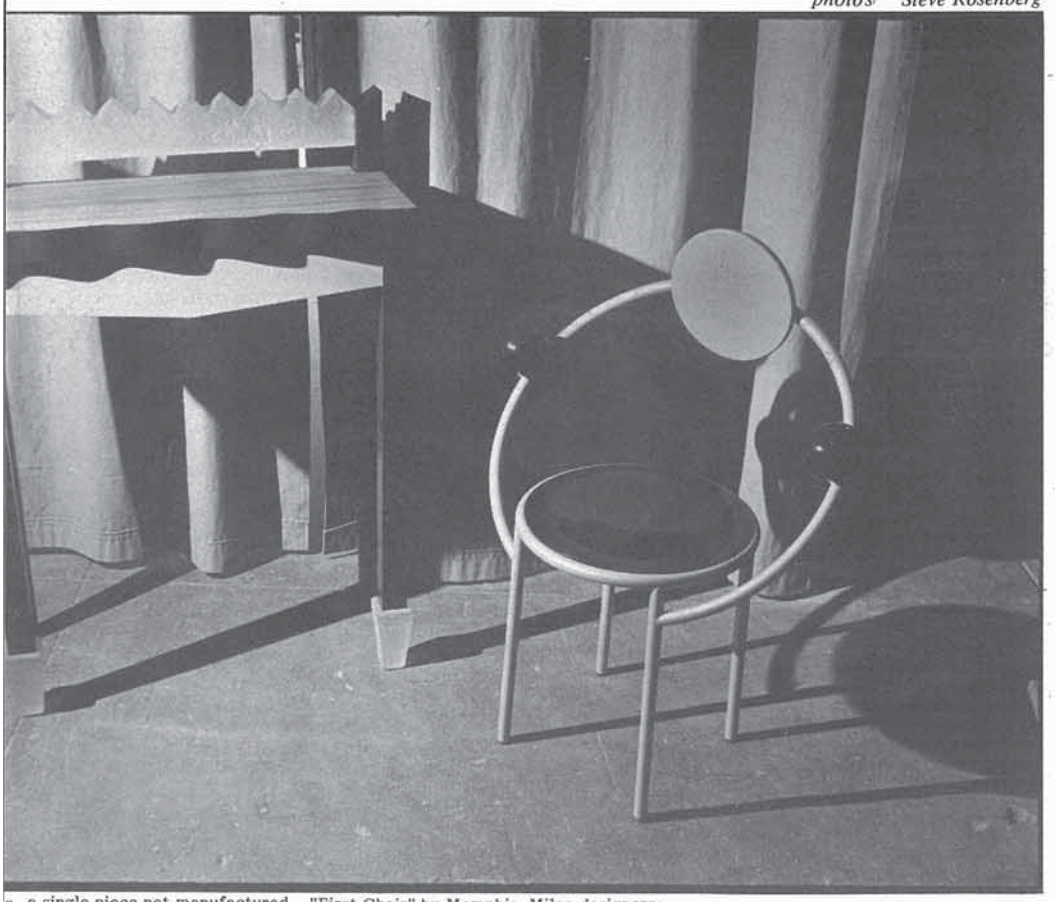


Brad's Vase, Sofa manufactured by Sherwood

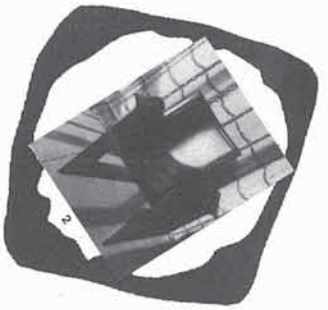
Table: "Catch-Jump," by Max Leiber, a one-of-a-kind piece

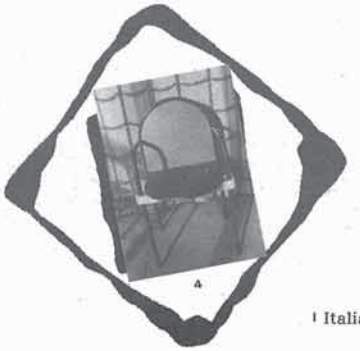
Sofa: "The Ciao," by Brunati

photos Steve Rosenberg



s , a single piece not manufactured. "First Chair" by Memphis, Milan designers





1 Italian lamp "Arco-Vleno" by Marco Zotta

2 Mattco Grassi "Corun I"

3 a work of art, a piece of furniture.

4 Memphis "Regent Chair"

Cathryn Domrose

"Hey, move over,"Alyosha told the students crowded into a booth in the bar near Leningrad State University. But there were already eight young men sitting around the rough wooden table, drinking sour Leningrad beer from glasses the size of small pitchers.

Undaunted, Alyosha turned to the adjoining booth where six soldiers sipped their beers and snacked on pieces of sausage, cheese and fish.

"Is there room for two more?"

One of the soldiers good-naturedly moved to the other side of the booth and we sat down.

While Alyosha went to get beer, I turned and looked at the group in the other booth. They were all in their late teens or early twenties, wearing short hair and rather plain school clothes—shirts, sweaters, cotton or flannel pants. One wore a leather motorcycle jacket and carried a plastic shopping bag that the others were peering into.

Alyosha returned with two beers, his brown eyes flashing with excitement. He set the glasses down and with a wave of his hand, introduced me to his friends.

"These are new wave men!"

The new wave movement in the Soviet Union is devoid of much of the trappings that accompany it here. There are no geometrical shapes, no hot pinks or electric blues, no skinny ties, no jazz shoes, no pork-pie hats, no colored hair and no dark sunglasses. no cooler-than-thou attitude and no practiced stoney stares, either, unless they're for a particularly obnoxious member of the heavy metal crowd.

Nevertheless, new wave is truly new to Leningrad, solely on the basis of the music. Groups like Devo, the Stranglers, UB40, Echo and the Bunnymen, the Specials, so well known in the West that they're almost passe, still bring thrills to the hearts of the Leningrad new wavers, who seldom get a chance to hear them.

The sale of new wave records on the open market is of course prohibited in the Soviet Union—Western decadence and all—and even on the black market, called the *talchok* by Soviet students, new wave groups are much more difficult to come by than the far more popular heavy metal and hard rock records.

Timur, the leather-jacketed "new wave man," therefore had quite a treasure in his bag. He opened it and showed me Echo and the Bunnymen's *Crocodiles*, and a music magazine from England, full of articles on UB40, Magazine and other bands, some of which I'd never heard.

Timur, an English student, had been a new wave fanatic for two years. He listened to all the music he could and what he couldn't listen to, he read about. When Alyosha pulled out a Fun Boy Three tape I'd given him and passed it around on my Sony Walkman, Timur knew instantly who was in the group and what previous bands the'd played in. "I think it was wonderful when they played with Bananarama," he told me.

He put on the earphones. After a few minutes, his thumb went up, a sign of excellence among Soviet students. "This is the first time I've heard Fun Boy Three," he said. "They are excellent."

Timur was not alone in his passion for new Western music. All the students in our group talked excitedly about their favorite groups or albums. Alyosha, his friends told me, was a recent convert. "Two months ago he didn't like any music, only books," they said. "Then he heard some new wave."

My dark-haired guide just shrugged and flashed one of his frequent smiles. He was wearing his favorite black sweatshirt with C.O.B. written on the front in white letters and a couple of colored pins I'd given him after we discovered our similar musical tastes.

The students were shy at first. Many of them were reluctant to test their ability on a native speaker. Soon curiosity overcame embarrassment, however, and the questions started coming.

What bands do you like best? What did you think of the Clash's (or UB40's or the B52's or Magazine's or New Order's) latest album? Why are the best new wave bands from England instead of America? Do you like the Soviet Union? Is there much crime in America? What books do you read? What are concerts like in America? What bands have you seen? What do you think of Reagan? Are you a capitalist?

"She is not a capitalist!" Alyosha defended me emphatically. His friends nodded their approval.

"That is good," said Timur. "Capitalism is bad. Socialism is much preferable.'

But politics was an uneasy topic and the conversation returned to music.

"I like the Clash, but I think they are getting too commercial," said one soft-spoken blond student with large, sincere blue eyes. "All they want to do now is make money." There was a dissenting clamor, and a lively discussion in Russian followed.

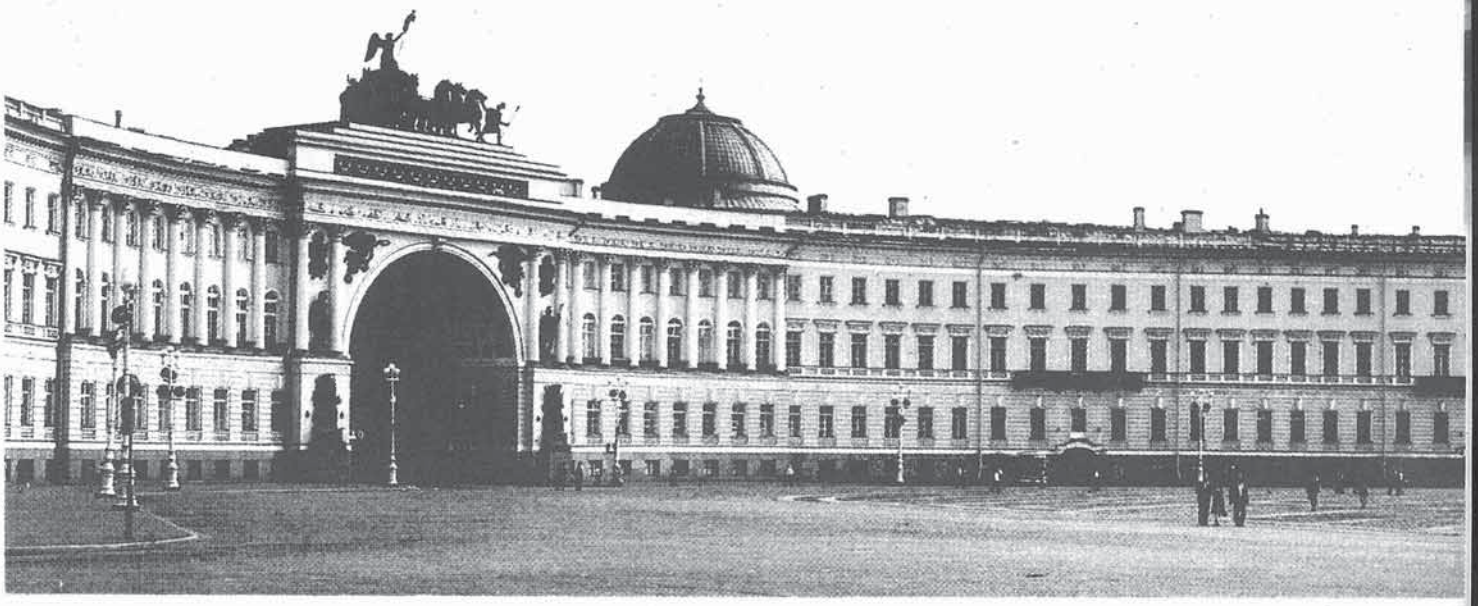
Alyosha turned to me, reached into his black book bag, pulled out a German-made recording cassette and fitted it into the Walkman. "This is Akvarium," he explained, placing the earphones over my head. "Soviet new wave."

The music that poured into my ears sounded like no Western new wave I'd ever heard. Instead it was an interesting blend of pop, rock, swing, African and reggae rhythms, modern jazz and avante garde. Every song was different, putting Akvarium's *Radio Africa* closer to the Beatles' *White Album* than to anything by David Bowie, although I was told Bowie was one of the group's main influences.

Akvarium (Aquarium" in English) is Leningrad's hero band, revered by the students more than any Western group is. The band's lead singer, whom the students refer to simply as "Boris," is a driver for a bathhouse in the center of Leningrad. "He is very popular," said Alyosha, "because he is a very simple guy. He likes women, playing music, having fun."

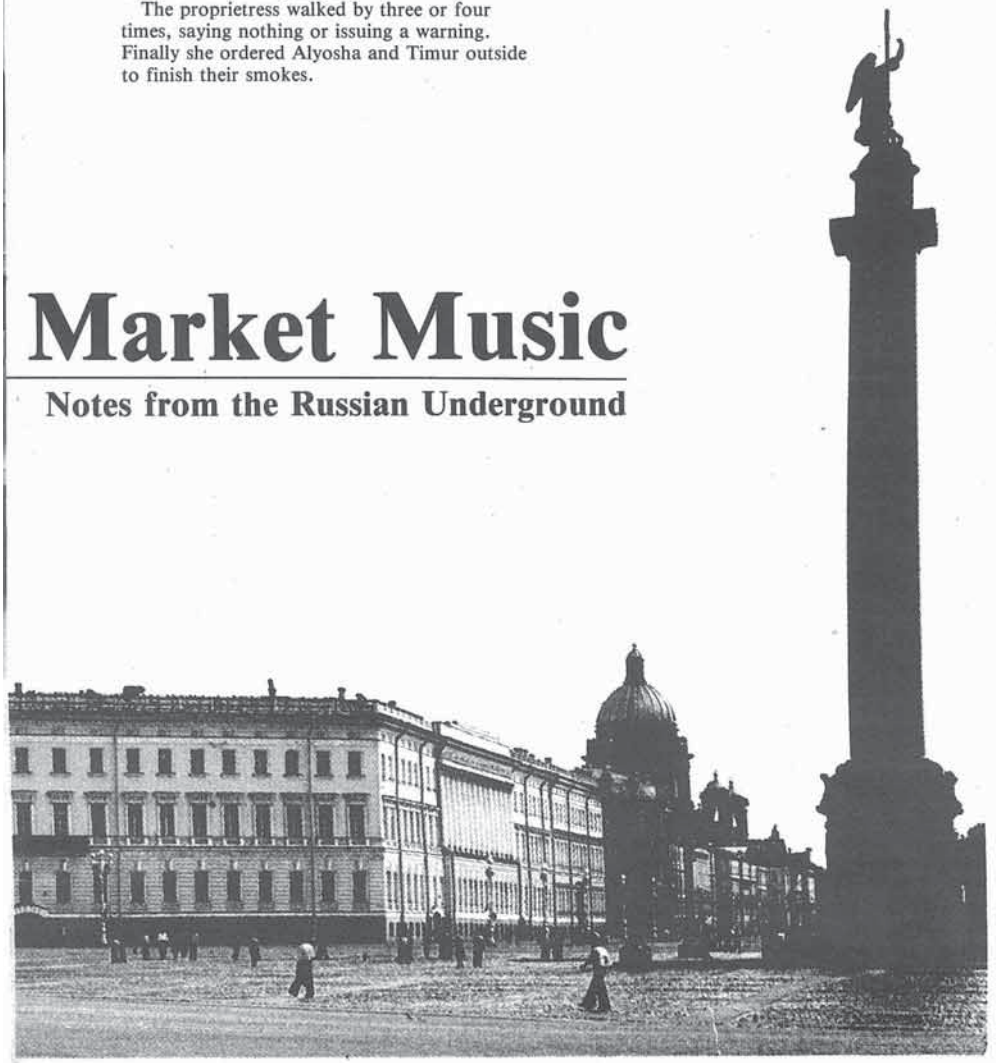
Akvarium has been around since about 1972. It's main influences, according to a bio sheet that one student showed me, are David Bowie,

Black



Market Music

Notes from the Russian Underground



Brian Eno, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. One member also plays in a modern jazz group. Boris had traveled in Western Europe in the early seventies and decided the Soviet Union needed a good rock band all its own. The result of that decision was Akvarium. Boris's stage presence, the students told me, is similar to Bowie's "Ziggy Stardust" persona.

Despite Boris's lack of serious political convictions, or perhaps because of it, Akvarium is a "semi-legal" rock band as opposed to the "official " Soviet rock groups like Time Machine and Earth People. The official bands may play only 20 percent of their own material at concerts. The rest of the program must consist of "songs about peace and the building of socialism," a student told me.

The semi-legal bands are allowed to play all their own music at concerts organized by the also semi-legal Leningrad Rock Club, but performances are infrequent—one every few months. The concerts are rigidly supervised by police, who sometimes make mass arrests afterward. Enthusiastic demonstrations are strictly prohibited. Alyosha told me he was once thrown out of an Akvarium concert for clapping his hands above his head during his favorite song, "Rock and Roll's Dead, but I'm Not Yet."

Semi-legal is a common concept in the Soviet Union. It means "sometimes something is okay and sometimes it is not," and is evident in many Soviet social customs as well as legal matters. For instance, the beer bar officially prohibited smoking. But every student in our booth (it was our booth now, the soldiers had left long ago, and Alyosha's friends had squeezed into the vacant spaces) had a cigarette or a paporos in his hand. When the proprietress walked by, they hid their hands under the table, but the cloud of smoke above our heads and the strong smell of the paporosi made it obvious what was going on.

The proprietress walked by three or four times, saying nothing or issuing a warning. Finally she ordered Alyosha and Timur outside to finish their smokes.

I went with them, and we stood under the doorway in the cold Leningrad winter. A group of militiamen walked past us and Alyosha made a face at them.

"They are shit," he said in French, and continued his tirade in Russian.

"He hates the police," Timur laughed. "He says they are all stupid and from the country." The stocky new waver stamped out his cigarette. "You will get to see them in action if you come with us tomorrow to the *talchok*."

Talchok is the Russian word for blow or hit, as in what the police do when they round up speculators. It is a more descriptive term than black market, for the *talchok* is not really a market at all. Every Saturday, buyers, sellers and traders of record albums gather in a large field on a children's playground. Those who have records to sell or trade carry bags or briefcases containing their wares, and hold out a slip of paper with the names of groups and dates of releases written on it. If a *talchok*-goer sees something on the paper that interests him, he asks the price and perhaps arranges a sale or trade.

Record albums go for anywhere from 30 to 80 rubles (about $45 to $100), depending on the recording artist and the release date. When Pink Floyd's *The Wall* was hot off the presses, it brought 80 rubles at the talchok.

The weather was overcast and drizzly the day Alyosha, his friend Andrei and I took the metro to the ice-coated field. The slippery field was difficult to walk on, but about 150 to 200 mostly young people with plastic bags of albums were huddled in the center of the playground. We wandered in and out of the crowd. Neither Alyosha nor Andrei had money to buy records, but they liked to come to the *talchok* just to see what was available, and also for the adventure.

"Don't speak English, don't speak Russian," Alyosha cautioned me. "Don't say anything at all. Just smile. If the police come, don't run, just walk slowly. Show them your passport and they will leave you alone. They won't bother an American, you don't have to worry."

My cover was blown when up bounced Timur, carrying a bag. "Hello, Cathryn," he called gaily.

"Shsh, no English," cried Alyosha, alarmed, but Timur was unconcerned. "Look at what I have," he said, opening his bag. There were albums by the Stranglers, Magazine and Adam and the Ants, procured by trading his albums of yesterday. Most of the new wavers trade their records rather than buy them. Many of them have access to gramophones, reel-to-reel tape players, and since their main passion is music rather than money, they prefer to record a treasured disc, then trade it for a new gem. Alyosha's friend Zheni, who taught elementary school in a nearby village, visited the talchok every Saturday for just this purpose.

But the stocky, blond, bespectacled Zheni was not having much luck today. We met him carrying a leather portfolio with the same albums he'd brought to the talchok that morning—Brian Ferry, Sparks and the Grateful Dead. He was looking for new wave, but most of the records available that day were heavy metal—Iron Maiden, the Scorpions, Led Zeppelin. "Music of the proles," Zheni sniffed. (Orwell's 1984 was one of his favorite books.) Alyosha inquired about a Blondie album, but lost interest when he discovered it cost 40 rubles. Eventually we decided it would be more profitable to drink beer.

In a steamy, smelly cellar workers' bar, chosen by Alyosha because of its "Russian character," Zheni explained how the *talchok* was usually ended. "The police drive through in a big truck, grabbing everyone they can and throwing them in. That is what happened last week. Once they had three trucks and a bus. It is a pity they weren't there today. Then you would have seen something interesting!" Zheni said the ones who were caught were fined for speculation and released. But after three fines, a speculator could go to prison.

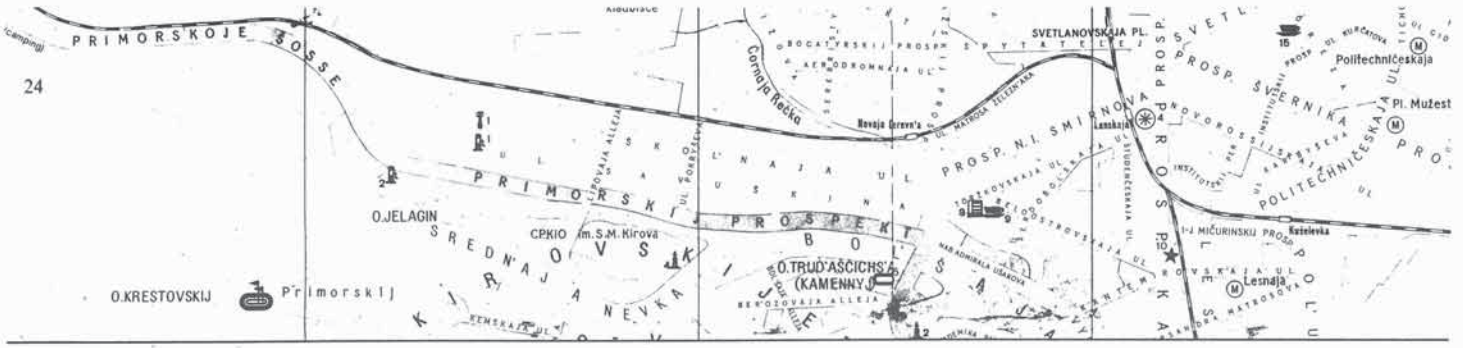
Zheni spoke excellent English—he was a godsend to Alyosha and I, who were struggling along with my broken Russian and his snatches of English remembered from grade school—and he told me he'd originally been trained as an interpreter for the 1980 Olympics. But after the boycott, he explained, there was a glut of English interpreters who were pressed into service as waiters and busboys.

Zheni had refused to have anything to do with waiting tables, and as a result, after graduation he was given a job teaching village children. "I hate my work," he said through clenched teeth. "Those kids I teach, they are so stupid. They are the children of peasants. They don't want to learn and I don't want to teach them.

"I have not gone to work for four days now. When I go, they will scold me, but they won't sack me. I wish they would, but they can't sack me. That is the law."

Zheni spent as much time as he could with his friends in Leningrad or with his girlfriend, a mathematics student in the nearby suburb of Petrodvorets. Tonight, he told Alyosha and me, the physics and mathematics dormitories were having dances, and the next day there would be a concert by a Soviet new wave group called Strange Games. If we could sneak into his girlfriend's dormitory without giving up our passports, a regulation for dorm visitors, we could stay the night instead of having to leave at midnight when visiting hours were up.

It went off without a hitch. We took a train to Petrodvorets, a lovely resort town in the summer, with duck ponds, gardens and storybook architecture, and walked through a small birch wood to the university. Zheni, who used to be a student there, walked through the gate with me,



and Alyosha followed a few steps behind.

No one stopped us, and once safely in the elevator, we were giddy with the success of our escapade. Zheni's girlfriend, Shilka, was not in her room, but he had his own key. The huge room was intended for three students, but Shilka had it all to herself, thanks to some connections with the dorm management.

There was a guitar in one corner of the room and Alyosha picked it up and started to play, while Zheni set out our supper. He placed a kolbasa (Russian suasage), several cans of fish and—a special treat—a can of cling peaches on a wooden table. Of course there was vodka to wash everything down, and Zheni's preference, "Yagdam," a cheap port wine consumed in gallons by students. There was no bread, but Zheni quickly went next door to borrow a loaf, leaving Alyosha to serenade me with the true Russian underground music—the old songs of the bandits.

These songs originated in Odessa, which at one time was the Soviet equivalent of Chicago in the twenties. "Now," Alyosha told me, "it is just an ordinary city." But its gangster heritage lives on in Soviet folk music. I'd heard these songs before--in the dining car of the trans-Siberian train, as part of a going-away celebration on the train platform, in a cab going down Nevsky Prospeckt. Everyone knows them and many people sing them, Alyosha said. The most famous of these folk poets was Vladimir Bisotski, whose funeral several years ago was attended by masses of Soviet citizens, even though it was unannounced by the government.

The bandit songs are mostly slang and are usually very sarcstic about the bureaucracy, the Party, and Soviet life in general. They depend on wordplay and rhyme, and many of them contain obscenities.

"We usually don't sing these songs around women and children," said Zheni, who'd returned with half a loaf of coarse brown bread and a dull knife, "but I think that in America it's a little freer."

Since I had no idea what any of the words meant anyway, it didn't matter, and Alyosha cntinued singing in the rough, raspy voice of the Russian bandit, while Zheni attempted a translation.

"He's telling a woman that he has no money, he has no ---. There is no word for it in English. It means a person in an official place that can get you a better position or a car or something."

By this time, Alyosha had finished the slow haunting song, and Zheni threw up his hands. "It is very difficult to translate this slang," he said. "Many words mean something only in the Soviet Union."

Alyosha put aside the guitar and started pouring vodka into tea cups. Zheni's girlfriend had already staggered into the room, very drunk, looked at us all and let out a peal of laughter before passing out on a cot. Zheni apologized profusely and shook his head. "I have never seen her like this," he sighed. "I will have to scold her in the morning."

So it was the three of us for supper, slicing the hard, greasy kolbasa, munching bread, chasing gulps of vodka with the peach juice. We decided not to open the fish.

"I am ashamed that this is such a poor supper," said Alyosha, but this is the way students eat."

We made constant toasts, to world peace, to good music, to Soviet new wave, to our own friendship, to our health and many more things that I could not remember the next day.

"I want to dance," declared Alyosha at some point in the meal, so we left our half-finished sausage and peaches and walked down 14 flights of stairs ("If you wait for the lift, it takes an hour," said Zheni.) to a first-floor hall about the size of a high school gymnasium. About 150 to 200 students, many in jeans, were gyrating frantically to French and Italian pop music, played by student disc jockeys.

They danced all together, sometimes in groups of five or six. Men danced with men and women with women. Coupling of opposite sexes was evident only during slow numbers.

Alyosha and Zheni were not particularly pleased with the musical selections, and when a friend told Zheni that they were playing Adam and the Ants in the Physics dorm next door, we were immediately on our way.

But alas, the physics DJ preferred heavy metal and we were greeted by the sounds of AC/DC. We were appeased by a Dire Straits number and an Italian new wave song, but these were hardly enough.

"These physics people love heavy metal, it is very popular here," sighed Alyosha as the dancing students broke into applause after the DJ announced a Nazareth number.

This was too much for Zheni; he approached the DJ who was dancing away to the pounding beat in the earphones on his head, and asked him to play some B-52's. But the DJ was a staunch heavy metal fan.

"Let's go," shrugged Alyosha. "We still have vodka."

We returned to the Mathematics dorm, but first Zheni borrowed a gramophone and a selection of tapes from a friend. The tapes included the Stray Cats, the Kinks, David Bowie and two Leningrad groups--Akvarium and Strange Games, the group we were to see the next day.

"I don't like them much," Zheni told me as the group played on the huge tape player he'd lugged up 14 flights of stairs. "Sometimes they remind me of the Police, sometimes of Madness. I don't know what they are trying to do. I don't think they are very original. Andrei and I went drinking with them once and they were very stuck up. They think that since we don't have anything else, they are the best."

"You are the snob," Alyosha told him. "They are very good." He told me later, "Zheni does not like anything Soviet. I think he is very bitter. He is so unhappy with his job, teaching those kids. I too will have to take a job in a factory or a village. For two years. But . . ." he shrugged.

We never did see the Strange Games concert. The next morning, groggy and hung over, we walked to a wooden yellow-and-white music hall only to be met by a sign reading "Tickets Sold Out." Alyosha and Zheni were quite philosophical about the whole thing, shrugging and going immediately in search of beer--the Leningrad cure for a hangover.

This we found at the rail station restaurant, as well as a breakfast of sausage, cheeses, pickles, salted pork, beets, potatoes and chicken Taback. Zheni wouldn't touch the food; he just gulped his beer and moaned.

"It's just as well we didn't see the concert," said Alyosha. "The second band is very bad."

"Are they heavy metal?"

"No, just . . ." he waved his hand, ". . . Soviet rock."

"Soviet rock," murmured Zheni faintly. "Very bad."

Alyosha and I were too exhausted to talk much on the train back from Petrodvorets, but on the bus through Leningrad, he perked up a bit and began pointing out the monuments of his beloved city. "There's Pushkin's house, there is the dome of St. Isaac's cathedral, here is the headquarters of the KGB in Leningrad."

Alyosha kissed me goodbye at the bus stop near the Hermitage with the Alexander Column towering in the background, and I boarded my tram to the elegant hotel Intourist had booked me into, so far removed from the humble quarters where I'd just spent the night. The last two days had been almost sheer excitement, and I was sure I'd drop off to sleep like a stone.

Instead, I lay awake in my room, flashing back on images of the strange world I'd just wandered through. Among these was a conversation Alyosha and I had soon after we'd met on German, French and Italian new wave bands. "They are okay," he'd shrugged. "But I think new wave is best sung in English--or in Russian."

Kristine Stiles

On August 1st Twin Palms Gallery sponsored the Bay Area premiere of Stelarc's new book *Obsolete Body/Suspensions 1976-1982/Stelarc,* a controversial book illustrating the Cyprus-born Austrialian artist's remarkable series of performances, or "suspensions," with photographic documentation, interviews , and statements by the artist (now living in Japan), as well as texts by artists and critics from Austrialia, the U.S., and Japan.

Stelarc's book was very difficult to publish and even harder to distribute. Customs would not pass it either in Japan, Taiwan, or Hong Kong. The book was several years in the making suffering successive delays due to censoring throughout production by printers who refused to print a book showing pubic hair in the nude photographs. Some printers quoted prices sometimes 300 to 500 percent higher than the market rate.

Stelarc's last suspension, sponsored by MO David Gallery, took place in New York where he hung high over 11th Steet in the East Village. At Twin Palms Stelarc gave a slide lecture interspersed with a video showing a performance done in Japan that graphically depicted the process of the suspensions from the first act of shaving the body, to cleansing the skin before the insertion of the stainless steel hooks, the insertions themselves, the suspension, and the final removal of the hooks. "The Body" experienced these painful insertions, he explained, but the real suffering occurred after the suspensions during the healing of the puncture wounds.

Stelarc then demonstrated the use of his prosthetic, electronic third arm which is activated by muscular reflexes triggered by signals sent electronically from electrodes attached to stomach and thigh muscles. The hand has capabilities of pinching, grasping, 270 degree rotation, and a tactile feedback system for a "sense of touch" based on hydraulic hands and the micro computer protheses originally designed for thalidomide victims. Finally, Todd Lawson of Channel 25 taped a live interview between Stelarc and the experimental physicist and philosopher Dr. Richard Morris, author of *Evolution and Human Nature.*

The use of the body as artistic material has always been controversial. The rise of Body Art, Performance and other similar related genre (Happenings, Fluxus, Guerrilla Art Action Group, etc.) in the post-war period is a testimonial to the centrality of the human being in the nuclear era. These artists exploring a performed art have waged life by using their bodies as material.

Performance Art rose to confront the post-World War II atomic situation with the construction of a unique medium whose primary formal element, the self in its body, included an intellectual rejection, a corporeal resistance, and an ethical challenge to society's attempt to destroy itself. Performance art is not simply an eccentric and short-lived expression in the visual arts which has burst forth at critical moments in twentieth century art. It is the physical manifestation of a need to communicate the preeminence of the substance of being.

N.Y. STREET SUSPENSION — E. 11th STR., July 21st, 1984 stelarc

Stelarc's art is no exception. His battle however,is more unorthodox than most, for while he still understands the body to be the central issue in the electronic post-war period, it is not the psycho-social being that is explored but the complex biological transition between humankind, as homo sapiens, and an artificial technological future in which as Stelarc predicts: "It may no longer be significant to remain human."

In a presentation for a conference at Standford University on design and the human body, Stelarc expressed the essence of his work when he posed the question as to whether "a bipedal, breathing body with binocular vision and a 1400cc brain is an adequate biological form." In what he labels the "post-evolutionary" electronic age of extra-terrestrial travel and space habitation, "The Body" has become a precarious obsolescent physical reality. This condition not only requires but demands the redesign of the body to enable it to cope with and endure an altered spatial existence in which zero gravitational force and infinite space

He explained that it is neither his "Faustian" desire to expand life nor to halt the cycle of birth to death but rather his observation that it is necessary to shift from the realm of the natural to the artificial in an effort for the body to keep pace with technology.

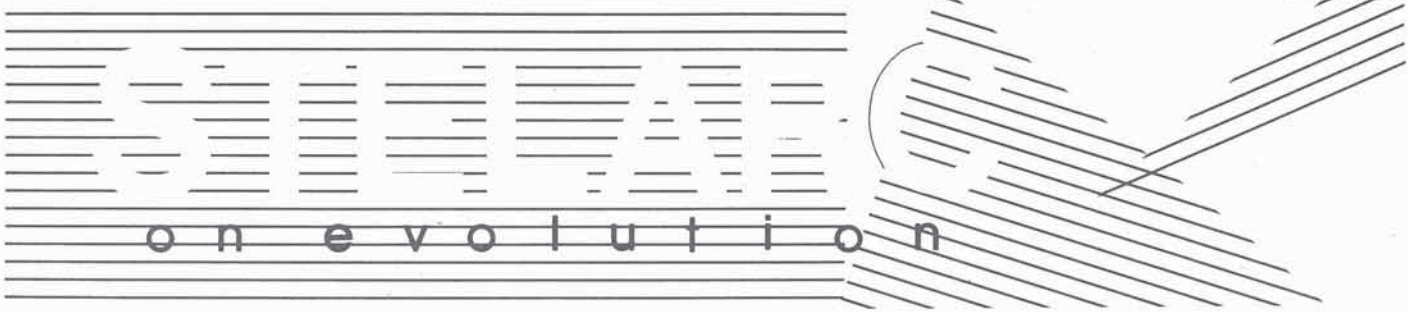
dramatically affect breathing and locomotion patterns.

"The Body" necessarily must learn to adapt to an interplanetary existence in which technology is the primary structuring principle if it is to overcome its physical vulnerability, its short life span, its curious and perhaps unessential aging processes, its fragile internal and interdependent structure of organs, as well as the inefficiency of its coronary and immunological systems. He explained that it is neither his "Faustian" desire to expand life nor to halt the cycle of birth to death but rather his observation that it is necessary to shift from the realm of the natural to the artificial in an effort for the body to keep pace with technology. For Stelarc, this shift locates the end of evolution in the invasion of the body by technology:

> . . . I see the splitting of the body, or groups, or colonies from the human species as the most significant sort of dilemma we are facing. There seems to be a trade off: we invented technology to amplify our bodies but we also produced the power to utterly destroy the whole human species. To me technolgoy begins as external to the body, as an implement, then as a tool, then it proliferates as instruments, and with computers it mimics some of the brain functions. . . finally (it) contains and regulates the body's rhythms. The information society is a good example of a society contained by transmitting satellites and telecommunications and telephone systems. In a sense, human society has been enveloped by the very technology it has created. But with the increasing miniaturization of technology, technology is allowed to come back to the body, Miniaturization is a kind of implosive force which hurtles technology back to the body.

As the skin sags away from the hooks demonstrating the gravitational force on "The

see page 35



SEEDLING CEREMONY

Painting Elaine Wander

INNER-FEARENCE

Painting: Elaine Wander

Photos: Jack Carroll
Models: Alexander & Von Benz
Fezs: Pedro & Alejandro (from Earth)
Fabric: Lex/Uuman
Text: Len Whitney

SÜBLIMINÅL PLÄID

Alexander Von Benz Hits New York

A recent visual entry in the neverending New York downtown celebrity sweepstakes is comprised of designers Beth Von Benz and Rebecca Alexander, collectively Alexander Von Benz. In the year the pair has terrorized Gotham, they have made their mark spilling drinks at the trendiest nightspots, provoking luncheonette riots with bleached-out matrons in their adopted home turf of Little Italy, and generally making themselves known, and feared, by the denizens of lower Manhattan.

Beth Von Benz (an alias adopted to spare her prim Bostonian family the notoriety she herself seeks with crazed zeal) came to New York via Los Angeles, Provincetown and San Francisco. Her early experience as a theatre major at Amherst, coupled with the flair she showed as a designer of hand-printed fabrics, gave her a firm footing when she and cohort Alexander decided to try their hand at producing their unique fashions for the general market. Alexander too shows her dark theatrical roots, gained as a costume design major at the University of Michigan and sparked by her London upbringing.

The first year of Alexander Von Benz has been one of early success and publicity. Their graffitti fashions have been featured in live performances at New York's Danceteria, Area, Kamikaze, as well as in any club where the two could maneuver their way past the doorman. Recent stage forays include a collaboration with Fiorucci's Joey Arias in his "Mermaids in Retail" performance fashion extravaganza, a fashion happening in newly trendy Tompkins Square Park, and a selling stint with the Masima Design Collective.

Outside of fashion, the girls number among their hobbies therapy haircoloring and songwriting (Rebecca's teenage masterpiece "Suck a Nippy Time" has yet to see release). On a philanthropic note, they plan a public works project to clothe the bums of the bowery in plaid.

Incest, Trailer Parks, and Vicki the Rifle-Twirler:

How I learned to Stop worrying and Love My Appalachian Roots

Len Whitney

In the westward expansion of the early 1800's, Olean, New York, my home town, was destined to be a major metropolis of the Northeast. The great Genesee Valley and Shawmut canals were all set to link Rochester, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway, with the shipping routes of the Allegheny, Ohio, and Mississippi River system. At the apex was Olean, on the banks of the Allegheny and in the foothills of Appalachia. Instead the Erie Canal opened, a few years earlier, and Buffalo became the metropolis.

Little Olean, always a bridesmaid, never grew much, and is now a peculiar town of 20,000, and shrinking. The Chamber of Commerce bills Olean as the "Heart of the Enchanted Mountains", an imagined four-season vacationland thronged with tourists. The reality is that the four seasons consist of a cold and snowy winter, a cold and rainy spring, a cool and cloudy summer, and a pleasant autumn with about two weeks of pretty fall foliage.

The entertainment event of the year used to be the Miss New York contest in July, which moved out years ago though signs on the outskirts of town still proclaim "Home of the Miss N.Y. State Scholarship Pageant"--the spiritual home, perhaps. Tawny Godin, the last Miss NY chosen in Olean, went on to be Miss America and now is married to one of the Dukes of Hazzard. She is an anchorwoman for Eyewitness News in L.A., and I knew she had achieved immortality when she was a cover photo on the **Enquirer**:

I'm Crazy About This Girl, Says Burt Reynolds!

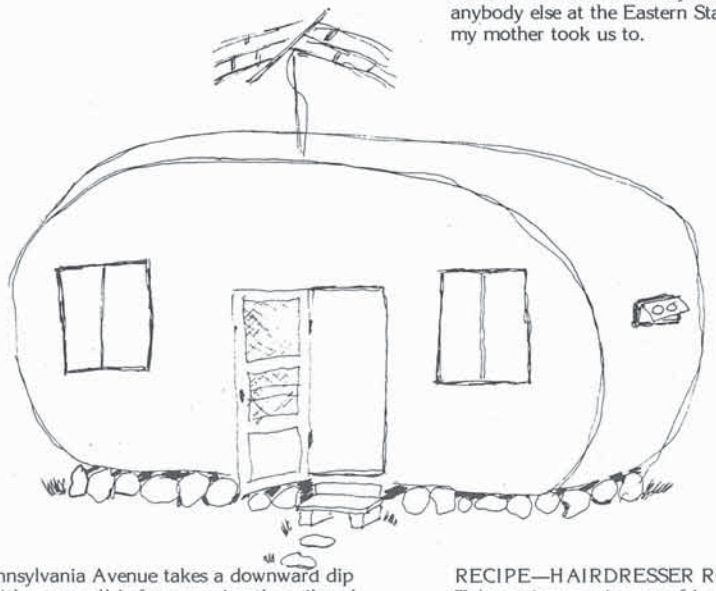
(of course, the photo was not identified until you found the story buried in the back pages.)

The major remaining diversion is probably the Kiwanis Kapers, when the wives of downtown businessmen get to see their husbands doing lip-synch drag routines (this due to the predilections of the choreographer-star of the Kapers, Bunky Young, a window dresser in the leading department store in town. Bunky livened up the Kapers each year with his spicy imitation of Little Egypt's veil dance, and a red-hot tango performed in pants so tight you didn't need to ask his religion.).

Apart from these hot-ticket events, Oleanders don't have much to do but shop. Since most industry moved out in the Sixties and Seventies, they don't have money to actually buy anything, but they still like to look at what they used to be able to afford. (I never grew out of this, and to this day can content myself for hours wandering through the A & P with an empty cart.) There also, not surprising considering the social calendar, seems to be a local passion for arriving early. If you invite everyone to dinner at seven, at least half will arrive at 5:30 to drink a cup of coffee and watch you cook. The other local tradition would appear to be incest, about which more later.

RECIPE—POTATOES OLEAN
Take a package of frozen potatoes. Add a can of carrots. Put into a baking dish with margarine and dried parsley flakes. Bake or microwave.

At seventeen I left my home in Westons Mills, a garden suburb of Olean (if a town of 20,000 can properly be considered to have suburbs) with a population of 700, for greener pastures in Los Angeles and ultimately New York City. Since then my feelings on returning home have progressed from exasperation to amusement and delight. And, since I am a six foot five inch androgyne with two-tone black and white spiked hair, I no longer have to fear being too much a part of the place. (And speaking of androgyny, I saw an overweight black drag queen on the subway today wearing sandals, with plastic patty nails on her toes. Is this a personal thing with her or part of a new trend—can someone tell me?"



Pennsylvania Avenue takes a downward dip into "the swamp" before crossing the railroad to my parent's farm. There is a lush Southern stench to the street, and the folks who live along the swamp are as exotically eccentric as one might expect. On one side the Doxeys built a swimming pool, with the water level in the pool a few feet above the frogs and reeds and dragonflies in the marsh below. Across the street there used to be a trailer where Sandy and Sara Acton (or Action, as the boys in town called them) had a mother-daughter sex team going.

The family next door, the St. Clairs, are the embodiment of white trash. The eldest daughter, Donna, used to produce illegitimate babies as surely as the seasons, and you could always count on seeing a cat on the kitchen table sipping milk out of a leftover cereal bowl. Their old house had never been painted, and the wooden column holding up the roof of their front porch was propped up with books and scrap lumber.

When Dorothy, the mother of the clan, was in the hospital dying of cancer, her old man Jack was shacking up at home with the mother of Donna's new husband. After Dorothy died, Jack married his new wife with the flowers from her funeral still decorating the altar . . . literally. (That was the biggest scandal since the lesbian postmistress, Marion, and May, her long-time lover, had a baby shower for a bulldog and invited all the spinsters in town.) When I was growing up, the St. Clair kids all had moist, greasy skin and hair, and had lots of first-hand information about sex. Of course, with a step-brother married to your oldest sister, who wouldn't.

Anyway, back to the present. As my sister turned off the main highway onto Pennsylvania Avenue, Morey Weatherbee, who lives between the highway and the swamp, flagged us down. He runs a traveling cotton-candy stand, and used to perform magic tricks at kids' parties as Morey the Magnificent. Now his crosseyed son Paulie is the magician, and Morey spends his time thinking up ways to protest the town's refusal to drain the swamp.

As he handed us each a spindle of pink cotton candy, I noticed his latest installations. On the surface of the swamp, Morey had floated Lena, a cheesy 1960's department-store mannequin, face down in classic drowner's position. Lena's head had long since separated from the body and was bobbing up and down in a swirl of green algae. On the corner, along the highway, Princess, another mannequin, was propped on a pole, a cardboard screw through her head, with the legend "Taxpayers Get Screwed." Equally lurid signs urged "Politicians Jump In!" with an arrow toward the swamp, and "Welcome to Sewergate".

My primary childhood memories of the Weatherbees were that they ate more food than anybody else at the Eastern Star tureen dinners my mother took us to.

RECIPE—HAIRDRESSER ROAST BEEF
Take an inexpensive cut of beef. Put it in a 500-degree oven. Go to the hairdressers. Get a wash, set, comb-out, and spend a few minutes deciding whether to dye your eyebrows to match the hair on your head. Don't forget to check your roots. When you get home, talk on the phone for awhile. Your roast beef should be done to perfection. For an added variation, season with salt.

As we climbed the hill over the railroad tracks, the first thing that came into view was my father's purple martin houses, mounted high on some tall telephone poles. Leslie Richard Whitney, my father, is a sweet, spacey man prone to spectacularly misguided ideas. When I was a kid, I remember the Australian silky hens he tried to raise. They were covered with white down instead of feathers, and their beaks and claws were cobalt blue. The only problem was, their meat was cobalt blue, too, darkening to rich navy when cooked. Nobody could stand to eat them. None of his livestock brought in much money, but they certainly made for exotic pets.

cont. pg 35

DINETTE SET

Look for **Dinette Set's Food & Crime Issue** this fall!!

EXPLORER GOURMET
by Wes Christensen

MOCTEZUMA'S DINNER

(Aztec Recipes for Human Flesh)

(Note: Most people are aware of the relish that the Aztec gods dined on human hearts. Numbers vary, but the prodigious nature of their appetites is denied by none. 20,000 victims were said to have been sacrificed at the dedication of the Great Temple in downtown Tenochtitlan. The gods ate the hearts. Who got the rest?)

"I heard say that he was wont to eat the flesh of young boys, but as he had such a variety of dishes, made of so many things, we could not succeed in seeing if they were of human flesh or other things." --Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who accompanied Cortez at the conquest of Mexico in 1519 (*Historia ver da dera de la Conquistador de Mexico,* 1568)

Hips and thighs were the portions that Moctezuma chose "on the hoof" for his main course, adolescent boys being his preference. Certainly seasonal ceremonies varied the tenderness of the "carnitas." Tlaloc child sacrifices provided pious reason to enjoy suckling children roasted on a spit with hominy, achiote, chile, and squashblossom stuffing. Brains and palms remained delicacies in picante moles, but the main course was thigh. Diego Munoz Camargo, mestizo chronicler and son of a conquistador, reported, "They even had public slaughterhouses in which human flesh was cut up just as beef and veal are cut up today." (*Historia de Tlaxcala,* 1576) A special class of priest, Quaquacuiltin (butchers of men), skinned, quartered, and distributed the meat. Moctezuma was a New World Lucullus, with 300 dishes served to him daily. Here is a possible menu:

[Note: prior to dinner, hallucinogens were served, as the most popular, Peyotl, frequently induces nausea (no fun at a party), perhaps the cosmopolitan Aztec king experimented with the exotic Maya technique of rectal infusion.]

MENU FOR THE FEAST OF XIPE
(Tlacaxipeualiztli "boning of men," March 4 - 24)

COCKTAILS

Octli ("Pulche" -- fermented agave sap -- today's tequila) garnished with chewy Meocuilin (agave worms).

Xocotl Atl (chocolate), cocoa whipped to a zippy froth with honey and vanilla.

APPETIZERS

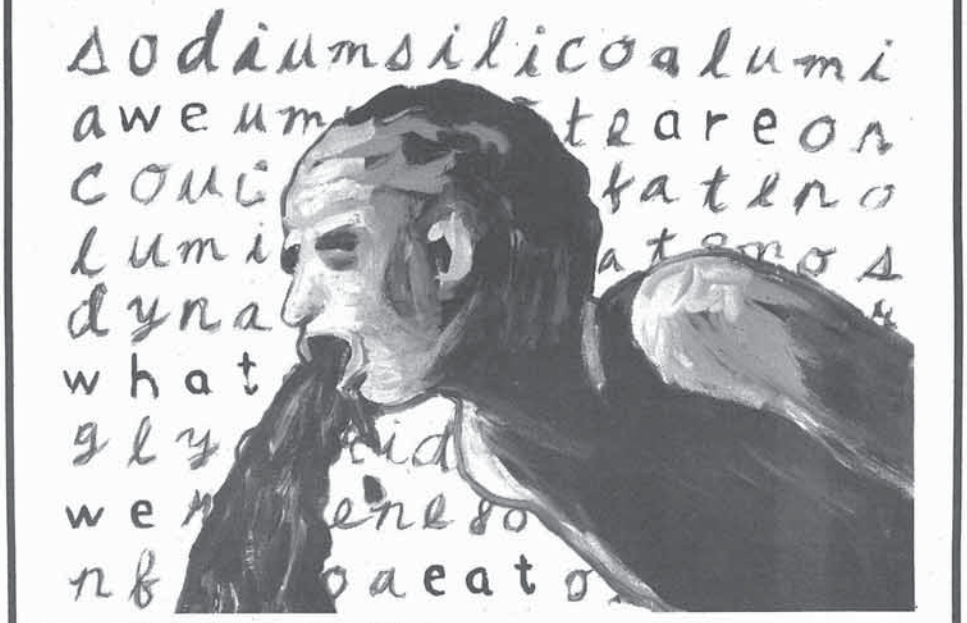
Axolotls (newts) poached with Nipales and pine nuts in Chile Chipote salsa.
Steamed brains with tomato, chile serrano and epazote.
Oysters, Atepotl (tadpoles), and Aneneztli (aquatic larvae) in clear green pumpkin seed sauce.
Toasted Ahuauhtli (waterfly egg) patties.
Pressed Tecuitlatle (spirulina algae) cakes.
Pickled Jalapenos, dried palms, and Oaxacan crickets.

SOUP

Atolli (porridge) blood pudding with amaranth, squash, epazote, sprinkled with calabash and morninglory seeds.
Pozole (hominy) thickened with plantains, bone marrow and pinto beans with chile habanero.

SALAD

House Salad: sliced Jicama, chayote, Poblano chiles, assorted mushrooms, tossed with Guerrero acorns, in musky Huitlacoche ("Corn Smut" fungus) dressing, garnished with human jerky bacon bits. Or:



We Are What We Eat by Peter Edlund

Vegetarian Guacamole (for fasting Quetzalcoatl cultists) "Nezuacoyotl's famous secret salsa."

Tortillas, hot from the comal, provided continuously throughout the meal.

Beans - Choice of Pintos de olla; or Black turtle beans seived and pressed into cakes with epazote and chili habanero.

CARNITAS (Main Course)

Succulent hip and thigh of corn-fattened adolescent boy. Fresh from morning Xipe sacrifice (conveniently skinned for dance costumes), the trimmed meat is tenderized with bruised papaya leabes, wrapped in corn husks and avocado leaves and precooked "clam bake" style. Transferred to a spit, the unwrapped roast is barbecued to sizzling perfection over a mesquite fire. The joint is continuously basted and finally served smothered in:

Tlacaellel's 'Special' Mole -- (Molli: Aztec for concoction) Red achiote base with dried smoked chili chapote, tomato, pimento, epazote, sage, pineapple, avocado, cocoa and honey.

Fruit Salad -- (in season) Papaya, quava, melon, sapote, pineapple and strawberries in pomegranite juice, sprinkled with cashews and pine nuts.

Dessert Sweets -- Candied sweet potato, Manioc tapioca, Amaranth and honey cookies.

Afterdinner Condiments
Chicle (gum), peanuts, popcorn, assorted vintage human jerky.
Cigars and Picietl (piptadenia) snuff.
Imported Maya Balche (honey mead) and Xabentun Liqueurs with hallucinogenic toadskin (Bufo Marinus L.) and Teonanactl (psylocybin) additives.

A NOTE ON HUMAN JERKY: The standard ration for Aztec warriors away from home was "parched corn and human jerky." As many famous heroes both foreign and domestic ended up on the sacrificial block, these "treasured vintages" must have been considered too good to eat all at once. Portions certainly must have been salted away and sampled on special occasions.

"When, after the conquest, human flesh was no longer obtainable, or only at great risk, the lords began eating pork because, as they declared, it tasted almost like human flesh."
---Fray Bernardino de Sahagun," Father of Ethnography", encyclopedist of pre-conquest Aztec life. (*Historia de las Cosas de Nueva Espana*, c. 1565)

FURTHER READING

Consult:
Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image*, 1971, Rutgers.
F. Guerra, *The Pre-Columbian Mind*, 1971, Seminar Press, London.
Michael Harner, "The Ecological Basis for Aztec Sacrifice," *Natural History*, 1977.
Marvin Harris, *Cannibals and Kings*, 1977, Random House.
Dumbarton Oaks, *Human Sacrifice in Ancient Mexico*, 1983.

Wes Christensen is an artist and archeological illustrator whose emphasis is Meso America.

(Editors Note: Accounts of Aztec cannibalism are too frequent to be dismissed, but were described as "ritual" until Michael Harner suggested a dietary component. His thesis has been challenged by scholars H.B. Nicholson and Peter Furst, but the fact of Aztec cannibalism has not.)

(Note from the editors of FRANK:

Guest editors from Dinette Set, a provocative magazine that cooks up a mixture of recipes, black humor and notes on food issues, contributed this piece on cannibalism in Aztec culture. In publishing this we have found that food is an issue. We at FRANK have debated what we consider a controversial piece. Dinette Set contends that this is scholarly research presented in a casual tone. That this subject is taboo, they say, is a reflection of societal temperament. Food is an issue, whether or not this is controversial, we leave our readers to decide.)

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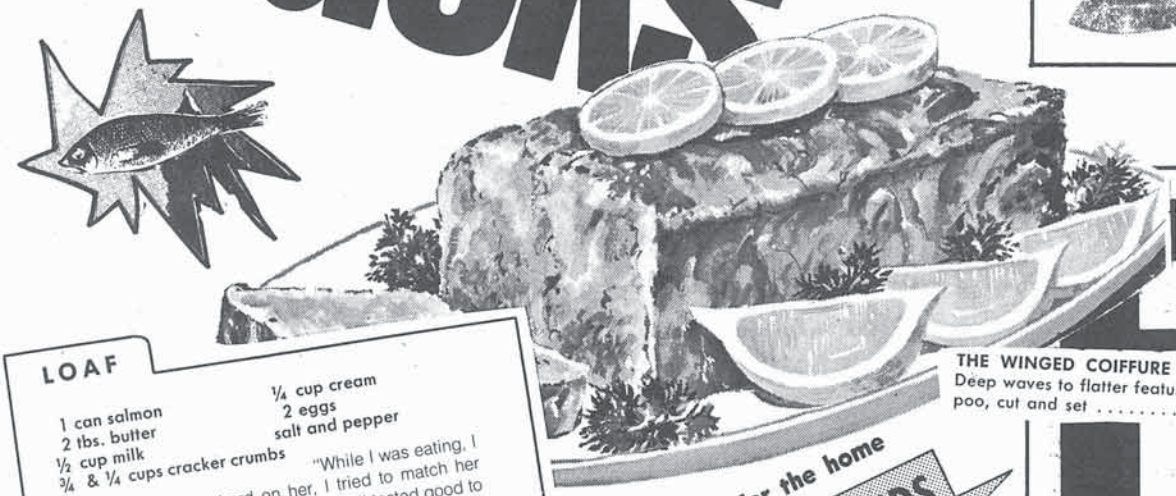

Instant
Compound
3 for 5

LOAF

1 can salmon
2 tbs. butter
½ cup milk
¾ & ¼ cups cracker crumbs
¼ cup cream
2 eggs
salt and pepper

concentrated very hard on her, I tried to match her image to the pieces of meat. And it all tasted good to me because it was her." "So as not to forget," he took about thirty color Polaroids of the slicing process and of the meal, playing the tape of her reading the poems over and over again "instead of music."

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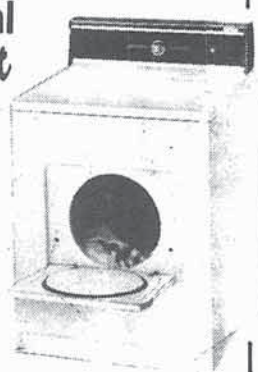

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The Dinette Set

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Jon Winet

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Glen Helfand

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Fill out official entry form. (Cut out or xerox)
Affix to post card or sturdy paper.
On reverse side create your own FOOD & CRIME image.
You may include all or part of the official contest image.
Mail to address printed on entry blank.
All entries must be postmarked by midnight September 28, 1984.
(Unfortunately, entries cannot be returned.)
All entries will be exhibited at POSTCARD PALACE from October 1 through Ootober 14, 1984. The winning entry, judged by the editorial staff of DINETTE SET MAGAZINE, will be featured in the DINETTE SET FOOD & CRIME issue.
The lucky prize-winner will also receive a surprise gift package and commemorative refrigerator plaque.
Winner will be notified by mail.

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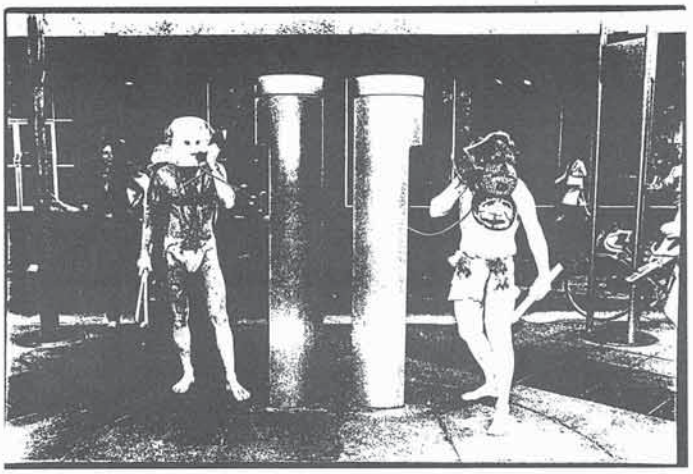


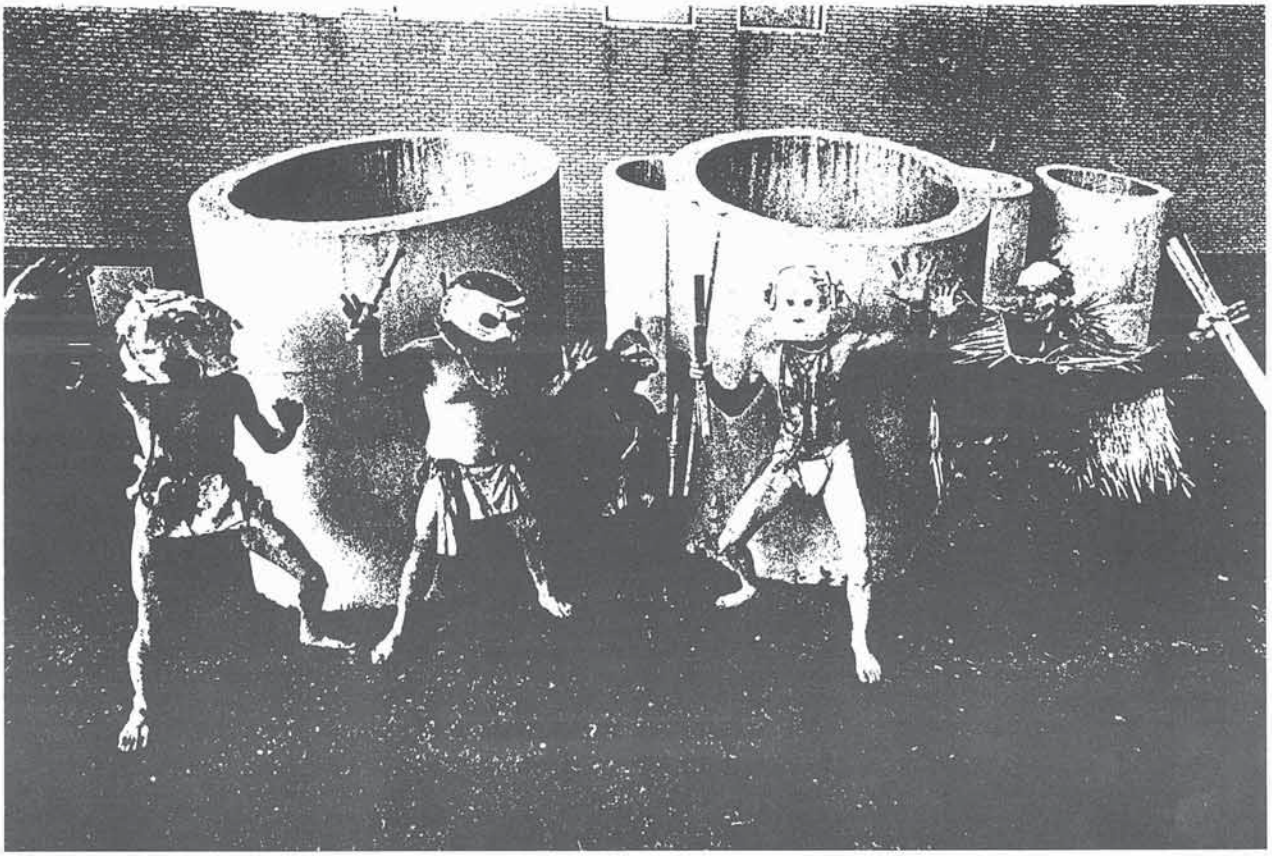
PRIMITIVE PERFORMANCE

From Denver comes word of the mudmen. They are a group of artists who perform the primitive tribal dances of the New Guinea Aborigines dressed in masks, mud and loin cloths. But the real kick is their choice of performance spaces.

The mudmen's sporadic performances are not at art galleries or underground performance spaces but in such urban-suburban settings as malls, tennis courts and bus stops. The effect is a startling one that a Denver journalist called a "shocking context of gritty, realistic-looking primitives against the slick-city backdrop."

The mudmen, composed of members of a Denver artist co-op called Pirate, do dances that are akin to breaking, in that they were traditionally performed as an alternative to war. Today the mudmen's dances can be seen as an alternative to high-tech performances that are seen only by a specific art-oriented audience. Instead, the mudmen in their mudstreaked bodies and loin cloths travel on city buses to shopping malls, tennis clubs and the like, bringing the news that performance pieces are not an 80s idea, they are an old idea, a downright primitive thought.

R. BIGGS



Photos by Jerome Delay

"The mudmen are not only from our past, but also from our future, where we may find ourselves in a post-nuclear survial age. Mudmen live in harmony with time and place; they build nothing, destroy nothing, and leave nothing behind."

Wolfgang Frederick Shine

Stelarc - from page 25

Body," Stelarc's body suspensions graphically depict what he believes to be our evolutionary physical deficiency. The suspensions further dramatize the organ which Stelarc believes is the organ of the future - the skin. He suggests that the skin might be redesigned to convert light into chemical nutrients for energy, permitting the organism to breathe through all its pores in an absorptive process rather than in our current "energy inefficient mechanism--the primitive lungs." This skin will belong to "The Body" of the future, a hybrid human composed of both organic and synthetic parts and structures whose organs might be organized modularly so that when one failed it could be replaced without the collapse of the rest of the system.

Throughout the talk Stelarc continually referred to "The Body," a form which seemed to be divorced from the existential self, the functioning ego/Id structure and certainly any kind of spiritual soul or emotional self. The irony of our "Body" is that it does have a "Mind" capable

"It may no longer be significant to remain human."

of inventing schemes and technology through which the body might escape its lumpen obsolete form and jettison out and away from its gravitational dependency on the earth.

When asked about his repeated objectification of the body, seeming to divorce it from both his own existential experience or subjective frame of reference, Stelarc responded that he does not conceive of a mind/body split in Cartesian terms. Furthermore, by objectifying the action in theoretical terms rather than isolating it in his own personal experience, he extends the implications of his action to embrace the universal physical issues.

Although these explanations are certainly clear and defensible, the mechanistic, slightly Skinnerian, and ostensibly "objective" and scientific language that he uses to discuss his work dramatically differs from not only the intense physical situations which he endures in the suspensions but also from the impact of their extreme aesthetic and esthete visual presentations. There is, quite simply, no way to escape the psycho-emotional relationships which emerge both for the viewer and to Stelarc as he experiences these difficult physical procedures.

"The Body" even with its Brain cannot escape the complex emotional and psychic, even parapsychological and spiritual (as abused as that word may be and as difficult as it is to agree upon its meaning) implications of his art even though as he states: "Leaving the earth is a metaphor for evolutionary processes while the body leaving the planet is a metaphor for the mind leaving the body."

Technology is normally understood as destructive. Yet Stelarc suggested that it is precisely technology which has been the decisive factor in the humanization of civilization. When questioned about the destructive potential of technology as witnessed in our post-war electronic and nuclear society, he pointed out that it is not a problem inherent in technology itself but rather a problem of use and essentially of the human psyche which creates and then employs its technological acuity for malevolent purposes, violence, aggression and ultimate annhiliation.

Alternative conditions for the body and any new forms for its shape confront radical and totally unknown physical possibilities as well as unimagined ethical and social problems; genetic experiments in cloning, artificial insemination, and the implantation of a fetus in an adoptive mother's womb pose extraordinary questions that test our ethical, moral and legislative structures.

Stelarc has suggested three additional solutions to our need for a more symbiotic relationship of the body with technology which "are projections of what I see happening now (to) the human body (when existing) off this planet which is vulnerable to radiation, to the lack of air, to vast distances." These might include the development of a technological exo-skeleton attached to the body to extend its possibilities; the body as a symbiotic insert into a robotic superstructure; and the incorporation of miniature technology as component parts in the body.

> **K.S.:** All three of these notions including the implantation of miniature technology in the body do not seem to me so much actual redesign of the body as much as adaption of the body.
>
> **Stelarc:** You are absolutely right. This third strategy (implantation of miniature technology in the body) might simply be part of the first phase of this evolutionary dialectic that we have created into a hybrid . . . The body may in fact remain very much similar. This might be the most human scale strategy . . .But I think once you start implanting things in the body then the concept of body structure comes up and the potential to redesign it.

Alterations to the body, all Frankensteinian tampering, or notions of "redesign" of the body are feared. Yet more powerful than any science fiction related anxiety over the endurance of the body in its present form are fundamental philosophical and religious issues grounded in the belief of mankind's resemblence, his and her mimetic reflection of God.

The Judeo-Christian heritage, as well as other world religions in whose doctrine mankind is the image of God, violently reject what are seen to be attacks on this, the most sacred of form. The Body has been traditionally that sacred incarnation, like that of the son who came to earth, or the One whose presence is still expected. On some very primal level, Stelarc's theory but even

Stelarc preparing to ascend E. 11th Street

more so his art, which defiles the body in what is seen to be a sado-masochistic practice, is threatening.

To some, Stelarc's art and ideas are heretical not only in the sense of the mortification of the flesh but in a very subtle manner; he has had the audacity to concieve of the body actually departing permanently from the earth and perhaps from the human species. For those of us who neither are able to identify *a* God nor yet willing to define the ethical limits of scientific investigations, Stelarc's art is perhaps the most problematical. For while it conforms to our curiosity and intellectual speculation about the future, our strong belief in technological advancements, and the right or freedom of experimentation, it also nags at a conscience that still clings to our uncertainty concerning the nature of soul and spirit as it inhabits the current form of the body.

Olean - from page 30

Anyway, Dad bought all these purple martin houses ten or fifteen years ago, after reading that these small, pleasant birds eat their weight in mosquitoes every day. It sounded like such a good idea to encourage them to build nests on the farm that he went out of his way to make sure they'd be comfortable. He put the houses on top of huge telephone poles he'd found somewhere or other to make sure they'd be steady and last through the winds and winter storms. Unfortunately, he never found out how to attract any purple martins into the houses he put up for them, so the farm has been covered with vacant birdhouses for years. (Any birds reading this take note: write for address.)

The first day of my annual summer weekend with the family, I acknowledged local tradition by browsing through the mall all afternoon, much to the surprise and wonderment of the locals. In the center atrium, I had a Medusa-like effect on a group of teenage girls stunned by my hair and earrings. They froze in their tracks, where I found them half an hour later as I headed for Chess King. A local crafts fair in the courtyard featured carved-wood name plates, and floor pillows for TV watching. I didn't spot anything nearly as interesting as my mother's Scarlett O'Hara toilet tissue cover, made with a Barbie doll and a corocheted antebellum gown.

I occupied myself at home cooking a vegetarian dinner for the folks (which they swore they loved, then fed the leftovers to the dogs). After dinner, my mother announced "Pie and coffee time", then brought out a pot of pink coffee and a radioactive-looking dayglo pink pecan pie. It seems that Morey Weatherbee had given her a bag of cotton-candy sugar he didn't need, and she'd been baking with it ever since. Conversation that evening was enlivened by the appearance of Tony Costa, an incest child who resembles Elvis Costello with chromosome damage. Tony swears he's Ronald Reagan's cousin, and wants to move up the ladder of Republican party politics (I think he'd fit in well). He was ranting and raving about the crop-duster planes that were spraying the swamp for mosquitoes—apparently he was privy to some inside knowledge that what they were spraying was actually Agent Orange. Probably a Democratic plot.

The next morning I set out on a photo odyssey, feeling like a cross between Jane Goodall and Diane Arbus. I was desperate to take pictures of the mannequins, along with the five trailer parks that Westons Mills can take pride in. Somehow, all my shots turned out to be landscapes—whenever anyone saw me coming, in pleated shorts and French beret, they rounded up the children and headed inside.

Along with the expected John Waters-esque terrain of pink flamingoes, abandoned Chevies and polyester shell-tops from the Family Bargain Center, I found a few surprise delights. I had wanted to shoot the Cogswell, roadhouse and local topless go-go establishment, but when I arrived, it had mutated into a Fellini landscape of junk tires piled up to the second story. As soon as I snapped the shutter a few goons shooed me away (thinking I was a Communist spy looking for defense installations, I'm sure).

Down Mill Street, I hoped to catch a few shots of the Crawfords, an albino incest family of hillbillies a la "Deliverance." Honestly, the Crawfords are so inbred that if they had a family reunion, they could have six generations in attendance and only three people there. When I got to the dirt road leading to their house, I was disappointed. No naked albino children playing in the mud. There was a sign nailed up at the driveway that summed it all up, though: "Winchester won the West and also protects the property—STAY OUT!." I did.

(Next issue's installment: Lame, Macrame, and the philosophy of life with Vicki the rifle-twirler.)

Illustration Fred Rinne

An international dada festival right here in San Francisco! HA! Great! A week of dada events culminating in a free for all dada parade! Great! HA!

What's dada?

Ask anybody and you'll get a different answer every time.

"Ronald Reagan as president. That's dada," was one man's cynical summation.

"dada is for children," someone else said, "It's playfulness that never dies."

For some, dada is referred to in the past tense. dada was an art movement around World War I. It was almost anything that didn't make sense.

Pretty loose, even for the art world. But then, that's the point. dada means never having to ask, "But is it art?" It's attitude, fashion, film, posters, performance, rubber stamps, anything at all.

dada emerged as a protest to the French and German art elite. Vaguely described as art of the absurd, dada was meant to tear down labels and categories of the official art world.

As a result, the official art world pronounced dada dead. San Francisco's Interdada 84 proves that pronouncement wrong.

More dada

"dada dead?", asks Ginny Lloyd, a local dadist and festival organizer. "We're a pretty lively group." Organizers have planned a week of open-ended events, and Lloyd says the best of the festival will happen spontaneously in the spirit of dada.

dadadadadada--always a controversial label for an artist to wear and one that all artists are afraid can cost them serious attention in other "art circles". Some "artists" in Interdada 84 are using pseudonyms for that reason, Lloyd says.

Still, serious attention is not dada. Lloyd says the whole point of the festival is to break the elitism, and ignore what will or won't be accepted. It was decided to make time and place available - and leave the rest as open ended as possible. Lloyd and her co-organizer found space to display the mail art show and other visual work, theaters to present films and videos, and stage time for performances. She says they have plenty of dadadada to fill it up. They are trying to attract all types to the festival and to make it a truly international event, something Lloyd says is a rarity on the San Francisco art scene.

This dada festival is larger scale than the one held four years ago in Ukiah. But Lloyd says the spirit is the same, in spite of tickets to some events being available through ticket agencies, tee shirts, pens, posters, and pins on sale at the headquarters all the time and space is not free.

"dada has gone capitalist", Lloyd says pointing to one of the first letters sent out. It was addressed, "Dear dada consumer." With almost no financial backing, Lloyd says the festival is going to have to be paid for through the normal, mundane methods of donations, tickets and tee shirts. (HA!)

But then, if dada were a commercially accepted art form, it might have to straighten up and turn respectable. And wouldn't that spoil the fun?

\- Amy Nilson

DADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADADA

INTERDADA 84 will be at San Francisco art spaces September 2-9. Artist from 35 countries will participate in the week long event.

S e p t e m b e r 3

7 to 9 pm	Mail Art Show opening at 16th Note, 3160-16th St.
9:30 to 2 am	Spirit of Tzara, a nite of poetry and manifestos at Hotel Utah, 500-4th St.

S e p t e m b e r 4

6:30 to 10 pm	dada Film Nite at the Roxie Theater, 3117-16th ST.
5:30 to 2 am	Lucy and Ricky Look Alike Nite at the 16th Note, music and dancing.

S e p t e m b e r 5

7 to 9 pm	DOCUDADA, a documentary photography exhibit of contemporary dada activities. Plus Toy With dada, exhibit of contemporary dada works.
9 to 1 am	Hugo's Ball, a dance benefit for Interdada 84
	ALL three events at 20X20 Gallery, 1261 Howard St.

S e p t e m b e r 6

6 to 7 pm	dada Cocktail hour
7 to 9 pm	The Only Correspondence Art Dinner, A dada dinner party.
9 to ? am	Sound poetry, special guest speakers. ALL at La Mamelle, Inc., 70-12th St/ reservation only at $10. for full event.

S e p t e m b e r 7

8 to 12 am	dada Burlesque I and Hannah's Ready Wear; performance art and fashion show.

S e p t e m b e r 8

8 to 12 am	dada Burlesque II and dada Dance Contest. BOTH nights at VICTORIA Theater, 2961-16th St. Tix thru BASS or at box office.

S e p t e m b e r 9

Noon	dada Parade through the streets of San Francisco. Route to be announced. Anyone can participate.
7 to 12 am	MIDNIGHT SCREAM, Art, Language and Sound in the mudflats of Emeryville, performances in 3 stage areas, improv. input welcome.

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

During the week, the following activities will take place:

dada Headquarters and bookstore at the Maelstrom bookstore, 572 Valencia St.

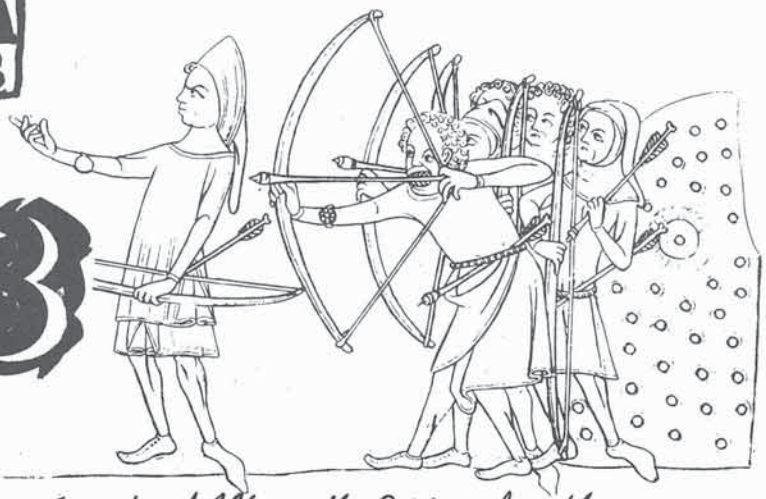
dada Video Showings at New Generic, 2 Clinton Park

dada Film Showings at noon each day at the Goethe Institute, 530 Bush St., along with an exhibit of historical works and reference materials.

DADADAHAHAHADADADAHAHAHADADADAHAHAHADADADAHAHAHADADADAHAHAHA

"Kaliman" illustration by Fred Rinne

MySterY aRt: sculpture on lamp post at Japantown similiar piece last seen being chipped from pole in front of the Museum of Modern (is this) Art.



dishing it out 3

Man of the 80's / Episode #19 / In which Man of the 80's valiantly projects secure creative self image.

Christie Mellor

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