

Eye

East Village

\$1.25 (\$1.50 outside NYC)

"It's All True"

January 1982

CHILLY XMAS

graffiti
djs
break boys
joan jett
malaria
jim fouratt
bimbo rivas
max blagg
the ski look



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Classes

SOHO NIGHTLIFE #011
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**LOOK LIKE A MILLION
 ON A BUDGET #028**

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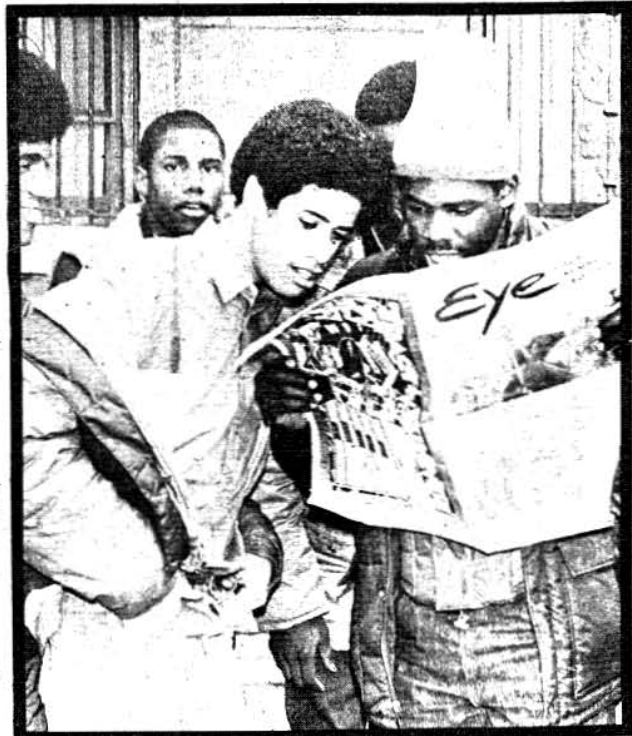
Vanity Press

by RICHARD R. ARMJO

I am envious of the mad woman who
 paces in my neighborhood. Her hair is
 pulled into a scarf and each morning
 she marks her face with red rouge. To
 me she is like a painting because no
 matter that I exhort she offers no
 answer. She is so lit when she deter-
 mines to walk, pulling one foot awkward-
 ly along. She is like a doll that escaped
 my playroom many years before. I can
 not repair her.

Sooner or later the anomalies are ac-
 cused and their mystery attacked. That
 is the spirit of America at one with
 fascism. Everyone needs to junk off a
 cop. Everyone needs to gun down a fag-
 got. What you need is adjustment. I am
 an artist. I need the sheer indifference I
 feel after escaping my predators. I hear
 each democratic principle, amplify it to
 its absurdest valuation, then trash it.
 Nothing at all has gone wrong and I do
 not want to live afraid of madness.

Everything conspires to suffocate the
 free act. America is so entombed and
 freedom such hindsight that we have
 forgotten our real name. Those who par-
 tially recall limp about the cities half
 crazed and half illuminated. Everything
 valuable is endangered.



DON'T CALL THEM 'SQUATTERS'

by Lehman Weichselbaum
with Janet Rosen

To the satraps of Koch's housing bureaucracy, the tenants of 272, 274 and 278 East 7th Street are so much trouble. The city, owner of the three East Village tenements, wants the 70-odd residents out. Not only have the homesteaders staved off the municipal boot, they have firmly rooted themselves by making the three structures habitable under very primitive conditions. Worst of all, their practice has propelled them from the micro- to the macrocosm where they have been arrowheading a drive toward a citywide housing coalition that would fight for residents of all buildings that have defaulted into the city's hands. Trouble.

It started back in 1975, when the buildings were still privately owned. Landlord indifference provoked a rent strike. The buildings changed hands, but deprivations—including two suspicious boiler fires—only deepened. Finally, in 1978, the city took the buildings over for non-payment of taxes.

The tenants quickly learned that City Hall as landlord was no blessing. The city did literally nothing to maintain the buildings, violating its own housing laws. Even the water was cut off. After tortuous machinations between tenants, community board and the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), housing bureaucrats did decide to close the buildings down, and began eviction proceedings against tenants this summer. Now it was full scale war.

The tenants fought by fixing up and keeping up the buildings by their own labor. "We're our own 'Housing Preservation and Development,'" says tenant activist Rolando Politi with much irony. The tenants resist being called squatters—as the city prefers to tar them—opting for the more generous

label of homesteaders. "Homesteaders develop their home, squatters don't," sums up tenant and artist Mozambique.

A visit to the banner-blazoned three buildings—dubbed Thunder, Rainbow, and Sunrise Associations by residents—confirms this image of pioneers struggling to coax a new life out of the raw urban prairie land. On every floor tenants toil to make wasted apartments habitable, as plaster dust smokes and harsh spackling smears the walls. Makeshift lights and turned-up ovens keep things lit and warm. Rubber hoses trailing up stairwells and down corridors supply water. "If not for the tenants, these buildings would be blasted," says Mozambique frankly.

On the political front, tenants formed the East Seventh Street Coalition and recruited wide organizational support, thanks to pervasive fear of galloping gentrification in Alphabet Town as well as elsewhere in the city. Religious group endorsement was gained, cites Politi as an example, in part because of the anxiety of local Hispanic churches who stand to lose much of their flock if members are forced-out of the neighborhood. The coalition calls for entry into the Tenant Interim Lease (TIL) program—which essentially would give tenants an 11-month grace period free of eviction hassles—and the right to buy their apartments as low-income co-ops.

But HPD's hardballing has ensnared the coalition in its present legal tangle. The State Supreme Court is due to review the coalition's request for a preliminary injunction against HPD. Legal Services attorney Liz Gonzalez, representing the tenants, believes the decision could prove to be an important test case, setting a precedent for all tenants who call the city landlord. "We're using an oval theory of litigation," Gonzalez says, citing a two-part brief that first, calls HPD on its failure to make necessary repairs as mandated



LISA KAHANE

for any private landlord, and second, fingers the agency for being "unjustly enriched" by the tenants' own renovations.

Yet even with a favorable court (or out-of-court) decision, tenants' strategy could still prove tricky if, for example, they abandoned their bid for TIL and entered a risky competition for the buildings with other, better-heeled groups as part of a sweat equity or urban homesteading program.

Meanwhile, tenants work hard and revel in their solidarity, a remarkable bond of affection running between bohos, Euros, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Blacks and Latinos, comprising an ordinary multi-ethnic sliver of Loisa vida. "We consider ourselves a family," says Mozambique.

He continues: "It seems to fit into Reaganomics. Stop depending on government. Even though this is the order from above, they don't want to do it down below—see what the people can do for themselves with minimal, if any, government aid."

Despite—and because of—the buildings' beleaguered state, many prospective tenants have applied to the coalition office for an apartment to rent,

drawn both by the political allure of the struggle and by the simple need of a place to live (for info: 533-0285 and 598-0100, ext. 28). At the same time, the battling tenants, not to be thought selfish, have taken their troublesome nature to the rest of the city, forming the nucleus of a new City-Wide Housing Coalition that would group together other tenants now living under city control.

The City-Wide Coalition's preliminary goals are to fight gentrification, keep a keen eye on the housing bureaucracy, lobby lawmakers and provide general, grass-roots self-help. A recent mass meeting held nearby on East 7th Street drew representatives from groups as diverse as the Union of City Tenants, the People's Firehouse in Brooklyn and the West Harlem Community Organization for a lively skull session. An especially visible presence were local members of the New Corners Club M.C. in their fine, beat-up bikers' jackets ("They're a possible anti-eviction mobilization force," half-joked Politi). For the Ronnie-and-Eddie '80s, when basic needs like food and shelter become hotter issues than ever, it was a good start.



"Hey man, I found some art!"

These boys, recruited from native Soho, have found an art object while renovating an evicted artist's loft. This find might mean a reward of \$300 to the "boss artist" who has found the object.



Art Object Graces Belle of the Ball

The art objects are then sent to uptown Manhattan where they are put on display and worn by Park Avenue socialites at charity benefits. A \$2,100,000 price tag has been put on the art object worn by this belle of the ball.

This is a paid message from the **MUDD ORGANIZATION**, 77 White St., N.Y., N.Y.



MOROCCO'S VIETNAM

By LIZA BEAR

For six years now the King of Morocco, with U.S. military help, has been waging a war of aggression in the Western Sahara. Apart from Hassan II's delusions of territorial grandeur (he has had designs also on the Algerian Sahara, part of Mali and all of Mauritania), the economic stakes are high. In the northwest corner of the territory lie the Bucraa phosphate reserves, the world's fourth largest deposit. Morocco is already the world's number one phosphate exporter, although its phosphate revenues barely pay for its Saudi oil tab. It doesn't want any competition on the commodities market. There's also uranium — which might be very handy for Iraq's nuclear reactor — oil, and offshore fisheries. Successive droughts have drastically reduced Morocco's ability to feed itself. Even as a third world nation, Morocco stands high among the ranks of the undernourished and underemployed. The rural exodus swells the population of the shantytowns on Casablanca's outskirts at the speedy rate of a thousand a week. Bread and a can of sardines would count as a good meal.

Until 1975, the Western Sahara, a territory the size of Colorado, was a little-known Spanish colony, inhabited by some 750,000 nomads. Following the bombing of their sheep, goats, and camels, many were forced to settle on the coast or on the banks of seasonal rivers. The area functioned as a sort of backyard for the Spanish troops. However, the Spanish occupation was resisted. The Frente Polisario became

the diplomatic and military expression of the national liberation movement. Its guerrilla resistance compelled the Spanish to withdraw. At the point of exit, under pressure from a Western conspiracy, the Spanish betrayed the Sahrawis. The infamous Madrid Accord drawn up on the wake of their departure, handed over the administration of the northern part of the territory to Morocco, the southern to Mauritania. In return, Spain would get a 30% kickback from the exploitation of the phosphate.

The Polisario went on fighting. They use armored jeeps too fast for the American tanks to catch. Morale is high. By 1979, Mauritania abandoned its claims to the southern province. Morocco promptly moved in. At this point, the Polisario claim nine-tenths of the territory. The Morroccans have been forced to retreat behind a 400-mile embankment of sand, stones, barbed wire, minefields and electronic sensing devices installed by Westinghouse Corporation. The wall protects the "useful triangle" of the Sahara where the phosphate deposits lie inactive. "We," say the Polisario, "prefer to call it the triangle of shame."

When the Polisario storms a garrison, they move their people to refugee camps on the Algerian side of the border. Some 140,000 Sahrawis live in 23 camps. Reports from visitors and film footage show these to be highly organized. The Polisario have a constitution and a state, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, recognized to date by fifty members of the U.N., and a majority of the O.A.U. (Organization of African Unity). The O.A.U. presides over African affairs. Its Wisemen committee wants a ceasefire to be implemented, a

referendum to take place so that the Sahrawis may determine their future.

Until recently, Moroccans were informed that the war was a border conflict with Algerians. Since Morocco and Algeria gained their respective independence from the French, they have not been friends. Now that the war is sapping 40% of Morocco's national budget, popular sentiment is changing. "Hassan's Vietnam," they call it. A chant during the June 20 Casablanca uprisings in protest of price hikes for basic staples went something like this: "No queremos Aguerguer, queremos a comar." The *New York Times* foreign desk, which reports such spicy items as buses overturning in Chile, was strangely silent on this one. It ran only a four-liner with phony statistics supplied by the royal palace. The Casablanca massacre of a thousand young Moroccans didn't prevent the Canadian prime minister from taking his vacation in Morocco.

An international lawyer present at the Rabat trials of those who survived the machine gun onslaughts in Casablanca is suing the Moroccan government. Sent as an observer by the International Commission of Jurists, he was forcibly expelled, escorted to the airport along with all the foreign journalists. His just-published report is a chronicle of the most flagrant miscarriage of any form of justice according to the Moroccan penal code. Wounded dying in court in front of the judge, collective trials, no defense for the witnesses. Meitre Tremblay has also called for an international human rights investigation into the massacre of children during the Casablanca riots. Most of the accused at the July 11 Rabat trials were aged fourteen to

seventeen. Witnesses report a five-year-old girl being shot in the throat.

The United States is the only Western power still supplying arms to the Moroccans. During the Carter administration, the weapons were ostensibly for defensive purposes only. M-18 tanks and OV reconnaissance aircraft were ordered but not delivered. As Reagan swept into office, there was a "tilt," a hasty lurch in foreign policy, the arms package was delivered within six days and the strings-attached clause removed. The new policy, according to an off-the-record assessment by a member of the U.S./U.N. delegation, is to give our friends what they want ("their perception of their own needs"), and along with that "some friendly advice." Questioned as to the administration rationale for giving Morocco more weapons ("rationale" is not a word that the U.S. State Department can relax with), all one official could do was repeat "but we've been doing it for twenty years." To some political analysts, Morocco occupies a highly strategic position for the U.S.—take-off and landing strips at the old WWII air force bases for a speedy entree into the continent's trouble spots, a friendly buffer between the Algerian and Libyan devils and the deep blue sea.

This fall, the action intensifies. Hassan II is in grave trouble. He has lost two more desert outposts. As I write, Caspar Weinberger lands in Rabat for a "refueling" stop, the DOD's Colonel Grouch proclaims. Colonel Grouch fields queries from the news media. Reports from American sources quoted in the *New York Times* bely his candor. Requests for more sophisticated U.S. weaponry have already been relayed by

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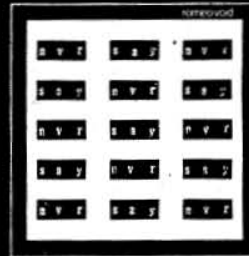
Capital Punishment.

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New from 415 Records

romeo void's debut album, *itsacondition*, was one of the most heralded new records by an American group this year. Soon there will be a new romeo void album.

But if you're like us and you don't want to wait, then we have some very good news for you. romeo void has just released an EP called *never say never* featuring four brand new songs and it's available right now!



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MALÄRIA ≈ + # ::



DARYL-ANN SAUNDERS

By CELESTE-MONIQUE LINDSEY
with RICHARD FANTINA

Malaria is one of a group of German bands which have in recent months begun an invasion of these shores. If you did not catch their shows at clubs like Mudd, the Ritz or 54 you can hear their music on their upcoming American release for Cachalot records.

We set out to do an interview about music, about the trends and influences prominent in West Germany right now. We had intended to spend more time talking about other German bands such as DAF (Deutsche Amerikanische Freundschaft) or Neu. But as it happened the political problems which seem to concern German youth these days came to the fore and we ended up chatting about matters such as Ronald Reagan's plans for a revitalized NATO alliance in which Germany and other European countries will bear the brunt of the risk and responsibility.

Malaria is: Bettina Gudrun, lead vocals and saxophone; Gudrun Gut, drums and vocals; Christine Hahn, drums and bass; Manon Duursma, guitar, and Susanne Kuhnkel on synthesizer and vocals. (The Laura who participated in our discussion is Laura Kennedy of NYC's own Bush Tetras).

CML

(David Bowie's "Heroes" is playing in the background.)

EYE: That's my favorite song.

Christine: We are going to do a cover of it on our American record.

Bettina: I mean we wouldn't do it in Germany but I think here it's nice.

EYE: Why not?

Bettina: I don't know.

Christine: It's too much.

Bettina: Yeah, but I think it's nice when you're away from Berlin to do a song about the German wall. It's nice when you're somewhere else. But when you're in Berlin and then you talk about the wall because.

EYE: Do people there think about it a lot, I mean I've never been to Berlin.

Bettina: I don't think that it's that they think about the wall. I think it's just normal there. I mean there's the wall.

EYE: You did a song about Berlin but I didn't understand the lyrics.

Bettina: It's about fighting and winning and dying and loving. Like Gudrun and I were out on the street and this fight starts, and it was like two hundred policemen on two sides of the street wearing plastic shields and very heavy boots and... I don't know what they're called... and we were banging on the pavement. We were so scared and it's... and now there's war but that's just today and tomorrow everything's okay... we're not coming to a real war.

EYE: What was the incident about?

Bettina: Hein? ... About squatters.

Christine: There's a lot of buildings in Berlin... rents have gone way up... buildings are just lying vacant for technical or legal reasons or I don't know why... and so people need a place to live and just move in... and the police are ordered to get them out.

EYE: We have problems like that here.

Christine: But what scares me there is the way the police come to these things, like hundreds and hundreds and they really enjoy it.

Bettina: Now they have this nice conservative government in Berlin. Two weeks ago they told everyone to leave the squatted buildings. And now last week they just killed one guy. We did the song about it half a year ago, it was the first demonstration when they squatted the first houses. **Christine:** There were so many cops, more and more and more... it was like there is a war going on and you just did not hear about it.

Bettina: And so we wrote a song about it. **EYE:** What was the Haig demonstration like?

Bettina: Oh yeah... I was working in a cafe... it was just on the square where the demonstration was. And suddenly there was all this water, we had to close all the doors quickly because all the water was coming in and then they threw a tear bomb into the cafe. It was very ugly. They burned cars. It was... it was not as violent a demonstration as this one where they photographed the police who started throwing stones just to keep the fight up.

EYE: I met a woman at the EYE office a few weeks ago who said people in Germany get really excited about the nuclear energy issue, that hundreds of thousands marched about it.

Christine: Germany's a small country, and Reagan's a real war freak. He just decided he wanted five hundred power plants here, already Germany's very occupied. Being

an American growing up with all this propaganda. They want to put Neutron warheads here. You know, that makes Germany essentially a sitting duck if any trouble starts and we all get blown sky high... if it (Germany) was blown off the map most people wouldn't even lift a finger to help.

EYE: How long have you been in Berlin? **Christine:** I've been living there for about a year, but before that I was in and out of there working.

EYE: How long has the band been together?

Bettina: Since January now.

EYE: This same line-up?

Bettina: Yes, we started with Gudrun. We knew what we wanted to do. So we discussed records and then we did live gigs and now to April we did forty live gigs.

EYE: How did you launch this tour?

Bettina: Oh, it was funny, Eric (of Cachalot Records) was in Berlin for the women's festival.

EYE: Oh yeah.

Bettina: He was there, he said "Oh! you must come to New York". And we said "Yes, perhaps" and then Christine came to America to visit her family and she just met him on the street.

EYE: This is really a pretty good tour.

Bettina: Yes.

EYE: So you're thinking of making a record here?

Bettina: We've started.

EYE: Where?

Bettina: I don't know what studio. We do it with the record company he owns, Cachalot Records. I mean because it's really difficult if you have an import record. So we decided to make a record here then it's cheaper than it's not an import and it's a regular record in America.

EYE: Will it have different songs on it?

Bettina: One song from Berlin and one song we made here but that's a German song and then we do two more songs. One is not fixed and then we do this cover version ("Heroes").

Gudrun: That one we never do in Germany but it's okay here.

EYE: I don't understand. I'm confused about that. Why would you not do that in Germany?

Bettina: Because in Germany we are living in a town where the wall is, it's absolutely normal and everybody knows about it. There are some other things which are interesting: other things to do songs about or play music about.

EYE: Oh, I see, so it's not because people would be offended.

Bettina: Oh no, we do things because we are interested in them. America is much different than Germany or Europe so here we love to do different things.

EYE: Which brings us back to Neutron bombs. Americans want to put them in Germany, not because they hate Germans but because they think that's what the Germans want.

Bettina: No, they just want to keep their war out of America.

EYE: No, people believe that. They think of it as defense, you put those missiles there so...

Bettina: No, no, they think Germans love war and they want the whole country to be blown up all over again. Those missiles are really just for destroying not protecting.

Germans are really afraid about the americans. The American government wants many more atomic power plants in Germany because like if the Russians are coming to invade Germany they just blow up those plants.

Gudrun: We really don't want those plants and now we have them. I think the Americans are just as nice as the Russians.

EYE: I guess that's not saying much these days. That's funny. I know we can't guess what governments have in the back of their minds but as far as the people are concerned I think this really is a classic case of misunderstanding. The average

American doesn't want to put neutron bombs or cruise missiles in Germany because he hates Germans and wants to destroy them.

Bettina: But those weapons are really not for protecting a country, they are only for attacking. But we really don't care so much about that. We are just saying when the war is coming and when it comes we go down in the streets and we fight.

Christine: Anyway it's traditional for Germany to be destroyed. It's happened so many times. I wouldn't be surprised if it happened again.

Bettina: I don't like it.

Christine: It's really horrible.

EYE: Americans do have this image of German people as being very warlike.

Gudrun: That's because they don't know us at all.

Bettina: Yes I don't think we are so very warlike.

EYE: But even in your music. That drumbeat is kind of martial.

continued on page 16



THEATER

by TONY AWARDS

Even before venturing to the seventeenth floor of Rockefeller Plaza, home of *Saturday Night Live*, last spring with Northwestern University literature and poetry major **Steve Mass** dogging my foot steps, my interest in cabaret theater had become almost an obsession.

I first had an inkling that cabaret performers would eventually rival musicians in my esteem, in the jocular days of the old SNL. Back then, **Talking Heads**, **Bob** ("Save me Jesus!") **Dylan**, and even **Frank Zappa** seemed awkward, stiff, and lacking most importantly, in *Cool*, when contrasted with vignettes in which **Dan Ackroyd** portrayed his sleazy salesmen, squares, Europeans, and celebrities with vituperative veracity. The lyrics of even the best bands often seemed simplistic and hopelessly romantic when juxtaposed with the stinging scripts that **Dan** and **Peter Ackroyd**, **Michael O'Donohue**, **Annie Beatts**, and others churned out every once in a while. I met and hounded **Ackroyd**, **Belushi**, **Woody Allen**, **Robin Williams**, and others. Then under **Mass'** auspices I began writing, producing and directing vignettes for the Mudd's slandering hordes that featured **Vinnie Platania**, who is certainly one of the best standup comedians around.

Platania, **Patrick Weathers**, and I had formed a comedy group, the **Poison Awards** (we later added **Maria Pessino** and **Laura Barlicevic**). One Saturday evening in midsummer as I was duly trudging along West Broadway to one of our Mudd gigs, I encountered **DI DI Curruthers** Gouldspassing out flyers advertising her stint with **Beryl** and **the Perils** at the **Westbeth Theatre**. Although I continue to support the ERA, I've reached my saturation point with feminism as a topic after suffering through too many sermons in the **Village Voice**. However, the **Perils** sendup of dangerously inept gynecologists, homicidal medieval priests, and child molesting, wife abusing fathers had me and the throngs the **Perils** attract merrily yukking it up. I almost concur with **Jan Hoffman**, who wrote a cover story on women comics in that previously mentioned rag a few months ago, when she called the **Perils** the "most disturbing and dazzling group I've ever seen."

BASE METAL UNIVERSITY OF THE STREETS

Base Metal is an Intrepid Theater gambit written by David Meyers. It's the first New York production of one of the Washington DC espatriate's efforts and the role of **Venceslaus** is **Herman D. Farrell III's** first leading role. However, without my program notes I'd have never suspected the virginity of this production.

Set in the thirteenth century, the action centers around **Venceslaus**, a puny effete, young poet who has just inherited his dad's estate, as he is believed to have sundered in combat. The young would-be lord is about to wed the lowborn but graceful **Gretta** (**Mary Guzy**) when his pissed-off pop returns and thwarts the impending nuptials. Still worse, **Venceslaus's** religious tutor, the perfidious **Mastino** (**William March**), double-crosses his one-time protege, and gets the wimp scheduled for a duel. **Alchemist Lorenzo** (**Terrence L. Kiel**) realizes that his student faces certain death and heads for the lab.

This play has a lot of conflicts, Science, v.s. Religion, Innovation v.s. Tradition, and the Struggle of the Classes. Everyone in the cast was as slick and polished as **Robert Gordon's** comb and **Ruth Landowne's** costumes would have garnered her employment with **Cecil B. DeMille**. The Intrepid Theatre Company forges ahead.



Musical numbers flounsh during the **Ladies** set and suprisingly, are made up on the spot, often using an unimaginative suggestion from some loudmouth in the audience for the tune's theme. Dark haired and shapely **Jane Brucker** is the groups most powerful singer and obvious sex symbol. (in the **Susan Sontag-as-a-young woman** fashion), and she leads her cohorts in witty unflinching verses that are craftily accompanied by pianist **Art Labriola**.

Someday at least one of these women are bound to become famous and you may have to forego your qualudes for a week in order to buy tickets to see them. Hence, I recommend hoofing it down to the **Noho Cafe** at eight this Saturday armed with suggestions for improvisation, and I defy you to stump these wacky women.

MR DEAD & MRS FREE SQUAT THEATRE

I had to fight and claw my way into this one. Imagine? They were finally going to reient and let me in, but my companion was expected to pay?!! Eventually, after dropping a few twenty dollar words like "parsimonous" and "verisimilitude" which, in conjunction with my press pass, firmly established my journalistic credentials, we were permitted entrance. It was the worst fracas I've yet had with door people at the theater, so naturally I was anxious to take the most dismal view of the performance I could muster.

M.D.M.F. began with a film which, like the stage act that was to follow, was essentially a collage of images. **Esther Balint** made her entrance by snuffing up some lines of toot and then imploring **Black** and **Boogying Sheryl Sutton** to take on the near impossible task of teaching her how to dance.

Moving on, we were shown the placid domestic life of a flat foot as he drags his impish daughter off to school and phones his knocked up wife. Just as I was musing over possible undercurrents of infidelity, the badge boy is methodically drilled full of holes by a crook he stumbles across in a parking lot. We're then treated to some beaver shots as the wife jettisons a yowling baby from her bloody abyss.

Balint then reappears, sauntering along some industrial ghost town section of the city, impassively reeling off **Hustler** caliber porn to her equally impassive girl friend.

After the film, one of the most beautifully proportioned women I've ever seen (she was nude) took the stage and performed some mesmerizing yoga manoeuvres which clearly demonstrated what cheerful health every working part of her physique was in. This was accomplished against the backdrop of a huge, twelve foot high papier-mache baby with video-monitor eyes. The titanic tot wore headphones and the music must have been good, because the baby bore a "warm milk in my tummy" smile.

DIANE TOUR MUDD CLUB

This performance artist's diligent study of the dance has finally obtained her the opportunity to glean a livelihood from her craft. Having plucked a twinkie-toed and buxom comrad from the Jersey go-go joint, where they rake in the loot of the lascivious, **Dianne Torr** and her pulchritudinous pal exhibited their **Big Bucks Boogy** during a recent **Early Mudd Evening**. Grinding, bending, squatting and swirling evocatively to three contemporary tunes, those randy, scantily-clad girls had the utmost concentration of the audience. The following afternoon I woke up suffering with a stiff neck that I'd gotten from twisting my head too violently in my efforts to bury my eye's in all that T&A.

Dianne and co. brought their strictly artistic act to **Inroads**, bolstered by **Sally White's** monologue about her loves and life. Not for men only!

MANHATTAN BANANAS NOHO THEATRE

The **Bananas** began with **Michael Shaffer**, a bit weak in a Prime Time style mugger sketch. He returned to do a highly satisfying commercial rock parody. Savagely strumming one out of tune chord on his **Gibson**, **Shaffer** prowled the stage growling all the **WPLJ Redneck Rock** platitudes that high-heeled, heavy metal maulers so unctuously spew out over thousand-watt P.A. systems.

Shaffer was followed by **Ed Karvoski**. The **Bananas** director and main writer is a blond, aggravatingly clean-cut, soap opera veteran who is deft in deprecating the cheese-head with acting aspirations: most memorably in a skit where he called the folks back home, (ageing lowan curmudgeons **Richard Bassett** and **Bess Wingate**), his answering service, agent, and rival, with predictably disappointing results. Finally, he decides to heed his nagging crone of a mother's advice and resolutely picks up the phone to enroll in keypunch operating school. Alas, yet another dilettante demolished.

Pat Baily was deft in her myriad characterizations and speaks in precise, high-pitched, mellifluous tones that seemed to visibly affect a pervert sitting near the wall in the row in front of me.

The **Bananas** set also introduced me to the formidable talents of **Nancy Lombardo**. One of the most agile improvisers I've seen, **Lombardo** seems able to ape any dialect. Whether she is enacting a neurotic playing word association games with a shrink, a Scottish woman reciting Yeatsian-style poetry, or a narcissistic little girl preening before a mirror, **Nancy Lombardo** manages to be amusing. So, while the **Bananas** are not really a **Downtown** act, (they would be just as much if not more at home on the **Upper West** or **East** sides), if you willing to take in their day-gig, **SAG** member, appearance and forgive them for it, you won't regret seeing them.

FUNNY LADIES NOHO THEATRE

Both the **Bananas** and **Funny Ladies** are expunged from the **First Amendment Comedy & Improvisation Co.**, and are protectively presided over by **Artistic Director** and founding member **Barbara Contardi**; she brought the original incarnation of the **First Amendment** to **Gotham** from **Berkeley** in 1975. The **Amendment's** forte is improvisation and the **Ladies** formula is to begin by begging the usually laconic audience for a topic and action, as long as it isn't too obscene (which excluded me), they'll take any suggestion and muster a vignette on the spot that is usually at least, jaunty. At one point **Nancy Lombardo** coyly asked for a subject, "Food!" someone brayed, and the names of four playwrights, barring thankfully, only the overexposed **Neil Simon**. The **Ladies** then proceeded to vigorously lacerate the culinary proclivities of **Shakespeare**, **Williams**, **O'Neal**, and **Chekov**.

In another bit, **Krishna Stone** came on as a barely intelligible ("You know, you know," act), black **Philadelphia** inner city cable t.v. talk show host, who boastfully offers up sagacious advice she's gleaned from "very serious articles" in **Cosmopolitan** and **Ogni** magazine. Among her guests was **Linda Stine** who was convincing as a happily-domestic hick visiting from a potato farm in **Idaho**, and **Kim Sykes** who intimidated the rest of the cast with her belligerent, Hulk smash, **Puerto Rican** street fighter.



Krishna Stone



Abruptly, a jeep commanded by three soldiers came careening in from the street through the wide glass storefront door-window just behind the stage. The men pulled a blindfolded, handcuffed prisoner from the car and shot him. They then tossed the wounded man back into the jeep and drove back out onto the street. Returning shortly, the soldiers placed the hemorrhaging wreck in a hammock, and as he lay there he began masturbating with the assistance of a visiting priest who sucked him off.

One of the soldiers then began rapping over some DNA funk along with Sheryl Sutton on a tune naturally titled "Mr. Dead & Mrs. Free. With poignant timing, Esther Balint and her puerile pal appeared at the window and Balint's pornography-promulgating utterances came oozing out of the P.A., thus providing a literal continuity from the film to the stage; (Wow!) A rusty robot clinked down the aisle toward the stage and recited a poem called "El Dorado," (I prefer Nathan Ross' rendition).

Music materialized with a Bela Lugosi violinist attired in a natty tux who played "Sex Machine" which he embellished with Heifetz like flourishes. He was accompanied by a fashionable woman who warbled the words with wit.

Just after a jilted waitress bumps herself off with a shiksa bob stick, the show ends with Nico's voice wafting out of the baby's mouth as she taunts the tune "New York, New York."

Mr. Dead & Mrs. Free gets five stars for performance and since I'm feeling magnanimous I'll bestow two stars upon the Squat Theatre for their door policy. After all, we did get in.

CHRISTIANS FROM OUTER SPACE CLEAR SPACE

Although Jimini has just dragged Topo off to the Old Country (Europe), the Christians vow to return by April. I've been bemused by their antics on a couple of occasions during the last few weeks. They surfaced at the smash "Win a Weekend in New York!" E.V.E. Halloween party held at the now dead Chase Park (only a coincidence) and confused and amused the standing room only crowd with a ridiculously pathetic pantomime.

Later, I joined about sixty other culture buffs at Clear Space for their bon voyage performance. The miserable tedium of domesticity seems to be the Christians prevailing motif. In white face, Topo has such elastic lucidity of expression that when he is portraying a senile old man decked out in a red bathrobe relaxing in the Masters Chair, and is thinking of a reply to a query from Jimini, you can actually see the rheumatism jamming up the creaky cogs and coils of his brain. Topo is a good mimic. In my favorite bit, he answers the phone responding to an invitation to "A party?!! In Soho?!!!" in characterizations that reminded me of personalities as disparate as Don Adams and Steve Mass. Later, he portrays an insect buzzing around the room by blowing on a kazoo and dies a lingering ham's death after being sprayed with insect repellent, by Jimini.



Jimini & Topo

The duo was accompanied by an apt, but un-named violinist and the ennuet of her string scratching would be highly appropriate to have playing in the background while reading a Marilyn French novel.

Jimini's outstanding solo stint was written about so incomparably by Griselda Steiner in an article she submitted to us that at this juncture I'm turning over the column to her.

"I almost dropped dead laughing when Jimini came on stage wearing a bouffant blond wig with hoop earrings and sunglasses, flowered mini-skirt, high clogs, and carrying a big plastic shopping bag. A glamorized bag lady off on a picnic alone, she personified the "private" me-useing little grooming habits that only I know make me happy. As she spreads her goodies on a table cloth she eats junk food with absurd relish while she spreads lotion all over her body in sensual delight. In between arranging napkins on the top of soda cans and spraying flies with a large decanter, she finds time to pose like a sex pot in the sun."

I had attended the Christians' wedding last summer which was held on the same day Prince Charles presumably relieved Lady Di of her virginity. Jimini seemed steady and pleased, but nervous, in her tux and tails. Topo was resplendent, beaming rapturously in his flourishing white bridal gown and veil. All of the bridesmaids (led by Sir Rodney Sir) were in drag, but were much more tastefully attired than the things one sees mincing out of the Saint at 4 in the a.m. The nuptials were ruefully covered by channel 7 news and a gala reception was held for the now legal lovers at Club 57.

THE EXORCISM OF CHERYL UNIVERSITY OF THE STREETS

(Cher-yl) is defined by the More Fire production people as a "submissive & self-defeating voice that speaks from speaks from our inner recesses." The Cheryl's theme is the anguish of unrequited love and the futility of attempting to attain security in a relationship. Whether the character is the housewife who marries young, as portrayed by Dorothy Cantwell, (who also doubles as the mental M.D. Dr Deadheart), or the svelt Old Country career woman, (Marianne Willtorp), or even the man distaining lesbo (Robin Epstein), every relationship ends in disaster: just like yours do.

The Cheryl's open as little girls who are all three best friends. Cantwell is especially efficacious as a pre-pubescent, sitting on the floor ensconced in toys, playing "house." The girls are constantly on the phone gossiping about boys and new clothes. Time passes. Now in their late teens the trio are out on the beach soaking up some rays when some macho stiff comes along and over Marianne and Robin's vehement protests, Dorothy goes off to the suburbs to be tortured by an oblivious and cruel husband and snotty kid who distain her extensive labours in the kitchen.



Dorothy, on the verge of valium addiction, is beoned back to Manhattan by her willowy bond girlhood chum Marianne, who has gone on to become a Network talk show host. The two women are reunited with Robin who is locked in the quagmire of obsequiously catering to her bull dyke lover who is giving her much the same treatment that Dorothy received from her sports-fan husband. The three chums meet in a Chelsea bar, find new beaus and the cycle begins again.

In "Junk Love," the More Fire production people deal again with the foibles of sexual entanglement. The solutions are elusive, (I'll never figure them out), but if anyone is ever going to find a way for two people to attain romantic stability, my money (food stamps) is on Dorothy Cantwell and company.



Maria Pessino

BLACK & BLUE THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY

This one is my contribution to this issue's Ghetto Culture motif. Reinaldo Povod's first play started out as a sixteen page poem which later appeared, honed into theatrical form, as "Cries and Shouts," which was also an apt name for it, because with the of the ubiquitous poverty and slimey decay of our own Lower East Side engulfing them, the characters scream, rant, rationalize and rage, as smothering paroxysms of overpowering anguish takes full possession of them.

Paul Ben-Victor is Joey, a role he originated at the Nuyorican Poets Theater. He is agreeable looking, for a wail roaming around the desolation of Avenue C, and is casually befriended by Ooh Ah, (Erick Kohner) whose curiosity is piqued by the doll Joey carries. As an unctuous, "You don't know these streets like I do man, you got alot to learn, sucker." Puerto Rican, Kohner provides most of the much needed comic respite.

Maria Pessino is the plays femme fatale. She dwells with her lesbian lover, the very tough Monica (Drunell Gross) who can be seen holding a blade to Joey's throat. All of the other characters

are vying for the attentions of Pessino's mini skirted, leggy and understandably provocative Allegra. This common lusty objective makes for a character and culture revealing crisis that eventually forces the most vociferous eruption I've seen in the theater in the last few months.

Keep an eye peeled for Irina Brooke, whom I saw at the 78th St. Theatre Lab last spring in Meir Ribalow's "Irish Coffe." This tawdy scenario, set in contemporary England, deals with an incestuous brother and sister who move in with a worm of a post office worker. The pair rob, pillage, kill, and of course, philosophize: eventually they persuade their timid host to join them in their debauchery. Marilyn Stasio of the Post was so smitten with Brooke that she gushed "Without raising her honeyed voice or cracking her lovely face, she creates a forceful characterization of the seductive beauty of danger. We must see more of her." Presumably, Stasio wants to see Brooke in something X rated, which could probably be arranged, the scruples of thesians being what they are, if someone put up enough dough.

Latter day Pavlova Louise Meshekoff has been piroetting her way through town in concerts with the Room To Move dance company and is slated to appear with the Felice Lesser aggregation soon at Carnegie Hall.

Ian McColl's West Beth Theatre threw a birthday bash recently to celebrate five years of Promethean programming. In the last year alone I've seen such unforgettable acts there as Linda Sibio's "Ha Ha New Wave," Jackie Curtis in "Tyrone X" and the Perils. McColl's major opus "Plastic People" is currently knocking them dead at the West Beth and is a multimedia extravaganza not to be missed.

The most elaborate press packet I received last month was from Barbara Shaw to come and see something called "Theater of the Heart." Their promo promised to take one "beyond intellect, beyond psychology, and beyond even theater itself...and leave you, at the show's end, in tears." Awfully egregious stuff, eh? It got worse. The show's co-producer Pascal Kaplan, a Harvard Ph.D. who is professor of Consciousness Studies at John F. Kennedy University says "They are tears of joy. Call it expanded consciousness, call it divine energy, call it love - there is a new sensitivity being born in our country."

How an imbecile like this guy can muster the budget to nab Francine Tacker, from "Paper Chase" and take this bldge on a cross-country tour while so many of the far more talented intellects I've mentioned are scrapping to get by, proves the veracity of our former peanut-popping president's statement that "Life is not fair."

LOOKS LIKE:
"This drama speaks for me."



DARYL-ANN SAUNDERS

EYE contact....

Dear Editors:

I just want to praise and congratulate you on your fine rag, the *East Village Eye*. I've been down in New Orleans last couple of years and there was this one newsstand that got a scattering of N.Y. press once in a while. So I've been reading it down there for a while, and now I'm in a hotel on E. 23rd St. and I picked it up along with current issues of the *Soho News* and the *Village Voice*. (I'm from the small upstate town of Elmira, noted for its large prison and the manufacture of fire hydrants, and I remember when I was a kid my father bringing in a copy of the *Voice*, dropping it with a thud on the table — I'd always read the *Sporting News* up until then, so one week I was reading about Harmon Killebrew's home run chase and the next week; fist-fucking — the *Voice* was pretty much the only paper in our sleepy, peaceful and serene little town where one could read about fist-fucking.) Anyway, your writers are vastly superior to both the *Soho News* and the *Voice*, and your summer issue with all its potent shots and slams made that broad's article in the *Voice* about taking a cross-country bus trip look like the kind of profusive slop that makes first-year creative writing teachers want to quit.

Your rag has a nice look to it, and it's about the only paper these days that doesn't have something good to say about that doddering old bastard who is our president — that photo borrowed from *Screw* of Reagan's head over an asshole was a real coup, the finest piece of journalism I've seen in a long time and sums up all my constructive political opinions on the matter. That's what our country needs more of!

None of this blathering political intellectualism of the *Voice*; those folks

who can make an article on a championship heavyweight fight a terrible trauma and ordeal to read — your writing beats out the *Voice* like a hot knife through Crisco. They're just a bunch of yammering over-educated fools. They couldn't deliver a cheap shot if their lives depended on it. They're weaklings. I didn't see the word "sensibilities" used once in the *Eye*. And none of the ridiculously modeled art-work of the *Soho News*, none of that gutless fashion drivel so popular over there. On the other hand your doctored artwork is great stuff, the *Soho News* is ever so sophisticated. Your articles on politics are freewheeling and loaded with shots and slams and escapes the benign political-radical product that stifles papers from the *Guardian* to the *Voice*. And one of the reasons your rag is better than *N.Y. Rocker* and stuff like that is that you don't devote the whole issue to interviewing bands and music personalities. So you avoid that deadly pall that hangs over *Trouser Press*. I'm tired of reading nothing but interviews with up-and-coming bands all the time, all the multiple-choice questions and answers. It's only good when the groups start insulting each other.

Too bad you couldn't come out a bit more frequently, like bi-weekly or something. There's no other rag I can think of that's anything like the *Eye*. Most underground stuff is either predictably music or politics, pretty easily categorized and orthodox stuff really. Your range, your freedom, the rabidness of your writing is pretty amazing. Most papers are more than willing and ready to drop their pants and bend over for potential advertisers.

My sincerest prayers are behind you guys.

Jack Stevenson

Dear Sybil Walker

Really liked your interview with Paul Simon. I got soaked right in and it's a piece I'll enjoy reading again and again. He's right, you are pretty smart. The whole summer issue has been fun and full of info, ideas . . . inspirational. Hey!

Thanks, you!

Elizabeth Tobier

P.S.

Just read the Cookie Mueller andurray! Record time I think. A few spins around the room.

Hey Richard:

I think you did a great job on the interview. It was one of the few that I didn't say after I read it: "What?! I never said that!" I said it all.

The paste up guy is rather retarded, however. Was he on heroin?

If you see that cute little Daryl-Ann tell her I think the picture is terrific. I almost look decent.

Best to you and keep up the good VORK.

Penelope Spheris

P.S.

I still hate New York. I'm having T-shirts made up.

The Sicilian Americans

The Sicilian Americans believe in the same American Father's Respect and Love. Also the same Father's House as Americans.

Sicilian Americans expect the same belief with Italian Americans and other Americans as they do.

Sicilian Americans also believe in the same equal rights as Americans. To avoid a society conflict, lets all believe as Sicilian Americans do.

Sincerely yours,
Sicilian Americans

Dear Editor:

As ceremonial opulence grows in our nation's capital, and the budget for just about everything else shrinks away, I would like to make a proposal which I feel may keep all parties contented and funded.

The traditional Republican approach has been to cut the government's share of the cost of social programs and to hope that while they commit the Federal monies to arms and to tobacco subsidies, some caring, humane, robber-barons will throw part of their wealth to our country's disadvantaged citizens and make up the difference.

What I propose is to reverse this tactic. Since human nature is basically selfish and self-serving why not take advantage of these traits instead of fighting them? The federal purse should act as our collective and mandatory conscience by shouldering the cost of our responsibility to the downtrodden and the shiftless. Then we should appeal to the American business community for donations to the Pentagon. What right minded tycoon would refuse his total financial support to the institution which upholds his interests in the cruel sea of Foreign Affairs? This plan would make money available for everything, the budget might be balanced and we could all live happily ever after.

F.F

Dear Julie Burchill

I read your reply to Iman Labebedi's questions in the summer issue of *East Village Eye*. I've been wondering all this time who reads your writing and thinks it's anymore than mischievous polemical tirades?

You feign some illusion as a soothinger. But in effect you're simply developing your career as an infant terrible journalist. You profess to be a communist, and say, "In Russia . . . everyone is told the truth about himself." Does that mean the Communist women are lied to? Come off it . . . Do you think life in the Urals is more honest? You say your parents are "Communists and therefore intelligert" (pretty odd definition of intellect I'd say, Julie). Julie, you bought it all — your parents' communist ideology, the parental acceptance, you even got married. English youth rebel for a while but eventually settle down, copy the attitudes of their parents; of their political beliefs. It really matters to you what your parents think, whether they accept you or not.

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BAN THE BIBLE!

EAST VILLAGE EYE JANUARY 1982

Anyone who has kept up with the media for the last several years is well aware of the civil suits and scandals that have ensued as a result of the book banning that has scourged the nations libraries. Not content with merely putting a halt to 'Brooke Sheild's filthy exhibitionism and Kojak's crushing karate blows, the likes of Jerry Falwell and the Coalition for Better Television are trying to purge the smut by amoral authors such as Twain, Dickens, Burroughs, Vidal, Vonnegut, Poe, Salinger and Shakespeare that has sullied puerile minds.

While it's true that these writers do have their ribald moments, its also true that the only book most of the members of the Moral Majority have ever attempted to read has also, (no news to anyone I'm sure,) been used to rationalize more blood shed than *Mein Kampf*, despite the Herculean efforts of that author.

Jehovah is the Bible's main protagonist and He regularly embarks upon campaigns of depraved butchery that no mere mortal could ever hope to rival. One gets the feeling that the genuflections Jehovah's supporting cast offer up is done for self-preservation. As Kierkegaard has noted, when Jehovah asked Abraham to slit his offspring's throat in homage to Divine megalomania, the Father of the Jews pauses only briefly to debate the morality of Jehovah's request. Then, just as the old man is about to oblige his liege, an angel comes fluttering down from the sky and prevents the fatal thrust. The sadism of this sorry episode seems analogous to the fake firing squad Dostoyevsky was tortured by in Siberia. But then, at that time Russia was still a Christian nation.

Then come the floods, the plagues, the crumbling walls...Mark Twain captured the divine attitude toward mortals in his short story, (now banned in the Bible Belt and parts of Long Island), the *Mysterious Stranger*. The Stranger, is an angel who comes to earth to know out with two Austrian boys, and for their edification and amusement constructs miniature cities populated by four-inch citizens. After the diminutive humans painstakingly construct edifices of their own, the angle playfully destroys the buildings and kills the inhabitants in much the same way Jehovah wipes out cities with his fires, rivers of blood, and earthquakes.

Jehovah's moral capriciousness finally disillusioned even the fanatically quixotic and admiring Jesus, ("Father, why hast thou forsaken me?")

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Letter from the Editor

We started out working on a theme issue — "ghetto culture" — which worked to an extent, but things being what they are, it took us a few months to get the Eye out, and the field of articles has filled out somewhat, so we'll take a cue from War and remember that "the world is a ghetto."

Because it is. It's nice to sit back and dream of leaving this dirty town, really get away from it all, you know, go to some exotic, balmy spot where a dollar goes a long way... well, a dollar does go a long way; however, if you follow it to some of these paradises, things may get a little grimy.

For example: At the moment the Hopi Indians are confronting a utility company's plan to build a geothermal energy plant on sacred Hopi land in the brilliant Arizona desert. Interestingly, U.S. authorities say they cannot accept the legitimacy of the holy sites because their exact locations are a secret. (Why U.S. authorities must know the intimate details of another nation's land and culture is another matter, but it's a good bet that the consideration being given falls purely in the realm of power politics, rather than that of law or [heh] morality.) At any rate, the sulphurous hot water used to power the plant will make the area smell like rotten eggs.

You may not want to take the Marrakech Express at this time either, judging from Liza Bear's article on that region in this issue of the Eye, where King Hassan of Morocco is waging a



"The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in response to the Reagan Administration's budget cuts in the school lunch program, has proposed counting condiments such as catsup and relish as vegetables."—New York Times

bloody war in the Western Sahara to exert control over valuable phosphate deposits at the expense of the indigenous Sarawi people.

OK, OK, let's forgo the "cruise" to Europe as well. What does this have to do with our home anyway? we ask as we pack our belongings in preparation for the move from a too-expensive-for-the-middle-class neighborhood to one that's too-expensive-for-the-poor. Well, if nothing else it serves to remind us that unless we have enough power or money to stay where we are, we're being treated just like those Hopi, just like those Sarawi, just like our neighbors.

The world is a ghetto? Tell me about it. As one nigger of the world to another, we constitute a vast majority.

Let's show some solidarity, home boy.

Let's do some solidarity. Here's a tip: There are literally hundreds of empty buildings on the Lower East Side alone.

Many of these are suitable for home-steading, by people who can scrape up a couple of thousand dollars and commit a year's labor. As it happens, the Koch administration would rather sell these buildings on the open market, which is fine if you've got 20, 30 or 40 grand to bid with. If not, think fast!! You're dealing with financially dangerous characters!

It's hard to wrest these properties back from the city, but not impossible. Though even two grand isn't within the grasp of everyone, it's a start. And it's very important, because not only would housing be provided at a reasonable price, but the tenant, by owning the dwelling, is less dependent

upon the prevalent economic structure and is freer to think of his or her true needs than if forced to work for someone else for the privilege of staying in the same place each night.

Why are the Sarawi fighting (successfully) to stay in their homeland while New Yorkers shuffle pathetically from one ghetto to another?

Because the Sarawi take it seriously? Because antitank launchers are not available in New York City?

But in America we use the Constitutional process. President Reagan, commenting recently on the discrepancies in living conditions between regions, suggests citizens "vote with their feet."

To quote our favorite hip-hop host, "long as I can kick nine or ten bones outta his ass."

—LEONARD ABRAMS



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PUNK FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH: ON THE LIST AT A7

By CARLE VP GROOME

Friday night and the weather keeps clear enough for the stars to shine at six a.m., but that's Saturday morning and too soon anyway.

You've heard about speakeasys and after-hours joints, hold-in-the-wall deals where jazz musicians used to cut up their chops when the big gig was through, a situation where anyone could come up out of the audience and swing his axe on a number. They're still happening in odd spots but the new trend is to catch rising rock luminaries while they're still grubbing around in the punkiest clubs. And the best of times, the really *fun* events, are when a whole bill of bands gets off in someplace like A7 — as close to a basement rec. room in decor and yet have a cover charge. From a stage-dance floor area about the size of a studio apartment to the dinette space division at the bar, you can hit up any square of linoleum to acoustic ceiling tiles and call it your own. It may be a dive — but take the plunge.

Not having caught the first three bands (the tail end of one was so execrable that I took a walk in Tompkins Square for a toke) it was hard to tell if I walked in on a mood or brought one with me. Parked behind two J.A.P. divorcees talking about their alimony leech, I am sucking down the remnants of a brew when Nada comes on. Yeah, the spanish for 'nothing' should clue me as fast as their leader's German accent. Astrigent, serene rhythms with lots of instrumental breathing room brings to mind clearly, Can, Neu, or Kraan. But they do loosen up and get back to family business with rockin' boogie a la Muddy Waters and even bring up this gal Lisa (from the Shadows, I think), to belt out some hot mama blues.

After a couple more Chuck Berry covers and an encore of Stone's "Heart of Stone," I am listening to the J.A.P.'s chattering ("What's this band coming up?" "I think they're called Jewish Chinese." "Oh, Kosher-Suey!" "Ha-Ha-Ha!") when Nekron 99 come on — two oriental brothers, John on guitar and James on bass, and a caucasian drummer who crash with the impact of Ramones at a Pop demolition derby. But there's a rapport with the crowd. ("Well, here we are back at A7 for our umpteenth time." "You should play this one on the jukebox: it only costs a quarter and there's two songs on each side!") which John keeps up with an occasional "King" Carrasco run into the throng at the archway. They even bring up their photog sister for a tune and get down with guest artist Billy, who turns a slick pommade job with grease

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Interview with

JOAN JETT

By RICHARD FANTINA

Last year *Bad Reputation* established Joan Jett as, perhaps, rock's top female vocalist/guitarist. The newly released LP, *I Love Rock 'n Roll* by Joan Jett and her band, The Blackhearts (Gary Ryan, Lee Crystal & Ricky Byrd) proves that she'll be around for a long time to come. This girl has impeccable taste. Look at the cover tunes — "Bits and Pieces," "Crimson and Clover," (and who would have thought that she could pull off "Little Drummer Boy"?). And originals like "Be Straight," "Run Away" and "Victim of Circumstance" fall right into that pure rock tradition.

It's true that she's had a lot of assistance from various music biz people in New York (the acknowledgments on the sleeve list some of the biggest bananas around) but the most important influence on her development has been her manager, veteran songwriter Kenny Laguna. Earlier in her career, she had a manager who, if anything, cramped her style. Laguna's guidance has proved to be ultimately constructive. Joan credits him with choosing "the best old songs" and she vindicates his picks by fleshing them out into instant classics.

The following interview was taped before the release of her new album.

RF: Are you from L.A. originally?

JJ: Not originally. I was born in Philadelphia. But I've lived all over the place. I was an army brat — lived in Pittsburgh, Erie, Rockville, Maryland, then L.A. And now I'm a New Yorker and I'm quite happy here.

RF: So you founded the Runaways?

JJ: Well, I was one of the founding members of the Runaways. OK, I'll tell you what happened. I wanted to form an all-girl band after seeing Suzi Quatro in 1975. And I thought, "Oh my God! I'm not a weirdo. I'm not the only one that wants to do this kind of thing. Then I thought it would really be cool if you had four or five girls up there playing this hard rock 'n roll. It would blow people away. That's where I got the idea to do an all-girl band. And this friend of mine was a song-writer and Kim Fowley was her publisher. And she told him about me and he called me up and he's asking me if I'd ever been in bands before and did I have any demo tapes. And I was fifteen and I had no idea of what a demo tape even was. And I was confused and so after a conversation that was very nerve-racking, for me anyway, I thought that was the end of it. A couple of days later Kim Fowley ran into Sandy West who became the drummer of the Runaways and they talked and Sandy told him she was a drummer and she wanted to form an all-girl band — which is the same thing I'd said to Kim, and Sandy and I didn't even know each other at the time. So Kim called me up and gave me Sandy's phone number. So I took a bus down to Huntington Beach and met Sandy and we got along really well — we hit it off right away like best friends. So we started jamming and we called Kim up and said, "Listen." And we put the phone down and with just guitar and drums we played some Chuck Berry type songs and he liked the way it sounded and that was the beginning of the Runaways.

RF: When did you break up?

JJ: We broke up in January or February of '79. I didn't do anything for a while. I was confused. I said, "What am I gonna do with myself now?" So my manager at the time asked me if I still wanted to be in music and I said, "Yeah, I do." So we went to a record company in Europe — Phonogram — and they were into me doing a solo single. So I went over there and I called up Steve Jones and Paul Cook from the Sex Pistols because I'd met them several times when the Runaways had been on tour in England. And I said, "Do you wanna play on a couple of songs with me and produce the



Confessions of a Blackheart

songs?" And they said, "Yeah, sure." So we did a song called, "Don't Abuse Me," "I Love Rock 'n Roll," and "You Don't Own Me." Two of them wound up on the *Bad Reputation* album. "I Love Rock 'n Roll" came out as a single in Europe but we killed it right away because they weren't promoting it right so instead of having a flop single we just killed it.

After that I came back to L.A. and I knew this band the Germs. And a couple of them had been fans of the Runaways and they were just about to do their first album — which turned out to be their only one and they asked me to produce it. So I thought it would be a lot of fun so I did it.

RF: What was it like working with Darby?

JJ: It was great! I knew Darby as a friend. A lot of other people didn't really know him. He was *quite* wild. I lived right across from the Whiskey and Darby used to go over and light these big trash cans on fire — the ones that are on wheels! I lived on a hill and straight down is the West Hollywood Police Station. And Darby would light these things on fire and roll 'em down the hill. Yeah, he was pretty wild. Had some crazy parties.

I get sad when I think that Darby Crash is dead.

Anyway, after I did the Germs album ... When the Runaways were still together, we were offered to do a movie called *We're All Crazy Now*, loosely based on the Runaways, about an all-girl band on the road. But we decided not to do it because it was too low-budget or something. But after the band broke up I had nothing to do, so I wanted to do the

around 14 songs for the album, including b-sides. The European record company wanted a different line up for the album than the English record company. The English label did not want "Do You Wanna Touch" on the album because Gary Glitter had a big hit with it in 1973. And they were being really weird about it. And I thought they were being nuts. So they didn't put that song on their Joan Jett album. They put "Hanky Panky" on instead. But the European album has the same lineup as the American one. Then the English company started exporting their album to the States and it wasn't the lineup we wanted and we were really angry about it, so we decided to kill the imports. I mean kids were buying it for \$12, or something like that.

So this friend of ours suggested that we get some money together and print up the album ourselves and put it out on our own label. So we printed up 5,000 on the Blackheart label and they went right away. Gone. We just couldn't keep up with the demand. We couldn't get the album to enough places. There were kids writing from all over saying, "We can't get the album." Another reason we put it out on our label was no one here would touch the record. We had friends calling up these record companies saying, "Do me a favor and listen to this album." And they all said, "No. If it's Joan Jett we won't even put it on the turntable."

RF: Why do you think that was?

JJ: I don't know. It must have had something to do with a Runaways backlash. I don't know.

RF: Do you think you had some image problems because of the Runaways?

JJ: Oh yeah. Definitely. It had to be that. Record companies are all weird anyway. That's just their own stupidity, is what it is. That's blatant stupidity. I mean saying "We won't even listen to it if it's Joan Jett." That's babyish bullshit. Finally, Neil Bogart from Boardwalk Records heard the album and said, "I love it. I want it. I'm putting it out." And he did. Right away. So now we're with Boardwalk Records.

RF: You have kind of a rebellious image. Are you really a rebel and a misfit?

JJ: I don't think I'm a misfit. And I don't really consider myself rebellious either although a lot of people think that. As far as I'm concerned smoking, swearing and drinking isn't rebellious. Well, maybe it is the more I think about it.

RF: What would you have done if it weren't for Rock 'n Roll?

JJ: I can't imagine. I can't see myself doing anything else since I've been doing it since I was fifteen. I can't conceive of doing anything else.

RF: Were you a tomboy as a kid?

JJ: I was a real tomboy. Never played with Barbie dolls. Always played with G.I. Joe. I always loved baseball. I'm still a big Baltimore Orioles fan.

RF: Are you ever gonna grow up?

JJ: I'm never gonna grow up. I have problems with people calling me a woman. I can't stand that. I'm a girl. This guy introduced me once as a "young lady" and I said, "What do you mean? Lady! I'm a girl. I can't stand 'woman' and 'lady.' It has nothing to do with age. I don't know — I just don't feel like a woman. Call me a girl or just one of the guys but don't call me a woman.

RF: Are you a feminist?

JJ: I'm not a feminist in the traditional sign-carrying way. I don't really think about it a lot. I'm all for equality though. But as far as I'm concerned I'm going to do whatever the fuck I want to do and that's that. If someone doesn't like it that's too bad.

movie. I was still interested in doing it. So they had me do the movie and the band was called Joan Jett and the Runaways.

RF: Did you have a working band at the time?

JJ: No. It was just me.

RF: Who backed you up in the film?

JJ: They hired actresses to be the rest of the band. Artie Johnson and Peter Noone played our managers. And so we did that movie but it was never finished — it was a low-budget B-type film. But that's where I met Kenny Laguna and Ritchie Cordell because they flew out from New York to L.A. to help me do the soundtrack for the movie. And that's where we met and we became really good friends right off. And we were writing songs for the film and we decided to keep one of the songs from the movie for ourselves because we liked it too much to give away.

RF: Which one?

JJ: "You Don't Know What You've Got."

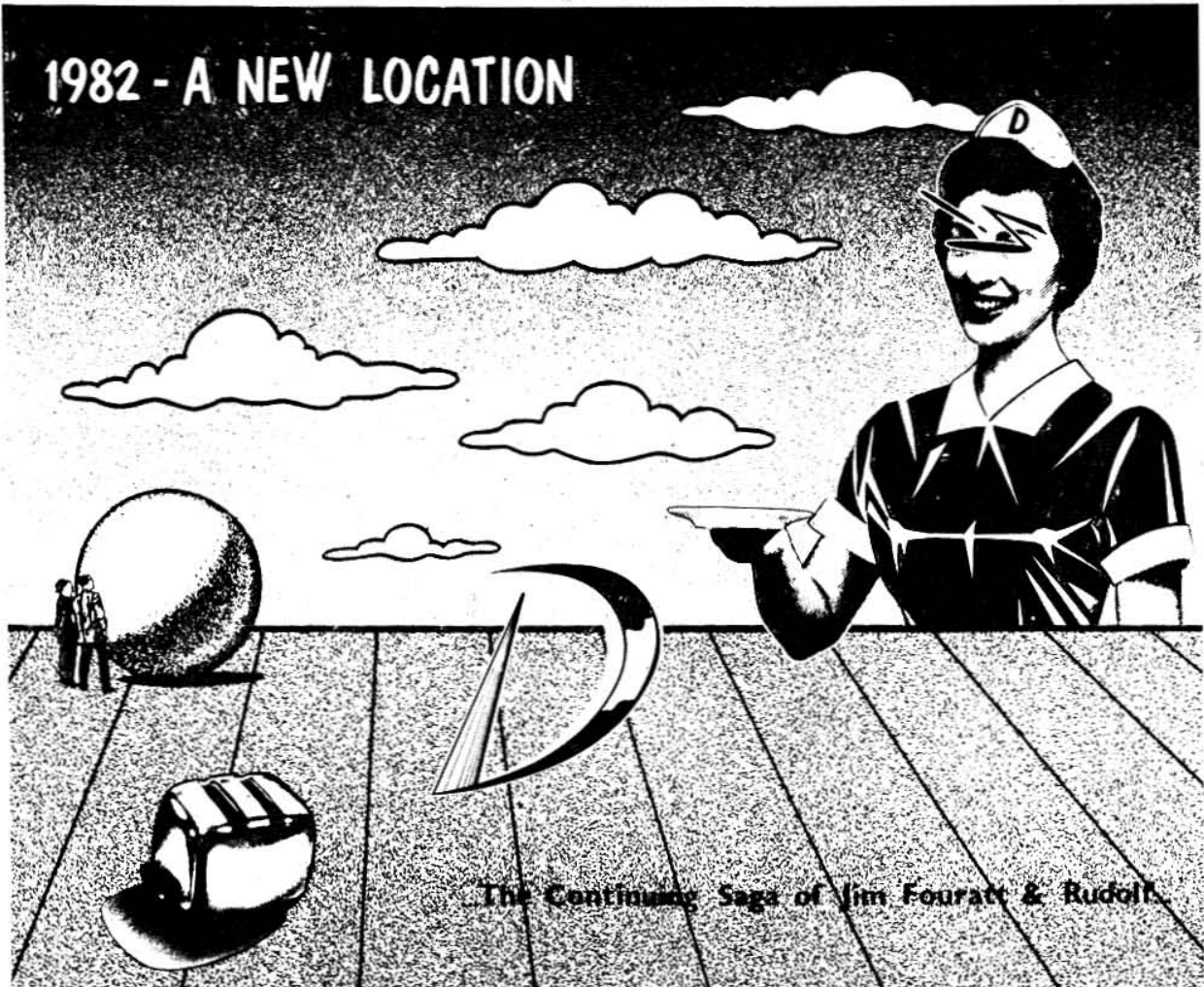
RF: Where did that song "Make Believe" come from?

JJ: That was an old, old single that Tony Orlando did years and years ago. When it was released it went straight to number 14 and then the record folded or something like that. So that was like our idea for a hit single but it never happened. It was never released as a single here.

RF: When was the album released?

JJ: May, 1980 in Europe. It wasn't released here officially until around four or five months ago. It's been just crazy what this album has done. It's hard to explain the whole story. See, we cut

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Malaria

continued from page 7

Bettina: This one song because when we saw this happening on the street with the police... and so we had to do it in one song.

EYE: I heard someone in the audience say "I wonder when the storm troopers are coming?"

Bettina: America's got storm troopers too.

EYE: Yes, that's what people wonder at when German bands come over.

Bettina: O.Ja. You know what the DJ who announced us in Philadelphia said? "Oh give them a hand, they are great and they come extra for you from Berlin and say to them 'Heil Hitler!'" And he didn't mean anything. He did not do it to hurt us. He was just very enthusiastic and he thought we would love it.

Gudrun: You have too many comics.

EYE: Eh?

Gudrun: Watch too much television.

EYE: Oh, I see.

Laura: I think things are changing. This generation of people does not think like that anymore.

Bettina: One reason Americans are thinking about this so much is that because it's really like that here now. Like Germany in the thirties. Whereas Germany is now I think, the most democratic country in the world. And in New York it's different too. Not so much like Philadelphia. Even in Germany though they say we look very military.

EYE: Well, women are not supposed to play this kind of music.

Bettina: Not in Germany.

EYE: Not anywhere.

Christine: We're not the GoGo's I'll say that. Not that we don't like them, we're not like them.

Laura: I include that in my prayers every day. "Thank God that I was not born a GoGo."

EYE: Well, people expect that kind of blatant sexuality from women.

Bettina: Our music is very sexual. But you don't see it that obvious. Not like sexism or like is in fashion now. Or sing about sexual things. But I think music should be a little bit erotic or so.... We're not a group.

EYE: Oh, you're not?

Bettina: No it's a project. I mean Malaria is a project.

EYE: I thought it was a disease.

Bettina: No originally it was our cat. It was

and now it's not. Now it's not our cat anymore. No one has malaria now, they have a cure.

EYE: Quinine.

Bettina: What?

EYE: Gin and Tonics.

Bettina: Gin and tonic, ja. Malaria is not like it was before. I mean we don't... when we chose Malaria because we like the sound of the name a lot. We just thought it was sounding good and then we had a little cat that was called Malaria.

Bettina: And we had to give it away because we never had the time to look after it and it was always shitting on my bed.

Susanne: So we just took the name.

Bettina: We are a group and we are working really good together and we like each other and it's some kind of project that Gudrun and I did together because we were with a group before that was really democratic and everybody did what he wanted. And then we split up and Gudrun and I did not know what to do. We did not want to do normal rock group things... records. And then we thought now we do a project which is to make very much live concerts and just this year. Ad then do some other things and then maybe after a year start it again. Which has been not a personal affair. So we can give it to other people.

EYE: What else do you want to do?

Bettina: The next thing we really want to do, our dream or what we are thinking about is we want to do a movie and a real movie which goes in all the cinemas. Not an experimental one.

EYE: A standard commercial one?

Gudrun: But a very good commercial one in which we can act as we want to. Not as boys and girls but as people. Because everytime we do an interview people ask us about that.

EYE: Very revolutionary.

Bettina: No just the way things are. And then we want to do the music. Shall not be our music, just look for music we like to be in there. This is what we want but that's really far away. Meanwhile next year we do some videos and more records and not so many live gigs.

EYE: What other music do you like apart from your own? What influences do you think you have?

Bettina: What? Political?

EYE: No, musical.

Bettina: All kinds of music.

All: Yeah.

Bettina: I like a German group called Neu (New). Do you know them? It was from Dusseldorf. It does not exist anymore.

EYE: No.

Bettina: And then we like Brecht, Kurt Weill and then some Americans from the thirties, American film music like Frank Sinatra.

All: Frank Sinatra is one of them.

Bettina: What else do you like?

All: David Bowie.

Bettina: David Bowie is okay. Public Image I like.

Susanne: Ja, Ja — Japanese music. You don't know it? It's totally different from European music.

EYE: Like music from Noh or Kabuki theater.

Bettina: Ja, originally the traditional music is for drums. Like this: (she beats out a syncopated rhythm).

Christine: Early Miles Davis is good too.

EYE: I could tell you were influenced by jazz.

Bettina: Yes cool jazz I like. Oh yeah I like Charlie Parker...

EYE: I knew you were going to say that because it shows in your music.

Bettina: Yeah I like because when I first started playing saxophone I did not know anything about anybody who played and then afterwards I listened to him and I liked him when he was doing always the same three or four tunes or so. Again and again. I like that and then they always changed just a little. That was what I really liked.

EYE: Someone told me that in Berlin there is really not much of a rock and roll scene compared to here. That there are really few bands.

EYE: So you don't consider yourselves a rock and roll band?

Bettina: No?

EYE: But do you characterize yourselves at all?

Bettina: No, but what do you think?

Everybody: asks about that and we never know what to say.

EYE: It's difficult because it's so different. I don't really think it's dance music.

Gudrun: It is dance music.

EYE: You really think so?

Bettina: It's different dance time.

EYE: It's really difficult to dance to. I was standing up above the crowd at the Mudd Club looking...

Bettina: Yes, but you can dance very slowly.

EYE: Well, I really like the way you move on stage.

Gudrun: I can dance to it.

Bettina: Show them.

Gudrun: No.

Bettina: Because she has an American dance style.

Gudrun: Like this—throwing a lasso, like a cowboy.

Bettina: It was just like here, too... a lot of bands just started doing noise and then developed a little bit. That's how we started too.

EYE: Like all the bands on the No New York anthology...

Gudrun: Yeah, rock and roll is okay.

Bettina: Now we are going to try and be a little bit more like rock and roll.

EYE: They just had a noise music festival here in New York City two months ago, Glenn Branca and all those crazed guitarists.

All: We like Glenn Branca!

Bettina: I played with him at the SO 36. We were touring and he was there too. And Glenn Branca liked us so this makes us proud.

EYE: I saw Glenn Branca at a club here this summer called the Underground. It was a trial by ear.

Bettina: I like that. I really like his poster *Tonal Plexus*...

EYE: Do you know the Y Pants?

Bettina: We never saw them. We've only heard the records.

Laura: Very interesting... They played with Glenn, too. The main thing I noticed about the band that interested me the most the first time I saw them before I left New York which was that they create an atmosphere totally unlike any atmosphere created by another band I've seen. It was positive in a certain way, it's hard to explain... people were like drunk... not that they were but the music made them feel that way.

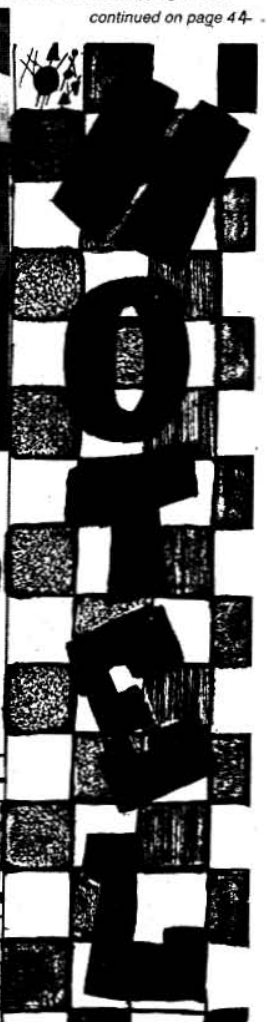
EYE: We saw Johnny Lydon at the Mudd Club the other night.

Malaria: "OH YEEEEAAHHH!"

B: Steve Mass came to me that night and said to me, "Do you want to meet Johnny Lydon?" And I said, "YES!!!" Then he said, "Okay, I going to introduce you." And then he said, "Hi John, this is Bettina." And John said, "Hi." And I said, "Hi." And that was all... And then I was introduced to John Cooper Clarke.

EYE: Johnny was being very nice. All these girls were going up to him and introducing themselves and he...

Laura: Keith Levine was at the Peppermint Lounge last night trying to beat this girl at *Asteroids*, but she was whipping his ass.



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JOE BOBER CAT

continued on page 44



SINGLES GOING STEADY

(and albums on the make)

By JMAN LABABEDI

From the magazine that just won't go away, the record column that just doesn't know what to do with itself. We were going to review lots and lots of Indies but lost the greater percentage of them; we were going to review only 45s but decided that would be a little silly. So now here is the new improved version. Will *Steady* ever be the same again? Don't know, don't know . . .

The Best of Blondie Blondie Chrysalis LP

I have yet to write a nice word about Debbie H. or the rest of the boys, so here's the exception that'll prove the rule. A platter that includes "Heart of Glass," "In the Flesh," an excellent remix of "Sunday Girl," "Call Me," "Rip Her To Shreds," and Blondie's greatest moment of all, Gary Valentine's "(I'm Always Touched By Your) Presence Dear," is going to be a classic (and a huge seller) almost instinctively I don't believe Blondie will ever hit the heights of *Plastic Letters* again, or be as popular as they were circa *Parallel Lines*. Debbie has both talent and looks, yet she lacks charm nowadays. *KooKoo* was a dreadfully weak platter. This simply marvellous party maker will remain an able reminder of how Debbie went from Princess of pop to another product for the American market. At its best, *The Best*, is the perfect rock fusion come pop believers album. End of story.

Love Is the Place Curtis Mayfield Boardwalk LP

Talking about the best, the best mainstream Top 40 American pop has been coming from our black population for donkey's years. Today Prince, Rick James, George Clinton et al. Smokey still keep the faith alive. *Love Is the Place* is an obsessively romantic sweet soul sound. For those of you whom (like me) are aware of Mayfield through his work with the Impressions and the *Super Fly* soundtrack, well, now is the time to get with it. From the lovely lush production (by Dino Fekaris) filled with strings and horns spiraling around Mayfield's sweet spornano to the soft funk of Mayfield's own song and Fekaris's Smokey influenced tracks, *Love Is the Place* is a (relatively) minor masterpiece. I play it right before I go to sleep or when I want to seduce a young lady, in return I have lovely dreams or a night to remember. What more can you ask for?

Gimme You Billy Burnette Columbia LP

And still on about the best . . . forget the Stray Cats, forget the Blasters, forget Dave Edmunds, this is the only completely successful nouveau rockabilly album I've yet to hear. Billy (son of Dorsey — nephew of Rocky Burnette) has transposed the rough and tumble of stand-up bass and heavy happy stix into the '80s. The problem with other Rockabilly bands is that they are a little too kind to influences, they sound just like what they are: revivalists. Billy has the looks, the songs, the voice, and the experience to use this genre and make stunningly adept rock and roll. This is American music played the way it was meant to be. Buy it before it disappears.

Something On My Mind Speedies Speedie Delivery

After the shortest break-up in history it's time for everyone to admit that they are the punk-pop band. A playful mix of the Ramones and the Buzzcocks. "Let Me Take Your Foto" was pleasant but nothing great. "Something On My Mind" is great. An Anglified vocal makes this crisp melodic song a true pop confection. Clem Burke's production is crystal clear, giving the band an early Blondie's aesthetic, and the lyrics, oh so naive, so young.

Little Drummer Boy Joan Jett Boardwalk

First reaction: What the fuck is this about?

Second reaction: It always was a great carol, with a built in beat. Later, much later: Walking down the street I start singing the damn thing to myself.

You wanna review? I love it. I love Joan Jett. When this song moves into its heavy metal finale it's delightful, even when straight it's great. Joan was always the most interesting Runaway and despite a wasteful sojourn with Cook and Jones, a solo career that's been alright but that's all, it's time (I want her to) to make that perfect album. The one that has just come out (which I haven't heard yet) might do the trick. I like the way Joan handles herself, I admire her for keeping her self-respect, and I'm gonna make this my Steadiest Single. Up and at them, JJ! Oh, and Merry Christmas.

Stop and Smell the Roses Ringo Starr Boardwalk LP

Deary, deary me. Ringo Starr has brought together Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Harry Nilsson, Steven Stills, and Ron Wood, for what is definitely the most thoroughly sterile platter I've ever heard. Nobody expects miracles from Starr, but we would at least hope for something with the cheerful irreverence and simply pure fun of *Ringo*. I can't listen to this album, I really can't. I reached Nilsson's "Drumming Is My Business" ("Drumming is my madness/drumming is my business/drumming is my pleasure/drumming makes me happy") and gave up in disgust. He should keep to acting. I know he's not much better at it, but anything's got to be an improvement on this.

I'm Not Selling Out/I'm Buying In Swamp Dogg Chrysalis LP

This is one of the best albums I've heard all year. Swamp Dogg (aka Jerry Williams Jr.) has been fighting our fight for a long time, so when he wants to sloganeer, shut up and listen — you might learn something. His piano is a boogie force, his vocals are sweetly sensational (and when he duets with Esther Phillips . . . it's a love thing). Side One has three immediate classics one after the other. On "It's Just a Little Time Left," he sets the world to rights, idealistically yet with so much truth ("We gotta take the chains/from the black man's brain"). The other two "Wine Women & Rock and Roll" and "The Love We Got Ain't Worth Two Dead Flies," are a welcome tongue-in-cheek put down of yer average rock star and a gorgeous, nay joyous goodbye to a love that never was. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. Buy this platter, you won't be sorry. I promise.

Tattoo You The Rolling Stones Rolling Stones Records LP

Watching the whole of the world as we know it fawning over Jagger's aging butt has been a nauseating experience. Watching some of my immediate peers write raves for this filler album (some tracks so old Mick Taylor is suing — according to *NME*) has simply amazed me. The whole Stones tour has been a mammoth fiasco, and added much credence to Ms. Burchill's comment from the last issue that "Americans are born 35 and die 35 . . . want to be with it but don't want to change." *Tattoo You* isn't as thoroughly rotten as *Emotional Rescue*, but it isn't anything special either. To be quite frank they stopped being special about a decade ago. Who cares about the oldest rock 'n roll band in the world?

In a Roman Mood Human Sexual Response Passport Records LP

A concept album: sex and dying in Rome circa 909 AD. HSR trick Devo at their own game with a martial beat and lousy use of the obvious possibilities in having four vocalists but it's an improvement on *Figure 14*. Two songs ("Andy Fell" and the beautiful scary fairy tale "Land of the Glass Pinecones") are among the best underground yankeisms around. But the album distances itself from the audience, coming off cold. I think HSR are worth watching but this isn't really worth the while.

Sunny Day Pigbag Y Import

I am bored to smithereens with funkiness. And "Sunny Day" is nowhere near as good as the iffy anyway "Papa's Got a Brand New Pigbag." Yeah, yeah, yeah, the horns pounce, yeah, yeah, yeah, the drummer is tough and bouncy. There's still nothing to catch on to here. *It isn't even funky enough!* Come back Material (or even Mr. White/Chance) all is forgiven.

Cold Chills Parts I & II Hi Sheriffs of Blue

Here at *Steady* opinions are divided as to the worth of this single; the main consensus being that it blanches in comparison to Hi Sheriffs live presentation. It seems to have been inspired by that Japanese sci-fi flick, *Gargantu-Bee*. I haven't seen the band live yet this is . . . quite different. Give it a go.

Orchestre Modern Elodie Lauten Rockin' Horse Records EP

This will not do! Although the synth isn't used as a dirge machine, but successfully integrated into the music as a whole, and although Alan Vega produces and co-wrote one track here, and although some leeway must be given cuz Elodie is French, this is fake Patti Smith with a quasi-moderne veneer. I like the fact that Elodie likes sex, but this sorta stuff has been done time and time again, and the synth isn't a good enough excuse for another shot at it.

Don't Stop Billy Idol Chrysalis EP

I interviewed Billy for *Creem* a while back. He's nothing like the liggering part the press tend to portray him as. Unfortunately this really isn't much of a solo debut. "Dancing With Myself" is an excellent song, but the rest of the EP is crap. Stop, Billy, stop.

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The Glitterhouse
Medium Medium
Cachalot LP

In this year of great dance songs, Medium Medium's "So Hungry, So Angry" stands out and that's saying a lot. This cut alone is reason to own this record. There's also a good anti-tribute to the Guru Maharaj Ji. This band of Brits has a lot more depth than most of their New Romantic cronies. Caught them at the Mudd Club around a month ago and thought they were hot. Got this record and it convinced me.

Rodney on the ROQ
Various Artists
Posh Boy LP

DJ Rodney Bingenheimer has put together a good sampler of what's shakin on the coast. This is a compilation of a lot of L.A. (Black Flag, Circle Jerks, Agent Orange, U.X.A.) and San Francisco (the Nuns, David Microwave) bands. The best cut here, however, is New Yorker Christina's thoroughly jaded rendition of Peggy Lee's "Is That All There Is?"

Richard Fantina

Chant No. 1 (We don't need this pressure on)

Spandau Ballet
Chrysalis Import EP

I can't stand the spindless one's, but there's no getting away from it: this is a pretty good mainstream disco song. Beggar & Co. add much needed horns, the vocals are basically a chant so Hadley's singing isn't too annoying. Their latest is shit, so I think it was as much a matter of luck as anything else. The rhythm section is a trifle too weak, still if you want to find out what the New Romantics are all about, there's no better place to start than here.

Guitar Beat
The Raybeats
PVC LP

This is what Fire Engines' *Lubricate Your Living Room* claimed to be but wasn't; background music for active people. But I seldom find myself really listening to it — like their live presentation — my attention tends to wander. All the influences are present and correct, (the Ventures, the Shadows) and Pat Irwin is a spec multi-instrumentalist. However *Guitar Beat* is only professionalism for rock archivists. They'll get better, then we can rejoice with them, instead of watch them rejoicing.

Author! Author!
Scars
Stiff America EP

I've been listening to this a lot. Scars are a touching band, there's a naivete in their approach that gets to me. Bobby King's lyrics are as thoroughly romantic as Ferakis's, but his imagery sometimes works against him (all about oceans and autumns). The rest of Scars travel through Bowie towards Mike Chapman and Smokie (the Brit band of the early '70s) across punk, and straight into post-punk pop. I hope they don't lose their heart to the rock business. I hope they stay as sweet as they are.

Condition Red
Red Rockers
415 LP

Jim Marshall told me Lester Bangs said Red Rockers sound as though they've been locked in a cupboard with the Clash's first album for three years. Yeah, great isn't it? I can't take 'em seriously as young revolutionaries and they've got nothing much new to say. Listen to the first track and you've heard the album BUT I'd forgotten how much fun this kinda thing can be and there's a toughness behind them that's fab. Plus: compared to the Gun Club or Black Flag there politics are fine. Can't help, dig this platter to pieces.

Prince Charming
Adam & The Ants
Epic
See *Jungle etc.*
Row Wow Wow
RCA

Positive proof that the British are one silly, candy ass bunch of human beans who could never, ever produce something as great as rock 'n roll on their own and could never have come up with anyone as profound as a true maniac like Jerry Lee Lewis or Little Richard. For their point of view see the interview with Julie Burchill last issue.

James Marshall

more

Subway Devils/Read Your Face

Zanoni
Zanoni 100

"Subway Devils" is sort of ska-punk. Title is shouted over (and over) repeated riff. Mesmerizing, if you're eaten a couple of ludes. Nice production. Clean, rich texture, even before the break, when in comes echo-laden, slightly psychedelic guitar. It's so well crafted that what it lacks is not immediately obvious. Inspiration? "Read Your Face" is better, a paranoid's nightmare. Inexorable martial beat, with smart choppy guitars sandwiched in. Nice minor key shifts. Chilling, stark, harsh — and it moves.

—Warwick Seay

Ouch!
Ohio Players
Boardwalk

Then again, not all black music is that good. This is the sort of danceable quasi-MOR product that goes right through me. Reminds me why I didn't care for disco initially, the beat doesn't develop or waiver, the lyrics are the usual "Geddown an' do your thing" stuff. If I particularly enjoyed dancing, and if I was in a discotheque, and if I was drunk enough *alright*, but we are well past this sorta historic sound. I bet Gary Kemp loves it.

Steel Tips

Steel Tips
Phantom Plaything EP

My good friend Billy Altman produced some of the tracks here. Ummm... Although Steel Tips are stoically antifashionable, there's a thrust to this EP that is timeless in an early Pere Ubu manner. Especially "Bark Like a Dog" and "Ireland (Must Be Free)". These guys have been around for quite a while now so if you haven't checked them out down at your local flea pit, better get your skates on.

and finally

Blurt in Berlin

Blurt
Slash

"My mother was a friend of an enemy of the people/translate my tears/with this saxophone I thee shed/in the land of living dead/where it's better to be red/cherry red on a double bed/here because we are/we're here because we are/Bluuuurt..."

Ted Milton once said the difference between him and jazz was that jazz is cool and he's red hot. Red hot is exactly what he is. And this is as brilliant a variation of improv-jazz as anything John Lurie has come up with; this expuppeteer is an inherently political mad mad genius. And along with Swamp Dogg I'm going to make this my making album. Buy it at your own risk, there's so much forceful passion in these grooves you might find it disturbing. Or are you red hot as well?

Coup De Grace
Mink DeVille
Atlantic

All of Mink DeVille's albums are frustrating and this one's no exception. On stage, Willy DeVille is one of the most compelling white R&B performers I've ever seen, entering to the strains of "Harlem Nocturne" and really possessing the stage for the entire time he's on it. In the studio however, he can sound a lot like another Southside Johnny type hack.

One would figure with his move to Atlantic Records, the company that virtually invented the style of R&B pop that Willie worships, he'd finally make his killer LP, but such is not the case. With the exception of the usual two or three stand-out cuts ("The Power of A Woman's Love," and "You Better Move On" are the best here, and the only two didn't write), there seems to be an attempt to sound like Bruce Springsteen, especially the sax solos and overproduction of some cuts.

Maybe the problems here is that he spends too much time recording, and uses studios that sound too clean. He'd be better off recording live on a four-track in the old Atlantic office with mattresses against the windows (which is how Ruth Brown, Joe Turner and other Atlantic greats recorded their earliest and best sides). But then again maybe this formula will finally get him that ever elusive hit record, and you can't argue with a big royalty check. My recommendation is to see him live.

James Marshall

Collision Drive
Alan Vega
Celluloid LP

Alan Vega second "rockabilly" oriented solo LP, leaving behind the synthesized drone of Marty Rev's keyboards for a real Texas rock 'n roll (Mark Kuch, guitar; Sesu Coleman, bass; Larry Chaplan, drums).

While Alan's voice is still either a nervous twitch or a breathy pant and he'll never sound like he's been in enough juke joints for the tough, flat-out sound of Carl Perkins or Billy Lee Riley, he has come up with a really good rock 'n roll album, emphasis on rock 'n roll.

The rockers: "Magdalena," "Outlaw," "Raver," and a version of Gene Vincent's "Be Bop a Lula" are all upbeat with Mark Kuch's guitar owing a lot more to Ivy Rorschach than to Scotty Moore. Drummer Larry Chaplan does an excellent job of not overplaying — just a left hand smacking the snare. Also included is the new obligatory epic cut as in "Frankie Teardrop" and "Harlem." This one concerns a "Viet Vet" who, of course, can't find a job.

All in all, an excellent set that should please various factions: Suicide fans, rockabilies, club crowds, etc. Worth checking out.

James Marshall

Lipstick Killers
New York Dolls
Fuck 'Em If They Can't Take a Joke
Dictators
Half Alive
Suicide
ROIR Cassettes

The idea of releasing this fan oriented material on cassettes is a really good idea, and out of the seven ROIR cassettes so far, these three stand up to any LP's released all year.

Anyone who's ever seen the Dolls, especially in their prime (72-73), can attest to how badly produced their two LP's (especially the first) were. These early demo tapes with the original lineup (Billy Murcia on drums) captures the Dolls at their crudest and best, minus the various techniques producers Todd Rundgren and Shadow Morton use to attempt to tone the Dolls down. Especially fine are the versions of Sonny Boy Williamson's "Don't Start Me Talkin'" and Bo Diddley's "Pills" which conjure up memories of mid-sixties R&B grunge outfits like the Downliners Sect, the Pretty Things and the Butterfield Blues Band. Otis Reddings' "Don't Mess With Cupid" is given the Dolls all-out treatment, as well as a version of "Human Being" that cuts the one on their second LP to shreds.

Suicide have been around since the Dolls' days — slogging around, clearing out clubs in record time — but in the last two years they may have been, for better or worse, the most influential band since the Dolls themselves. Still, I find Suicide miles ahead of their electronic imitators. This tape consists of various studio outtakes from the last few years mixed in with tracks from super-rare Live in Belgium LP (which stands right up their with *Metallic K.O.* as an exercise in how much abuse one band can take from an audience). Compared to their toned down last LP, the stuff here sounds amazingly fresh and psychotic. Liner notes by Lester Bangs are an added bonus.

The Dictators tape was compiled from a few of their reunion gigs earlier this year. Present are two new Andy Sher-noff originals: "Loyola," and the classic "New York, New York." My main complaint here is that the Dics had tons of great unrecorded songs that would have been perfect for this set (some titles: "Tits To You," "16 Forever," "Fireman's Friend," "Too Much Fun," "She's A Dog," "Smash That Faggot's Head Against the Wall") but they were too lazy to work them up again for their infrequent gigs. While versions of "Two-Tub Man," "Young Fast & Scientific," etc. are all excellent, it would have been nice to have other originals in place of pale cover versions of Mott the Hoople's "Moon Upstairs," the Velvet's "What Goes On," and especially, the Stooges "Search 'n Destroy." All in all though, I can't bitch too much; the Dolls are (were) an incredible band and Handsome Dick's between song banter makes this one of my most-played items of the year. Liner notes here are by Richard Meltzer, still the best rock 'n roll writer that ever lived.

James Marshall



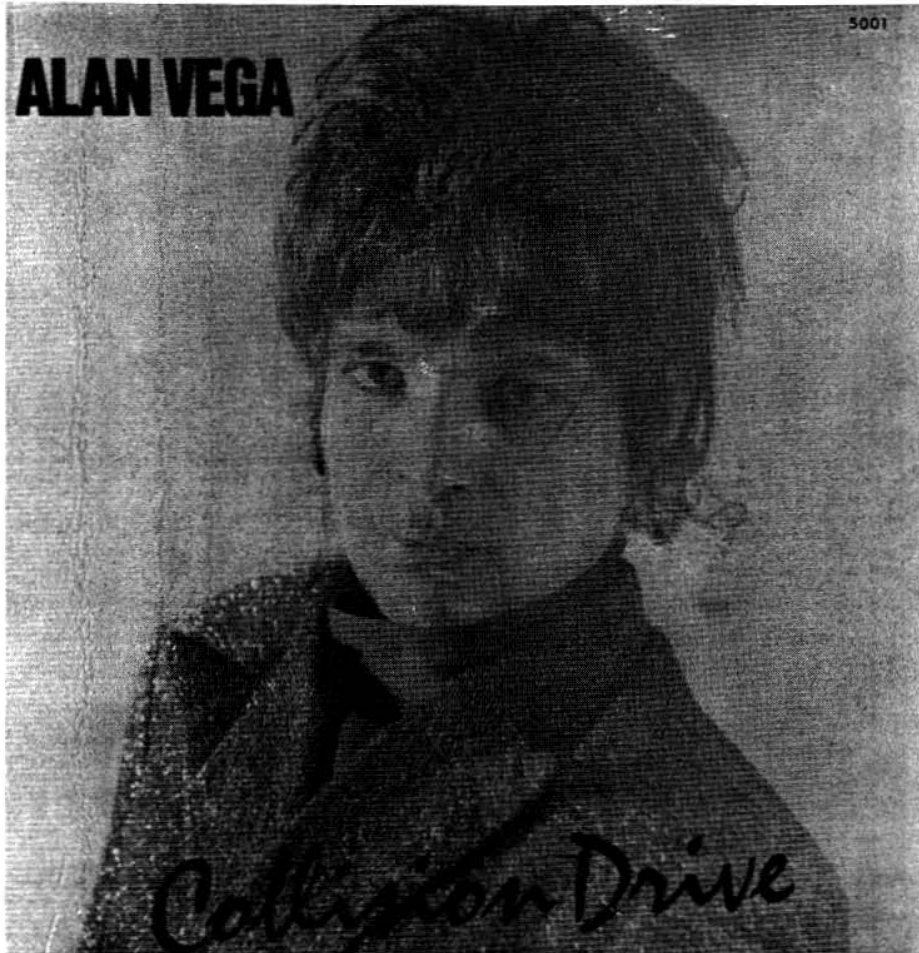
FIRST AMERICAN**CELLULOID****RELEASE**

A Ze Production

continued from page 18

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The Future Looks Bright Various Artists

Posh Boy Cassette

LA Punk — either you like it or you don't. I do so this sampler *The Future Looks Bright* is fine with me. Best cuts here are two by TSOL (True Sons of Liberty), "Peace Through Power" and "Abolish Government/Silent Majority." The ever-present Black Flag slam their way through four cuts in just over eight minutes. Plus interesting noises from Saccharine, Trust, Social Distortion, Minutemen, CH3, Descendents, Stains and Shattered Faith.

Shakin' That Rockabilly Fever

Billy Hancock

Solid Smoke

Rockabilly's gotten a bad name of late due to dozens of lame bands with foot high hair-dos and max-factor faces that can't match up to even Ricky Nelson's worst moments. But if it's the real thing you're looking for, this album is a good place to start. Billy Hancock is a middle-aged Virginian born hillbilly who's been playing his own hybrid of blues, R&B and hillbilly for near twenty years, and his first LP, from the company that re-issued the original Johnny Burnette Trio tracks is as good a rockabilly album as you're gonna find, British re-issue LP's (for the most part) included. Hancock works up blues standard's like Muddy Waters' "Can't Be Satisfied" and Dr. Ross' "Boogie Disease" into furious rock 'n roll, and gives the same treatment to more hillbilly oriented tunes like Hank Williams' "Rootie Tootie." Besides that, he's the best rockabilly/country balladeer to come along in ages, giving a suicidal reading of Conway Twitty's "Lonely blue Boy" and doing a bluesy rendition of the Delmore Brothers' "Trouble Ain't Nothin' But The Blues." My only complaint is the inclusion of two songs aimed at the younger rockabilly market that are downright embarrassing ("Rockabilly Fever" and "Redskin Rock 'n Roll"), but two clinkers out of fourteen isn't bad at all. Forget all those bands with 'cat' in their names, the real thing's here if you're lookin' for it.

Repercussion

dB's

Albion

The dB's are a strange of a band. A pop band with the ambitions of a pop band (hit singles) led by two singer/songwriters both with minor classics in their past (Chris Stamey's first Sneakers' EP and Peter Holsapple's first 45 "Big Black Truck") and an overload of ideas.

Their first LP which they produced with Alan Betrock was a ragged, charming collection of songs with at least one potential #1 hit: "Black and White," and lots of high points, it cried out for a real producer to make the whole thing move, make those songs jump out of the speakers like a great pop record should. Unfortunately on this, their second LP, former Carly Simon producer Steve Litt does more of a job of blanding the sound rather than hyping it up. The slightly ragged, disjointed edges of the band have been smoothed beyond recognition, giving the whole album a bit of a lethargic feel. It put me to sleep the first time I played it.

Still, there is some great stuff here, if you're the type to sit and listen: "Hap-penstance" is one of Chris Stamey's best songs ever, and two of Holsapple's tunes "Amplifier" and "Neverland" stand with any pop music I've heard in years.

I dunno, it's getting harder for me to write about new records. The state of the art production with it's multitude of tracks and Dolby's seem to drain a lot more than tape hiss out of music, and it simply makes records like this one hard to get excited about. If the dB's really want to make the killer pop classic they're more than capable of I suggest they get former Kinks/Who producer Shel Tomey out of retirement, or maybe have a go with their inspirational father Alex Chilton

James Marshall

etc...

The Bloods' soon-to-be-available single "Button Up" has been getting considerable air-play on WNEW-FM as part of their "Prisoners of Rock 'n Roll" series. Meg Griffin even played the song twice within ten minutes and sandwiched a James Brown tune in between — the ultimate tribute. WNEW wouldn't be such a bad station if they sent Scott Muni out to pasture; fired Dan Neer, and Pete Fornatele; let Vin Scelsa continue his show but forbid him to open his mouth; and keep Tim Monahan, the best and most unpretentious of the lot... Finally caught up with 3 Teens Kill 4, (featuring Brian Butterick) who've been around for awhile. Definitely one of the oddest, quirkiest bands we've ever seen. Using a variety of instruments and pre-recorded sounds they put on an enthralling show that's just impossible to describe. Seen 'em yourself. You won't be disappointed... Mykel Board's Art ("The Only Band in the World") has added Dale Ashmunn on guitar. They're funnier and more topical than ever. They've updated their "hit" "We're All Boat People," and do a medley that totally devastates everything from New Romantic to Reggae to Springsteen to Bowie to John Lydon. They do a version Bowie's "Fashion" substituting the words "Cash-in" and Kim does a great job on "Debbie Harry's Thighs" (sung to the tune of "Bette Davis Eyes"). Dale sings his own composition, a hilarious song entitled, "I'm a Fuckin Machine (if you know what I mean)"... Getting back to John Lydon, he's been popping up all over town — Studio 54 (!) to see Bow Wow Wow and the Mudd Club to catch Malaria. He and Keith Levine are also living here and are quite visible. Lydon, especially, is constantly being approached by women of all ages and he's uncharacteristically civil to them. Maybe he realizes what a god he is to many and, like Elvis before him, knows that you must be nice to your fans. Or perhaps he's just mellowed. Remember when Elvis died — Lydon's remark was "good riddance to bad rubbish"... The Women's One World (WOW) Festival wrapped up its second annual festival in October. Caught a fine new band, Hex Inverters at the Theatre for the New City during the fest. Despite the poor sound system you can tell this band has a lot of potential. We'll be hearing more from them... Tina L'hotsky, just back from France (where she was seen hanging out with Joe Strummer and Paul Simonon in a Paris nightclub), was the toast of the Deauville Film Festival (where her film *Breakdown* was shown). Tina's latest film *Stiletto*, directed by Melvie Arselian opened at the Bleecker Street Cinema recently to excellent notices... VKTMs, a San Francisco-based band, have a hot single out "100% White Girl" and should be coming to NYC real soon. Another good SF band is The Tenants, who also have a fine single which is hard to find here... *Germania-Alermania-Deutschemania* has struck NYC. A few instances of this are: the recent appearances by Kraftwerk, Malaria and Nina Hagen; the growing popularity of the band *Deutsche-Amerikanische Freundschaft*; the Fassbinder and Herzog retrospectives at the downtown Film Forum and the American premiere of Leni Reifensthal's classic *Tefeland*... Was (Not Was) cooked things up at the Mudd Club in October. This band is a loose conglomeration of renowned musicians from all over. Wayne Kramer's numbers were really hot... Deja vu the years change but the gossip remains the same dept: Peppermint Lounge interested in Interferon? Wonder how Jimbo rates it?... Giorgio



Ghouls revel at EVE's Halloween Party at Chase Park.

Gomelsky says Irving Plaza re-opening New Year's Eve for four days of benefits on behalf of the Polish Solidarity Movement with many big names to participate. It will culminate on Sunday, January 2, '82 with a movie by Andre Man of Iron Wajda, and a discussion on whether a union like Solidarity can be started in the States. For further information contact Giorgio at (212) 929-5182... *Soho News* Style section was set to hire Annie Flanders back for 50G per year but she blew it by spilling the beans to the current fashion editors? Huh? What?... The Eighth Street Playhouse continues its excellent midnight programming. The latest addition is the classic *Blood Feast* by the King of Gore, Herschel Gordon Lewis... John Spacely's *Thieves in the Night* continue to jam it up at A7. Recent guest stars have been Iggy Pop and Arthur Killer Kane. And a "Happy Birthday" to Spacely, who turns 30 this Tuesday (December 15)... Since Jim and Rudolf moved uptown (and then back down), the Underground hasn't been the same on Wednesday nights. But perhaps that's about to change. Brian Saltern has taken over on Wednesdays and is scheduling live acts. Dr. Buzzard's Savannah Band performs there as we go to press and there'll be more to come... Speaking of the Underground, one of the highlights of last summer there was Trash & Vaudeville's fashion show, which featured their unique rockabilly, new romantic and punk designs...

Neon Leon is just back from a very successful visit to Stockholm. Seems those blonde Scandinavians went wild over him and he's got himself a record deal. He's just released a hot 45, "Moving in the Right Direction" b/w "X-Rated," which is not available in the states yet. Leon's no fool — he's heading back to Sweden later this month... Teenage Furniture (not disturbed) are a good new pop-type band. Although they're still a little rough around the edges, given time, they could go a long way — especially with a lead singer like Andriette... Future Force, a local band that we haven't heard live yet, has a decent single "Hit Men"/"Reincarnation." Rico from the Pep is the percussionist and we're looking forward to seeing them... After losing manager Bob Spencer (who currently does the job for Miller x 3 & Sloan) due to "cash problems," soul supremos The Nitescapes are about to sign with Sire... Ex-Buzzcock Pete Shelly's underground classic "Homosapien" was banned by the BBC due to "gay overtones." Well, they'd know if anyone would... The Fire Engines were refused a visa to enter the U.S. this summer because one member has a record for assault. But expect them soon... Jim Fouratt came back from England very impressed with rumors of intrigues, office romances, and labor unrest) has it that the paper has just been sold again. This time to a giant corporation like RCA or someone like that (the rumors were still flying as we went to press)...

"Girl" is better than 99% of what gets played on what passes for New York radio. We'll be hearing a lot from Anne & band in '82. You can also catch her — plus Johnny Dynell, Lori Eastside, The Wallets, Art, Chris Kolhofer, Julia Morton, and Disco Dee on the David McDermott Show (an Eye production) on Paul Tschinkel's *Inner Tube* in late December or early January... *East Village Eye* also threw a benefit for Chase Park (only kidding, Chris) on the night before Halloween. The Bloods and Konk performed at the costume gala... Billy Idol, who's forming a new band, seems to be out every night of the week and hits at least 3 clubs before calling it quits — usually around 6:00 a.m. — before retiring to some outpost in the West Village. The people at his management company, Aucoin, will assure you that he's working very hard but with all that night-clubbing it's a little difficult to believe. We'll see... One of the finest, funnest new conglomerations in the city now is the 13-piece, all-woman band Pullsallama. Afro rhythms, comedy and some good, old-fashioned cheesecake. Great!... Steve Mass, New York's most notable social barometer, was given a birthday party recently at Club 57 by a group of grateful friends. The theme was stag. Skin flicks and porno motifs abounded and Steve seemed truly touched by the gesture of appreciation as he danced gaily with a mechanical toy duck. The Mudd Club continues to be the most resilient venue (hate that word) in town. The recent additions of Chris Gremsky (formerly of Club 57/Irving Plaza) and Suzan Crane as booking agents have helped restore the club to its former grandeur... The Peppermint Lounge celebrated its first anniversary by being closed by the Fire Department for overcrowding after two sardine-shows by Siouxsie & the Banshees in early November. (It reopened within a week.) Siouxsie and band, despite the overcrowding, put on one of the best shows seen in ages. Infinitely better than their last time out here. Also at the Pep every Sunday for a while was Bonaparte night. Bonaparte is probably the best distributor of imports in the country. They share offices with Stiff down in Soho and have a retail outlet on West 3rd Street in the West Village. If they don't have what you're looking for, no one does... So punk is dead, you say? Not so fast. Although they are not rich, trendy, intellectual, cerebral or chic, some New Yorkers are still playing the power-pop (or whatever you wanna call it) that some thought had gone the way of '77. The ever-observant Aaron Fuchs commented on some hardcore bands like Bad Brains and Undead. Hardcore keeps us honest. If you think this is nonsense you're as bad as your parents were when they scoffed at the Sex Pistols, the Rolling Stones or Elvis (depending on your age). We'll be covering more of the local hardcore scene in future issues. In the meantime if you want it from the source, get Jack Rabid's fanzine *Noise News*. Jack's a member of the band Even Worse and we haven't attended a hardcore event in the past year where we didn't see him. He can be reached at *Noise News*, c/o *Noise the Show*, 566 LaGuardia Place, 9th floor, NY, NY 10012. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope... Finally — the latest on the *Soho News* (whose history has been delightfully filled with rumors of intrigues, office romances, and labor unrest) has it that the paper has just been sold again. This time to a giant corporation like RCA or someone like that (the rumors were still flying as we went to press)...

continued from page 11

I'll skip over the Crusades and the Inquisition to avoid redundancy in favor of more modern examples. Every day the newspapers record confessions of killers who claim to have been exhorted by God or the Devil (the book's main antagonist) to commit their crimes; in the last few years we've had avid Bible readers David Berkowitz, David Chapman (both named for the giant-slaying, head-chopping, Bible hero), and Wendell Williams. On a wall in one of the abandoned houses in which he murdered children, Williams nailed a Bi-

ble opened to a chapter in *Jeremiah*. Circled was a paragraph spouting some gibberish about how even children will not be spared the Wrath of God when he returns.

Jehovah has promised, unfortunately for us, to return. The book concludes with pathologically dire predictions of the havoc He'll wreck on our wretched planet. This time, unlike the Flood, He warns, He'll not be so merciful. In Heaven's plan most of us will roast on the rocks of Hell, flesh bubbling, but still alive enough to suffer Joan of Arc-like pain for the Rest of Eternity!

By now it should be obvious to the perceptive reader that if protective parents intend to have *Franny and Zooey* removed from library shelves, the monumentally violent Bible has got to go too.

It wouldn't be fair just to single out the Scriptures however; Allah has a vampire like zest for blood that rivals even Jehovah's; and His prophet is a much tougher and more successful guy than Jesus ever had a chance of being. Most of Muhammed's life was spent galloping across the sands of Saudi Arabia sword ginting in his foe's eyes as he layed

seige to numerous cities, and personally by the might of his good arm, sent hundreds to decapitated oblivion. The Koran doesn't provide impressionable youth with a favorable example either.

I'd intended to wind up my ranting treatise by inviting all of you to a party staged at some down town club while I'd hoped we could Burn the Bible and Cook the Koran, after which we'd Baste the Bhaga Whad Gita.

But then I realized that the 45-magnum wrath of some God-emulating, semi-literate on my head would probably be my reward.

Average Normal



JIM FOURATT

By Iman Lababedi

If they were filming those old Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland "Let's put on a show" movies today, it would be "let's put on a rock show"; if they were filming it in New York City the problems of having the right "shop", whom to put on, how much to pay the support band, dealing with the bands' manager-record company, or — if the group isn't that big yet — whether an American band could draw a crowd, would probably blow away those ideas. What Mickey and Judy would have to do is either make a lot of friends who have shops of their own, or call *Modern Classix* and shout into the dictaphone "Heelp, how do you guys do it?"

A few hours later Jim Fouratt would get around to answering. His reply would be well worth heeding: with the possible exception of Steve Mass, nobody has done more for both Manhattan's night life and the groups that play in the clubs that make Manhattan's night life

That's not all. Hurrah! was the first club to give the support band decent money, and the first to bring Brit bands over (a normal practice today). On top of that Fouratt (and partner Rudolf) still didn't forget our local scene and American bands in general. The only club to go Hurrah one better was Fouratt's next, definably the best rock-disco ever made, Danceteria. Three floors ("to give people an alternative"), the first place to use video, and through luck and skill, a propensity for choosing bands just before the rest of the world caught on. Devo played Danceteria, so did X.

Naming no names, many of the bigger clubs in Manhattan are owned by the Mafia and run by people whose eyes never waiver from the big buck; in a business full of hucksters and con-men, Fouratt can run a club better, make more money, and retain his dignity simultaneously.

I met with Fouratt twice for this article, once in June and once last week. Despite an early wariness on his behalf ("if you're thinking of doing a hatchet job - forget it!"), I found him both loquacious and correct for the most part.

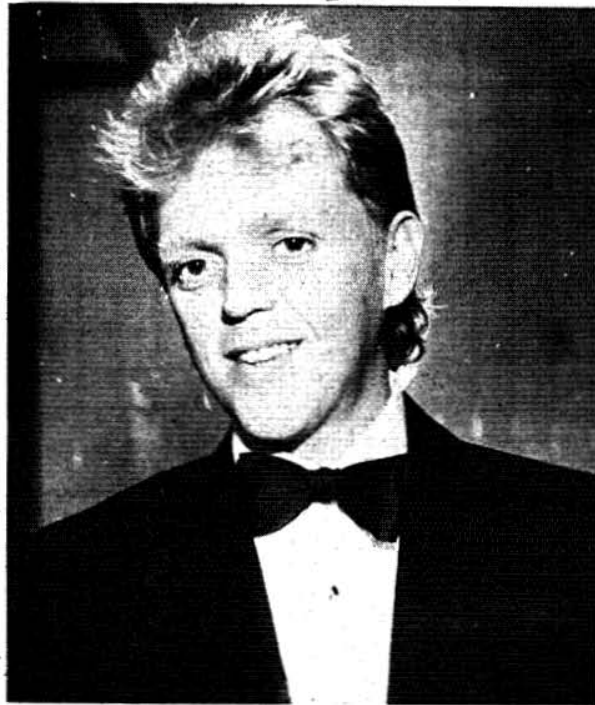
At the time of our first conversation *Modern Classix* series of concerts had just opened Wednesdays at the Underground with a performance by Spandau Ballet. I questioned the Underground's elitist door practices (if you don't look right you don't get in), and the New Romantics' peacock movement as a whole.

"We want these nights to be an event, and so we ask our customers to dress up for them. There are lots of clubs you can go to wearing whatever you like. Go to the Ritz. All we ask is that you make an effort." Isn't it expensive? "Not necessarily. If you have a little flair you can make nice clothes and it'll cost you hardly anything at all."

"That's the thing with Spandau. These are basically working class kids. Grovelling in misery is what the Government would like them to do. This is their way of getting back." So in a way it's political? "I wouldn't use those exact words, but yes."

You might think Fouratt is being a trifle hypocritical calling what he does political. But Fouratt is in his thirties ("say thirties"), and as a political activist during the 60's, working with the likes of Abbie Hoffman for the anti-war movement, and for gay liberation, he has done more for causes that I believe in than I have.

Fouratt began running away from his working class mid-Western family at the age of 15. His one ambition to be a film star ("a matinee idol") led him to Manhattan's Living Theatre. He worked around America's boondocks for the anti-war movement spreading the word; he



Daryl-Ann Staunton

became CBS's "House Hippie" for awhile in Los Angeles but gave up disillusioned. Then in the early 70's, he was put in jail.

"No, it had nothing to do with my being homosexual. This was the Nixon era, and I was involved in the right things at the wrong time." Officially he spent a year languishing in jail after being supposedly caught with the raw materials to make dynamite, a small quantity of heroin, and some pot. Doubly ridiculous because Fouratt neither smokes, nor drinks, not takes any drugs of any description. Not even coffee. The charges were finally thrown out of court when the police couldn't come up with the alleged substances.

"I learned a lot in jail. Talking with lifers and men waiting to be electrocuted. I learned that rhetoric is not the way you talk to people, being right is not the way you change people's minds. You have to talk with people on their own level, you can't talk down to them. The best way to change anybody's mind is to show them it's in their own interest." By the time Fouratt got out the dream was over and the 70's had begun.

As for so many of us, it was punk that gave Jim his next direction. "It seemed to me that only in music were the things that had to be said being said." I asked Jim if his being homosexual affected his work in any way.

"To a small degree. For example, we recently put on two bands at the Underground where members of both are homosexual. It was a sort of in-joke. Anyway, there was another band we were considering playing so I phoned around to try and find out whether any of the members were gay. Because none of them were, we didn't use them that night. But that's an exception. I've had girls strip in front of me and offer to sleep with me if I play their band which was quite embarrassing. I've had boys do the same."

"One of the things that upset me the most happened at Hurrah! On the dressing room wall there had been written about twenty snide comments about my being homosexual, and not one of my friends replied on my behalf. I don't mind people disliking me, but all they could find to complain about was that I was homosexual."

In a lighter vein, Jim admits that his next great ambition is to be Dick Cavett. "Have my own talk show, become a celebrity." As it happens, he is a bit of a celebrity with a regular guest appearance in Stephen Saban's *Soho News* column. "I need the press for my work, but I realize it is a double edged sword which sometimes makes my job more difficult. However, there are some journalists I keep informed of my every move."

After Danceteria was raided by the Police due to SLA violations, the closing was wrapped in controversy. Rumours abounded, and the vague odour of "set-up" (the Normal boys wanting to get out of the club in order to move to Peppermint Lounge called the police themselves — it's claimed). Jim pooh-poohs this: "What happened was this," he explained, "Danceteria was an after-hours club; we were raided at 12 p.m., very early in the night. Rudolf and I were arriving at the club at 12:15. The doorman warned us to leave immediately as the place was swarming with police so we drove round the corner and waited there. It is usual on such occasions for the employees to take the rap, and we had lawyers at the jail immediately. Everybody was free by 3:30 a.m. I waited at the station myself till they were released. Although the day of the raid was pay-day and the police confiscated the wages (which were on the premises) we paid all our employees in full. That's it." (In the interest of fair play, next issue the ex-employees will give their impressions of the night of the closing — Lababedi).

This seriously tarnished Jim Fouratt's image (warning anyway due to complaints of English group favouritism) as "small groups' little helper" and even today many people remain unconvinced of his sincerity. Personally, I don't believe it much matters. Fouratt is first and foremost a businessman — not a member of the Clash. It's the height of hypocrisy to single him out for special attention solely because a) he's successful, and b) he at least attempted to change the status quo.

At any rate, Jim and Rudolf became part of the Peppermint Lounge. They laid out the basic design for the club, and for awhile booked all the bands; that is until the owners began to have

ideas of their own. Didn't you have a contract? "Sure we had a contract." Then why didn't you sue? "Let's just say we were happy to get away."

Jim Fouratt works under several names. *Average Normal* is the booking agency, through which he places bands in other people's shops. *Modern Classix* is the name he uses for the concerts he and Rudolf give. *Danceteria* is the name he's saving for when he has an equity in the actual club.

After the Peppermint Lounge came the Wednesdays at the Underground. "We left on the best of terms," explains Jim, "we would have continued there, and we can still make events there." However, the offer of two nights a week at the newly re-opened Studio 54 proved too good an offer to refuse. Was the *Modern Classix* at Studio 54 an attempt to bridge one set of people with another?

"A failed attempt. On our nights it was obvious that our audience was the "Wednesday Crowd". We were selling tickets for \$10 a head and the owners wanted to raise it to \$14. Also for Studio we could only bring in a certain kind of group, groups who had popularity and a following." The few shows that were presented the groups included Nina Hagen ("a wonderful lady, and her first show since she had her baby"), Malaria, and Heaven 17.

"The thing I disliked about Studio 54 was that when you're using popular groups you get hassled by the record companies and managers. I don't like dealing with them." The impression one got from a distance was that Studio was using Jim as a safety valve. If the actual disco didn't take off, they'd be sure of an audience on his days. Then when it did take off, they gave him the boot.

"You could say that, though I wouldn't use those exact words. We left amicably, and we can still present the occasional show there."

Since Fouratt and Rudolf left, rumours have been rife. They're breaking up, they're losing money, they're re-opening Danceteria.

"Rudolf and I are partners, there is no chance of us going our separate ways. For a while we were considering Rudolf running the *Modern Classix* at Studio and myself handling the other business. But still as partners. That didn't come off."

"At the moment we're negotiating with Interferon to re-open Danceteria there. But we won't do it unless we can get equity in the business." Interferon's design was based on Danceteria; unfortunately the owners didn't know how to run it.

"It's the same as happened to Hurrah! After I left, Ruth Polsky put on English bands to the exclusion of other's. When the English bands were given better offers she left high and dry. I didn't happen to the Mudd Club, did it?"

"A place like Chase Park gets into bidding wars and plunks down \$10,000 for the latest hot-shot British bands, with no chance of re-couping the money."

"At the moment I have over 50 tapes of new bands I'd like to play. That was the idea behind Danceteria in the first place, to showcase new bands."

Is he happy with what you've succeeded in so far? "Yes. I never sold out. I can wake up in the morning and look myself in the mirror and feel good about myself. I have made changes for the better. I've helped many, many bands. I'm known within my own circles." Then how come some people think you're a right bastard?

"I understand that. I am difficult to work with, I want everything done my own way. But I'm getting better at dealing with people. Also I won't allow the people who work with me to slack-off or take drugs while they're working. But I've never done a band out of a penny, and you can ask anybody about that."

So what does the future hold? "I'd like to spend more time on my personal life. I'm involved in a relationship that's important to me and I'd like to see how it develops. I am also playing with ideas outside of the club world. We still don't know if we're going to get Interferon!"

Average normal Jim Fouratt!



NEW YORK

An interview with Fab Five Freddy by Hans Keller. Translation from the German transcripts by Celeste-Monique Lindsey.

Additional questions by Sybil Walker

HK: Have you always been involved with music?

FFF: No. I am a graffiti artist. This whole thing is an outgrowth of graffiti art. I'm always hanging out in the subways doing graffiti on the glass, the windows, the walls. That's where rap really began, it's ten years ago already.

HK: It came from writing on the subways?

FFF: The idea was to create something through which all people could communicate. To bring art to the streets. Graffiti deals with the written word and rap deals with the spoken word.

HK: When do you do your graffiti? At night when the cars are in the depot? The graffiti is so amazing that I can hardly believe that all this can take place at night.

FFF: Yes. No. Some do it during the day. I prefer nighttime. But now I paint on large canvases. I have shows coming up in Milan and Rome.

HK: What do your paintings look like?
FFF: They're just huge multi colored letters and stuff. It comes from the streets. Just like the DJs do with the turntables. It's improvised like jazz, the only real music form, like graffiti is the only real art form in America. For years all our art came over from Europe, it was derivative. Graffiti is all New York, it's the innards of the city. And it's not just from black people, people like you have done it too. New Wavers. But I'm talking

about the punk-rappers the real New Wavers.

HK: Are you familiar with the whole New Wave scene here?

FFF: Of course. I live on 2d and B. There's a show coming up in Rome soon which will highlight the connection. Twenty of the best graffiti artists and rappers from New York will participate. And there will be a movie with Anya Phillips in it. She was the occasion for a meeting of various groups at Bonds'. It was a benefit for her. Blondie, Chic and I performed.

Right now I'm collaborating with Chris Stein on a soundtrack for a film to be produced by Charlie Ahearn. It'll be called *Wild Style*. It will document the leading rappers and graffiti artists. It's done from the inside about the life-style of the rappers, not like the shit that passes for genuine today. The soundtrack's going to be pretty cool. But raising money for the film has not been easy. It's like anything else if it's new and unfamiliar people hate it. Like with rockroll in the beginning, they said "that's shit".

HK: Yeah, it was not so popular.
FFF: People in the fifties thought "it's crime, it's garbage".

HK: It was only middle-of-the-roadsers like Paul Anka with whom masses of people could identify right away.

FFF: Yes and it's happening again. The soft, accessible groups like Sugar Hill Gang and Kurtis Blow (although they did do good stuff in the beginning) are popular out there. But on the street among the people who know it's different.

HK: How did you get Blondie involved?

FFF: We were all friends there sitting around, rolling a lot of joints. Nothing was happening, so I said "let's go to the Bronx, that's where it's happening."



An interview with DJ Africa Bambaataa of The Zulu Nation, by Michael Holman.

For those who missed D.J. Bambaataa and the Zulu Nation at the Ritz on Sept. 15th (They were the opening act for Bow Wow Wow), all I can say is that it was awesome.

First there was a video of a breakers' battle which took place between the Rock Steady Crew of Manhattan and the Dynamic Rockers of Queens, and was filmed at Lincoln Center by yours true-LEE. The Rock Steady B-boys torched the Dynamic Rockers to the beat of Grand Master Flash, with the rapping of MC Rammellzee "the Al Capone of the Microphone".

This mixed into a solitary rhythm-box beat signaling the arrival of the mighty Zulu Nation led by D.J. Africa Bambaataa. The Nation's D.J. Jazzy Jay jumped behind his Technics and threw down the Stones' "Honky Tonk Woman". With a copy of the record on each of two turntables Jazzy played only the first eight seconds of the song, over and over leaving an almost unrecognizable rocking b-beat version. "Honky Tonk Woman" never rocked so hard.

His ability to take novel and out of context, rhythmic music and funk it up to a disco beat by manipulating its length and mix is an art that has made

D.J. Bambaataa famous in the South Bronx and all over the New York hip hop, b-beat scene. (Hip hop: the all inclusive tag for the rapping, breaking, graffiti-writing, crew fashion wearing street sub-culture. B-beats: consistent medium-to-slow funk beats which are the backbone of hip hop music. If you isolate the drumbeat after the lyrics "we will, we will, rock you" in Queen's *Champions* you get a b-beat.)

D.J. Africa Bambaataa, and the Zulu Nation over which he presides are contemporary heroes of the hip hop movement and though not as well known as Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, they have contributed a lion's share to the creation and stylizing of the so-called "rap" music. (The Zulu Nation includes not only D.J.s and M.C.s, but b-boys/ break dancers, graffiti writers, and anyone else who has worked with or through the Nation to perpetuate the hip hop thing.)

The number of "boom" sounds and techniques for which Bambaataa and the Zulu Nation are responsible and which have gone largely unnoticed have prompted me to make this interview public.

MH: How and when did the Zulu Nation begin?

AB: in 1975, at Adlai Stevenson High School in the Bronx. Everything started from street gangs. I was in a street gang called The Organization. Besides being

continued on page 29



CATHY CAMPBELL



HILLIN OUT.

wildstyle

Written, produced and directed by Charles Ahearn
 Starring Lee Quinones, (Fab 5) Fred Braithwhite, and Patty Astor
 Musical direction by Fred Braithwhite with original music by Chris Stein
 Rapping by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious 5, Busy Bee Starsky, Cold Crush 4, Fantastic 5, Double Trouble
 Graffiti by Lee Quinones, Lady Pink, Zephyr, Crash, and Dave
 Break dancing by the Rock Steady Crew

By Laurie Tavis

It's amazing to me that a whole underground culture is being generated in those terrible ghetto schools we hear about where teachers carry guns. I usually think of them as being full of fine, energetic, but tragically misdirected youth—which I'm sure is partly true, but obviously something great is happening there, quite independently of white and adult America. A ghetto can be described as a place where cultural isolation is enforced by circumstances dictated by another social group, but the human ability to transform circumstance through music, art, and language is being illustrated here.

Charlie Ahearn describes his new movie, *Wildstyle* as "new culture from the teenagers of the South Bronx." It features rappers, break dancers, and graffiti artists in acting and musical parts. The grand finale of the movie is a huge party that Charlie organized at the old amphitheatre in the Lower Eastside park that runs along the East River. He told me that the amphitheatre serves as a symbol of the transformation of character that occurs in the film. The amphitheatre is first glimpsed as though through a jungle; kids approach the neglected wreck through the trees of the park. Then the transformation begins: graffiti artists turn it into something spectacular, they are still painting as others arrive, speakers and turntables are set up, the DJs and rappers are all on stage at once like a huge family, thousands of people come. It's a vision crystallizing: a wasteland changing into a center of life.

While I was talking to Charlie, one of the stars, Jerry D. Lewis of the Cool Crush Four came in. Talking to him I learned that most of the problems within the rap scene come from its confrontation with commercial culture. Since rap has caught the attention of the market, competition has become intense. The most creative individuals are inexperienced kids who don't bother with copyrights. JDL says, "Some of the real rappers aren't even exposed because they don't have a record; everyone is at each other's throats for first position. Promoters give other groups top billing and the best groups lose out . . . original groups are bitten (ripped off) by other MCs. But in spite of all that we keep playing and practicing, and don't listen to what other people say."

HK: Where did this take place?
 FFF: In a school. Schools are where it all started, before fancy Discos or Rock clubs. There was nothing for kids to do and so they had these parties in the fucking schools. They brought their records, a couple of lights and that was it. There were no rap records, nothing. They made it all up. Now you can see that the same energy was at work up here as downtown in places like CBGB's. And Grandmaster Flash was the genius behind it all. He made the first tapes too because at first he just recorded everything he did so he could remix it and he would sell the tapes too for a few bucks to make money. And everyone wanted those tapes. And these Flash parties. I mean, everything he did hit the mark and attracted all kinds of people from all over. Some of those people were pretty rough. It was scary at times for me too. But all these people had discovered this cool thing. And the clothes were important too.

centerfold ↗

THE ADVENTURES OF FUTURA 2000

Six or seven cans of paint, nozzles from spray starch or bathroom cleaner, rags and masking tape, all in a paper shopping bag.

Up close for the dots and fine lines, small as pin heads, narrow as string. A step back for wide areas of sharp color, larger dots, outlines. Further back for subtle wisps of contrast and colored fog.

No drip.
 Precise push of the nozzle, short swing of the arm, up down and side to side, controlled and confident, elbow and shoulder.
 No drip.

Futura 2000 is one of the more accomplished artists among the graffiti writers. His work has been shown in various exhibitions around New York including P.S. #1's "New York/New Wave," the New Museum/Fashion Moda show and the Mudd Club's "Beyond Words." His paintings have appeared from time to time on the outside of the I.R.T. (especially the #2 and 3 trains), the side of buildings in New York and London and in the collections of distinguished art patrons. His Tag, "Futura 2000," is everywhere — well placed, easy to read, never destructive to public art.

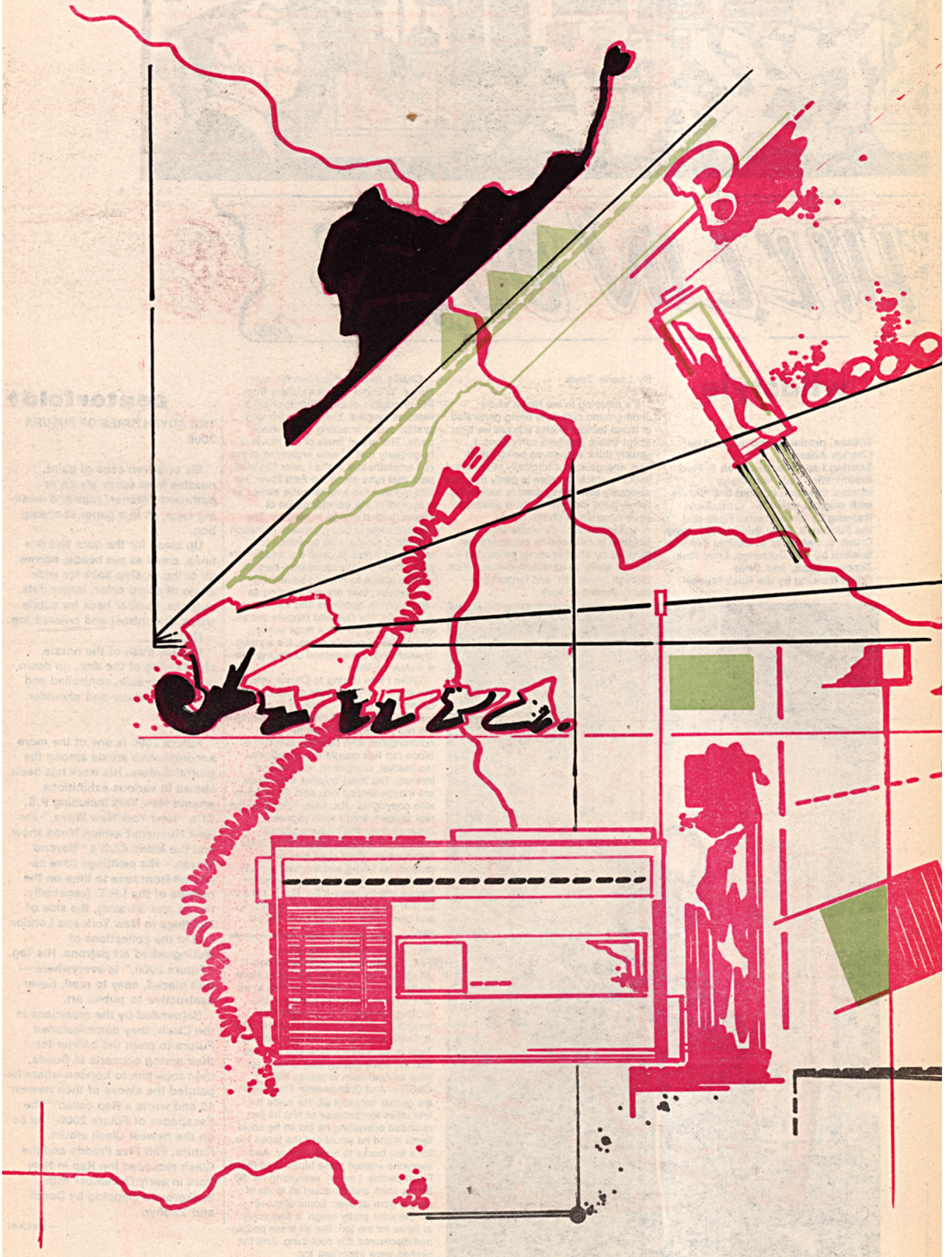
Befriended by the musicians in the Clash, they commissioned Futura to paint the banner for their spring concerts at Bonds, then took him to London where he painted the sleeve of their newest 45 and wrote a Rap called "The Escapades of Futura 2000," to be on the newest Clash album. Futura, Fab Five Freddy and the Clash recorded the Rap in New York in early December with background clapping by Dondi and Zephyr.

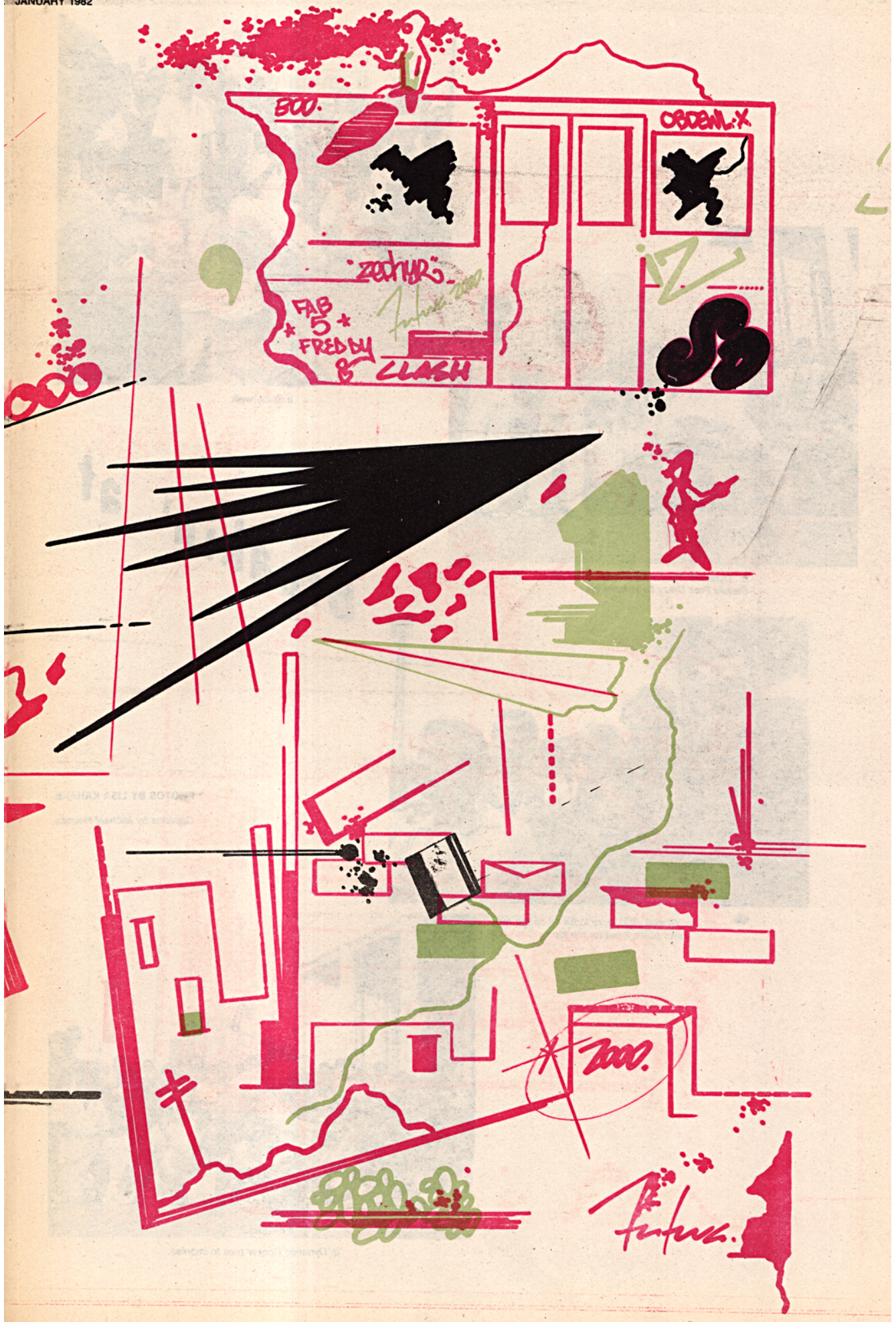
—Becker



CATHY CAMPBELL

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b. Dynamic Rocker breakers as Rock Steady Prez Crazy Legs looks on.



a. Spiderwalk.

Breakin' at



c. Graffiti artist Duro looks on as the two crews battle it out for the top.

PHOTOS BY LISA KAHANE

Captions by Michael Holman



d. Dynamic Rocker tries to impress.



h. Rock Steady's Kippy Dee does the turtle.



g. I.B.M.'s Mingo Rock falls back chilly.

the Center



f. I.B.M.'s Amigo Rock makes Dynamic Rocker look foolish.



e. And up again.

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continued from page 22

about violence and jitterbugging (*rumbly*), we were also into socializing. We threw parties and dances and put on concerts. We even helped out local politicians at times. Every housing project and neighborhood had gangs. We were in the South East Bronx (*Baychester stop on the 5 train*).

But the gang scene started to fade out when the ladies and families close to the gang members got fed up with the violence and the killings. When the Organization died out, what was left were different crews who were doing the entertaining at the parties, like the D.J.s., M.C.s and b-boys. This goes back six years now. At the time I was pretty well known as a D.J. and I was able to pull together what was left of the Organization and called the Zulu Nation.

MH: Where did you get the name Bambaataa and what inspired you to use Zulu Nation?

AB: On my first holy communion (at St. Anthony's in the Bronx) I took the name Bambaataa from my Godfather who had the same name. It's the name of a Zulu chief who lived around the end of the nineteenth century. Bambaataa means "affectionate leader". The pride and power of the Zulus in the movie *Zulu* inspired me to name the crew.

(Already from their name, Zulu Nation shows a uniqueness that sets them apart aesthetically from most rap crews).

MH: Now for the \$64000.00 question: how did the whole rapping MCs and effect DJs thing evolve?

AB: Kool DJ Herc, Kool DJ Dee, and DJ Mario were all part of a gang called the "Black Spades". They were from a part of the west Bronx that had a lot of West Indians living there. Kool DJ Herc who was from a Jamaican family himself, was the first DJ to take the Jamaican dub style and adapt it to a soul funk thing. He was the first DJ to spin b-beat records exclusively and was known at first just for that. Then together with the boys in the Black Spades he applied raps (like over dubbing) to the music. (Kool DJ Herc and the Herculodes, his crew after the end of the Black Spades started rap with the coining of lyrics such as "rock on" and "to the beat y'all".)

MH: When did you start DJing?

AB: In 1971 when I was still in the Organization. Like Kool DJ Herc when he first started, it was limited to mixing records, no effects. Later I heard DJ Herc play and I was really inspired by him. He knows how to throw down b-beats and that's how he got the reputation of being the godfather of hip hop rock. But a DJ was judged not only by how well he mixed but by how unknown but still rockin' his records were. I knew I could do as well as Herc and better because I had good sources and played a wider variety of music. Pretty soon the Zulu Nation and I became known for playing wild and unconventional records along with the top hits, all without losing the beat.

MH: What kind of mixes did you do?

AB: I played whatever made you rock no matter what it was, like TV advertisement jingles, the theme to the Pink Panther, or Winnie the Pooh's song. One time Zulu Nation had a battle of the DJs with another crew. We opened up with a special mix of the theme from the Andy Griffith Show and blew their minds away.

(Through digging for new and interesting records, Bambaataa acquired a lot of knowledge about the record industry which gave him an added advantage over other DJs by allowing him access to more obscure records and new releases. Later Bambaataa became a liaison between the hip hop rock music scene and critics and reporters.)

MH: How does Grandmaster Flash fit in to this history?

AB: Grandmaster Flash was from the South Bronx. He and the Furious Three (only three at the time), did a lot to organize and direct rap music into a more commercial thing. He and his crew gave rap more rhyme and rhythm. Grand-

master Flash started the quick cutting technique (*Which means to go from turntable to turntable fast enough to create a third beat out of segments of beats from each record*)

MH: Who invented scratching?

AB: Grand wizard Theodore started scratching around 1978 and became very popular just for that. (*Scratching is moving the record back and forth against the needle to create a scratching or ripping sound*).

MH: Who were the first rapping MCs?

AB: DJ Clark Kent, Tiny Tim, and Cokela Rock of the Herculodes; Mele Mel, Cowboy and Kid Creol of the Furious Three; and Mr Biggs, Queen Kenya, and DJ cowboy of Zulu Nation.

MMH: Tell me about Zulu Nation's super "effects" DJ. Jazzy Jazz.

AB: Jazzy Jazz is my partner and "little brother" in taking care of Zulu Nation. Jazzy is one of only two or three DJs (including Grandmaster Flash) who can quick cut and scratch smoothly enough to maintain a danceable beat. When scratching and cutting first came out every DJ was doing it and going wild. But what most were doing was too hard to follow and didn't keep a beat. Jazzy is definitely one of the smoothest "effects" DJ around.

(Jazzy's style is mean!)

MH: What are some of the elements of rap music for which Zulu Nation is directly responsible?

AB: The use of novelty music, TV jingles, or nursery rhymes in rap music. Also phrases like "shock the house" and "sure shoot the body rock, don't stop that body rock". We didn't start b-boys but the Zulu Nation started out playing music for breakers as did other crews. Zulu Nation b-boys were called the "Zulus". (*V.Voice. April 22, 1981.*)

MH: Can you tell me about the equipment used by the DJs.

AB: The best known and most widely used turntables are the Technic 210s because they have the necessary features such as pitch control (to unify the speeds of two different turntables), good balance, tone and durability (for cutting and scratching), and a good price. The first turntables used were Pioneers but they had limited handling abilities and were more expensive feature for feature than the Technics.

MH: Where do you see hip hop music going in the future?

AB: The music will change but the beat will remain. Rap lyrics will have to evolve to be more meaningful. More effects will be added too.

And so speaks the DJ Africa Bambaataa. I have to agree with him. The lyrics used by most of the MCs are pretty limp (sex and materialism). By the way, I have just heard a recording of the Zulu Nation performing at the Roller World Skating Rink. The style and delivery of the Zulu Nation DJs featuring Jazzy Jazz on the wheels of steel, and the cosmic force MCs surpassed anything I've ever heard by any other DJ/MC combinations. Zulu Nation sings the "las Vegas rap" and "GG curls" style of bands like Sugar Hill Gang and Kurtis Blow. So even if you're not known yet in L.A. or London, and you may never sell Afro hair products in magazines, keep on Zulu Nation, a "shock in the house".



the crew look

by MICHAEL HOLMAN

Crew: to dress in animated styles of athletic and institutional costumes or uniforms, adding subtle details that allow minimal individuality to the wearer. Originality without uniqueness. A fashion deployed to signify association with a group, social or anti-social, for example break-dancer crews, bicycle clubs, gangs.

Specific examples (in order of importance):

1. HATS. Baseball hats (Pittsburg Pirates a favorite), roadster caps, nautical caps (sailor, captain), pin-head tennis hats, Greek fisherman caps (of Beatles Help genre), bicycle caps. Fabrics range from terry cloth in tennis hats to polyester in Pirates caps. Hats are displayed on the head in non-conventional positions to add absurd humour, making a departure from the expected and to take advantage of coarse hair maleable enough to hold a hat in comical styles no matter how seemingly precarious.

2. SHOES. Sneakers are the order of the day, favorites being such brands as Pro Keds, Puma Pro Players, Converse All Stars, Nike, Adidas, and recently Fayva came up with a compatible style. The shoe styles specifically are basketball and tennis shoes as opposed to foolish running shoes, usually in bright or "off" street colors like burgundy, red and forest green. They can be high or low tops and are usually worn loosely tied or almost completely unlaced.

Hats and shoes are important because they make up the vertical parameter of any fashion and for crew especially, exhibit the highest visibility of institutional fashion parody.

3. Running Suits. Have varying amounts and widths of racing stripes (depending on the brand) finished in a variety of colors, fabrics, and detail designs. Most all running suits meet the criteria of "crew" and need little elaboration. However, it is interesting to note that running suits have universal appeal which either brings crew into the universal or the universal into crew, a point to be discussed below. The latest addition to athletic suits is a lightweight nylon peg-pant. Very Modern. For the record, the whole 40's look (1974) when peg-pants emerged, was started by NYC street kids doing the Zoot Suit look. (Italian Uomo Vogue, Sept. 1975).

4. PANTS. Bermuda shorts, polyester bells, nylon peglegs, tennis shorts, designer jeans, Kung Fu pants. The polyester bell bottom, the oldest crew style (circa 1972) has maintained its presence with ever changing colors, prints, and multi-dimensional weaves. While many people find polyester visually and aesthetically repulsive, it offers a unique texture which may be appealing to others for a certain futuristic aesthetic.

5. TOPS. Nylon T-shirts and tank tops, tennis tops, Lacoste shirts, Italian knit sweaters (*East Village Eye '78-'79*), and sweatshirts. The sweatshirt is the most important medium for pressed letters

spelling out a group affiliation, nicknames, personal dispositions, or inside jokes. Pressed letters have been used all over America for years, but (of course) it takes New York street culture to give it crew sensibilities. Crew is a slang adjective used to describe the street adaptation of Popism with an emphasis on athletics. For example Coca Cola's label is crew because of its resemblance to the stripe on the side of Puma Pro Player sneakers. Baseball caps with the visor askew are crew because it combines the athletic referral with Pop caricatures. 1970's Japanese automobiles, tennis stars and being a bicycle messenger are all crew as well. Bicycle messengers deserve a special mention being the most visible wearers of crew for New Yorkers who can't make it to the mountain (so the mountain comes to them on wheels) ... New York's cowboys.

This brings us to crew's history as a fashion. Crew is at least one hundred years old, dating back to the first black participation in white sports and other institutions like the military, because though participation was segregated fashion could not be. Oppression and segregation worked together to create pressure valves one of which was dress, daring to look accepted without being accepted.

This contrasts today with black ghetto kids embracing athletic fashion because they symbolize a way out of poverty and an emergence into wealth and prestige in a prohibitive society. But if you've noticed, the crew look is not limited to sports with heavy black participation (ie. basketball, baseball, boxing.) Crew also incorporates unlikely sports looks like tennis, sailing, golf (Lacoste, loud plaid pants, deck shoes without socks).

Why would these kids pick up the fashion of a conservative establishment which often acts as their social antagonists? It's a vehicle for social acceptance or correctness or "passing" among non-WASP whites (ie. Catholics, Jews, Italians). This is not the case for a black kid from the ghetto because obviously all the aligators in the world will not pass a black person as a WASP. It is more likely that preppy chic, like the designer label's "instant status", is considered hip by these kids merely for it's aesthetic value, not for any need to obtain social status for it's own sake.

It comes as no surprise to me that the highest American fashion is a combination of such extremes. Old establishment collides with instant culture to create crew.



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PHOTOS BY ADRIAN PANARO



Loose laces leave no traces.



Skibunny.



Two hats. Too chilly.



Robinhoodski





Slimski Good.



Frosty Freeze hotdogs off cement slopes.

SKI!

by Michael Holman

Have you noticed the enthusiastic embracing of ski sport fashion by NYC's chilliest? I knew it was to be the look of winter '81 (hang up your overcoats Lower Eastside gangsters—it's tired) but I didn't expect the ski sensation to have such a broad influence on NY's ethnic culture.

So to get a "lift up" on this matter I asked Crazy Legs, a rock steady crew member and one of NYC's top b-boys, to help me get a better look at Ski: photographer Adrian Panaro, Frosty Freeze, (of Rock Steady) and myself were taken on a fashion excursion by Crazy Legs to his high school, Kennedy High on 225st in the Bronx.

We waited until 2:30 came around and then Adrian started snapping pictures of the chilliest starski coming out of 7th period. We saw ski pros and ski bunnies, icemen, snow queens and chilly dames; it was Aspen.

The crazy thing about this fashion (which is taken to the extreme more by the guys than the gals) is that it's an exact emulation of ski sportswear without the intent or desire to do any skiing. I suppose the kids figure ski style is chilly enough as it is, why confuse it with long bus rides, broken limbs, expensive equipment, and tiresome instructions.

So hip! Anyone else, anywhere else would have to justify their attraction for a sports fashion with "hands on" participation.

Now let's try to understand how ski as a total concept started and how it snowballed into another across-the-board cultural phenomenon.

ABC's Starsky and Hutch, popular uptown, inspired a lot of ghetto artists, namely MCs, DJs, graffiti writers, break-boys, etc. to use versions of the show's title in their names or "tags"; for example, MC Hutch-Hutch, DJ Starski, Kenski, T. Ski Valley, Bee Ski, etc.



I jumped off the slope, and I started to cut; down that hill with moves of finesse...I leaned and dipped and I bent my knees and my booty was doing the rest.

Now sway to the left and twist to the right; use your poles to keep on time...bend your knees and miss the trees, now you're doing the Funky Alpine!



For the sake of originality the kids changed the "y" in Starsky to an "i" which by spontaneous inspiration established ski, the sport, as the look for what's up.

As cockscomb ski caps punctuate the air, more and more kids are giving up their sneakers for apre-ski boots. And where down is down, hot got chilly.



The past year has been for the obituarist a very exciting and productive period. First and foremost we must recall the stirring assassination attempts on the lives of both the President and the Pope. Fortune favors the heavily protected. They both lived to tell. Fortune does not favor the unprotected. Witness the scandalous treachery of the Egyptians. To my knowledge this was the first assassination which was thoroughly covered by the TV. A veritable chapter in video history was there for all quick enough to tape it on their cassette.

But now I am running ahead of myself. It is time to get down to cases. **Anwar Sadat.** As I was saying, when then chips were down, where were this man's bodyguards? Wow, talk about pants down! Anyway "Nasser's Poodle", a nickname bestowed on him while serving as vice-president, really met his match here. After his isolation in the Arab world became obvious and debilitating to his political health, Sadat took to calling the other leaders "jackals", "monkeys" and "hissing

1981

THE YEAR IN DEATH

By T.X. ERBE

vipers". This made for lively speeches and poorer relations. Soon enough this lap dog found the chickens coming home to roost! Dali was of the opinion that even the most ardent surrealist felt a surge of joy at the sound of a military band. Extrapolating on this we might conclude that for a military man, the sight or regiments marching, jets roaring overhead, and then guns blazing, well, that's a happy man!

Defense Minister Gaddawi Who? I know you never heard of this man. Imagine that there was a helicopter crash which killed Weinberger, Joint Chiefs head David Jones, Gen. Kelly of the Marines and, for good measure, nine other brass hats. Then imagine that Reagan was shot dead. This is approximately what happened in Egypt this year. Of course it's all coincidence.

Iranian File. Having limited space I can't list all those martyrs who were blown up in Iran this year. Rajai, Khomeini, Beheshti, Ali Baba, after awhile you lose track.

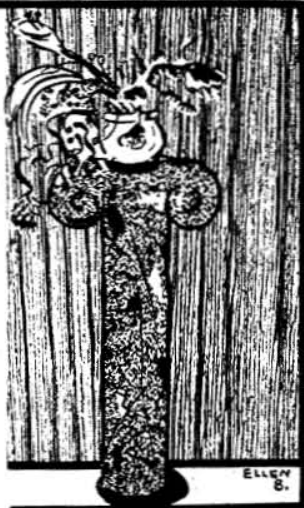
Moshe Dayan. Moshe was guilty as all get-out for the invasions of '56 and '67, the more blatant acts of Israeli land-grabbing. But he was likeable — after all, he was born there, which is more than some can say. Most can say. Then, too, he wore an eye patch, which was really sexy. What's more he had a brain and realized that something had to give vis-a-vis a Palestinian homeland. Not all soldiers fade away — some contract cancer.

Life Imitates TV. **William Holden** Personally I would like to live the life of a Hollywood Movie Star. I want to see if it really does lead, inevitably, to booze, sex, drugs and death. Barring that possibility I can only rely on the bathetic recountings of the

Post and papers of that ilk. **Natalie Wood** Oooops, fell into the drink! Obviously this was no accident. The whole milieu in which the typical "star" works produces a psychosis that very quickly blurs work and play. You wake up in the morning unsure of whether you are a pretty actress or a murder victim in a sitcom. Seriously, it is perfectly obvious that this fellow Wagner did her in so that he could elope with his co-star and co-murderess Stephanie Powers, who in turn had murdered poor Mr. Holden. I confidently await their apprehension by Robert Stack who will turn them to the tender mercies of Judge John Houseman.

Master Builders **Robert Moses.** It is 1935. The place, a brand new Packard cruising the newly built Northern State Parkway. Beside you mommy and a basket full of goodies. Behind you in the back seat are the little bears all atwitter. You are all on the way to Jones Beach! You're middle class, free and white! In short you have reached a highpoint of western civilization! Thank Bob Moses who paved the way to the future. One of the most powerful men in New York State, if not the country, yet never elected to anything by anybody, Moses was the driving force behind what was to be thousands of miles of arterial highways, expressways, parkways, parks, public beaches and the toll booth to get into them. If Moses had his way there would be an expressway running down Canal St. No Mudd Club, goodbye SoHo. I know you're all choked up. Still and all, you have to admire a man who could tell Nelson Rockefeller to fuck off!

Albert Speer Herr Speer (say hair shpair) was the unrequited love of that very repressed fag, Hitler. Originally, Speer was to have been the Reichsar-



chitekt, responsible for the first temples of National Socialism. Alas, a war got in the way and soon Speer found himself Armaments Minister responsible for boosting production of 7.5 mm. guns. This got him 20 years in Spandau prison. This in turn led him to write the definitive accounts of Hitler's inner circle, "Inside the Third Reich", and the hilarious diary of prison life "Spandau". All sorts of people, from Johnny Rotten to Wilhelm Reich, have had a go with the word fascist. Common usage leads to debasement, so to bring this word to life you must read these books. One day you will look in the mirror and realize, Ich bin ein NAZI !!!

Great Writers **Zerna Sharp** Some people shape the future through deeds. Some do it with thoughts and words. Zerna was of this group. A whole nation of school children learned their ABC's by way of Ms. Sharp's limpid prose. "Run Spot run". "See Dick". See Dick, see Jane. Yes, now it comes back to you, doesn't it! Immortal books that will live on forever!

NO RIVER, NO RIO, SOME PORTRAITS



By RICHARD ARMUJO

It beats pop radio. It's better than strapping an enemy. The portrait show that Tom Warren developed at ABC NO RIO suggests that an equivalency to broken English exists in the visual communicative realm. Broken English communicates despite the breakdown of a much hallowed syntax. And for a moment let's pretend that the portrait of a Nuyorican is equal in meaning to the latest Mary Boone fixation. Which is to say that the image of a Puerto Rican is valuable. It is and no, again like broken English. Their faces announce their presence, but as anyone knows a photograph is hauntingly speechless. As with rare words the value is underscored by survival. Normally we pay little heed to a word that is on the endangered list — with

a portion of the human race it suddenly becomes more complicated. Err, what would Mary Boone do in this dilemma? I suppose put her undersold artist on some sort of holding list. Broken English and broken aesthetic have much in common. Somebody speaks then some people respond. Mostly the response to the portraiture was exceedingly positive. But why? I mean I was certainly flattered to see a picture of myself up there. And I imagine so too were the other experimentalists. Pay a buck and see yourself. Come to the opening and mingle. If only for a moment we're up there with them. And we think it feels great. They are their best and so are we. But, like a pause, our fulfillment is shortlived. I think we are holding our breath. We are waiting for something to happen and nobody knows just what that will be, not them and not us. So we are left with the pictures. Photos of anonymous lives that piled up year after year collecting dust and abuse; hopeful pictures developed just yesterday, even some sad pictures of us — the local hangers on. For me it was much like television: wonderful commercials and soon they are over. There's Bobby and Christy, there's Robin and Rebecca, there is me and there is you and now we're all gone. Somehow we are over and much beside the point. I started out thinking about defacing our language but still forcing it to mean. Dialogue strapped down to gesture, remark equalling attitude (some men can only smoke a cigarette while they cruise a street), very gestural. I think the photographs contain much of that sort of transient beauty. We can stare at them much the same way we stare out at the world. Like saying cheeze like freeze.



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THE *real* GREAT SOCIETY

BY Josh Gosciak

Amid the everyday struggle of living on the Lower East Side — the hollow steam-filled streets and fire-twisted tenements of another more violent decade — amid the C & D deals and booze sonatas coughing up blood and spittle and love, amid all of this craziness and in spite of it, art on the Lower East Side is growing and evolving into new forms of awareness and interaction.

Bimbo Rivas, burning with emotions and untapped energies, has been weaving in and out of that evolution since its beginnings. As a playwright, director and poet, who grew up on the Lower East Side, he has invested a lot of energy in its development. He, as well as a group of tight-knit former Young Lords and dissatisfied activists from the Sixties, stayed when the city abandoned the community and put it up for sale; at the time in the mid-seventies, half the population was burned out on the streets by desperate landlords, who torched buildings for the insurance — "blood money" — and junk ruled the streets. They stayed because this was their community — their *only* community — and what people were left, they wanted to help, by fighting drugs and landlord evictions as well as city abuse and neglect.

"In the last two years," says Rivas, who has worked with Adopt-A-Building and Charas to set up homesteading plans and tenant groups, and who is only now able to begin writing again, "we have been involved in elevating the area. Gentrification is of some concern. People are moving back into the community. We have a plan, a concept of a community — so people moving into the area know they have to deal with a multi-racial, multi-cultural problem — as a more international entity." Loisaída (the Spanglish term for the Lower East Side) has in its seven year existence come to encompass the most diverse and interconnected group of musicians, writers and artists in New York. Since the demise of Soho and Tribeca, and the growth of the East Village, and Loisaída, the arts too reflect that interconnectedness, integrating and separating at the same time — creating new forces out of old structures. Latin, African, Caribbean, Eastern European — these and other cultures are all tossed around in a whirlpool of art-making, a frenzy unsurpassed in any other part of the city. And for Rivas, it is but a part of the evolutionary scheme which began back in the early Seventies.

Nuyorican Poets Cafe, the name itself — New York Rican, a mix of Puerto Rican, Caribbean and Anglo — implies the mix of young bloods and educated poets, which it brought into the vanguard when it broke ground in 1976. More recently, the New Pilgrim Theater, mixing reggae and rock, and ABC No Rio gallery reflect not only the new artist emigres, but the area residents who welcome the chance to interact with different groups. And of course Henry Street Settlement, a stronghold on the Lower East Side for many years, bringing plays and art to the surrounding Chinese, Puerto Rican, Black and Jewish communities. One of the newest centers to take root in Loisaída is Charas. Charas was a junior high school up until the mid-70s; at that time the area was depopulated, and the city, subsequently abandoned it. Bimbo Rivas attended that school; he cherished his memories from there and wanted to put them to use for his children and grandchildren. What better way than to create a multi-purpose arts, crafts and community center? "I graduated from this school in the auditorium downstairs," says Bimbo. "In fact, I know the exact seat. That's the motivation. I learned some skills and had some good memories and I was

saddened when it was allowed to deteriorate and later abandoned. It was part of my life. I thought it would be nice to save the building and preserve a little culture."

Rivas, a wiry, robust man in his 30's, is a seminal force in the rebuilding of Loisaída. He is the poet who christened the neighborhood "Loisaída" ("it is associated with love, respect and dignity.") in a poem he recited along with Chino Garcia, Roberto Nazario and others, he established Adopt-a-Building, Charas Recycling Plant, homesteading and sweat equity. He later became involved in playwriting and street productions because he was sick of the stereotypes of Latinos and wanted "to entertain people — to reach their souls and emotions." "When I was attending City College," says Bimbo, "I read about Johnson's Great Society idea. There was an article in *Life* about it. But the *real* so Great Society was called Charas. We knew that we were the real society, the young society, the idealistic society. And it was here that I saw something I could relate to in the neighborhood. "At that time I was living outside the community, in Brooklyn — I was almost suburban! — making \$16,000 a year. I became involved with Charas which became involved in the economic development of the neighborhood — in theatre, youth programs, economical and ecological programs. We are in fact the first group to give the Young Lords office space. We were also involved in the Fabulous Latin Club, La Mama, and Casino 14, as well as a Blimpie franchise."

In the years since the fall of the Great Society and the rise of Richard Nixon, Bimbo was busy working on housing problems. He formed a construction company, A Little Bit Of Everything, which provided renovations at affordable prices — making sure tenants didn't get ripped off — sealed up abandoned buildings, acquired space for parks and put on cultural events, but more importantly, (along with Roberto Nazario, who is now in Washington) it established a pipeline to City Hall. "There was a lot of activity then," recalls Rivas, of the early 1970's. "The Lords, the urban crises, the War. In addition to housing abuses, the leadership element was moving into a more politically conscious area in terms of what was really going on. We were taking a holistic approach, more futuristic and ecological, as well as doing a lot of research. That's when we met Buckminster Fuller, who liked what we were doing. He staked us with a grant and gave us the technology of the geodesic dome. That became our symbol, spaceship earth." The reality and application came a few years later when Charas acquired the East River Amphitheatre, and made plans to renovate and convert it into a multi-functioning

playhouse with Bucky Fuller's geodesic dome atop it, radiating over the Lower East Side. "We acquired the amphitheatre in 1976 and we all wanted a Fuller dome," explains Rivas, "so we contacted a Japanese associate of Fuller's, Sogio Sadao, who did the plans. With \$2,000, we hope to start construction next year. We have the support of 40 other organizations as well as city councilwoman Mariam Friedlander. Joe Papp gave us the initial \$5,000, to cinderblock it up at a last-minute 7 a.m. meeting. By 1984 we hope to have the dome completed."

All the activity around Charas these days is with *Winos*. A play within a play about "drunken bums" hanging out in Tompkins Park, practicing to be method actors. It is a play about life and drugs, love and gangs, it is a play about Bimbo Rivas' world. "The three winos in the play represent the language of the theatre, my being. I teach language. You are a teacher and a fool at the same time. That's what a wino is. It takes place in the late Seventies and is about the drug situation that is annihilating a good part of our population and youth."

Rivas not only pulls experience from the streets but also from 10 years involvement with theatre. In 1972 he worked with El Teatro Ambulante and toured Philadelphia, and New Jersey, as well as the Bronx and East Harlem, doing street productions in parks and theatres. And in 1976 — a good year for Latino productions, with Pinero's movie *Short Eyes* and works by Miguel Algarin and Lucky Cienfuegos opening off-Broadway — Bimbo rented the Orpheum Theatre on Second Avenue and produced and directed *El Piraguero del Loisaída*.

"Hispanic arts have been evolving in New York since that time," adds Bimbo. "As an art form it's still budding. There are so many possibilities, it's infinite. There is no central place, but there is strength here. There are a lot of germinating artists and artists' groups."

Adds Benny Lanco, production manager of Charas' Teatro La Terraza and a member of the cast of *Winos*, "You always see Hispanics as muggers, drunks or pickpockets, always doing harm. What we are doing here — even with the weekly film series — is to move to the 'inner feelings'. We are portrayed like cardboard, with no inner feelings. If you have a show about an Irish drunk, even though he is a drunk, he is good. A drunken Hispanic is never portrayed as good."

Very few plays have been produced off or on Broadway which project positive Latino images. Luis Valdez' *Zoot Suit* was about slick Chicanos beating on and killing sailors in San Diego; *Short Eyes* by Miguel Pinero, though compassionate, was about prison life. Bimbo Rivas' play is about

street life, but it is also humorous, touching and warm, with the grace and comedy of Beckett and Vaudeville.

"Outside poetry and theater," Rivas explains, "I pretty much don't know what's going on above 14th Street. I am a bit provincial. But I have this thing about making this a viable business about organizing the arts, never mind having to raise a family. This space has to generate money to survive."

Charas is surviving, even though it may not be making money. With the opening of the Survival Show this past spring, the school received a great deal of publicity, with artists coming in from all over New York.

"This building economically could be a tremendous resource," explains Chino Garcia, who runs the building as well as the Charas Recycling Plant. "It could bring in 200 jobs from sources using the space. Artists, housing groups, city agencies. We had 14,000 people come to the Survival Show. Depending on the type of event, you can accommodate 6,000 people."

One of the ways Charas is hoping to survive is to lease space to neighborhood groups, musicians and artists, in addition to functioning as a focal and meeting place for workshops, classes, theater and dance companies. There are about 20 groups using the space so far, including Adopt-A-Building, Lower East Side Music School, Seven Loaves, City Arts, *Quality of Life in Loisaída*, a community newspaper, and Baile Boricua, a Puerto Rican dance company.

"A lot of people have applied for space," adds Garcia, "from artists to small businesses to optical and dental clinics, even the State University of N.Y., as well as proposals for discos and social clubs." Any theater troupe, visiting or local, can use the theater for productions or rehearsals. "They can come from anywhere in the world," Bimbo emphasizes.

Yet at a time when the arts in Loisaída are just struggling out of a deep sleep, and renovating the school as well as the surrounding neighborhood looks bright, will there be an unbright future for the thousands of people — struggling artists, writers, blacks and Hispanics — who might spoil Koch's "Manhattanization." Will the city make good on its word? (Do landlords cheat?)

"No way," says Rivas with the determination that makes you blink, cough and look away nervously. "Let's be realistic. We have a 50 percent vacant community so that any shape the community takes will be finalized by the economic base, that is to say the 50 percent living here. Those people are not moving. They're not going to be forced out. This is it. It's up to us to make something. If anyone's going to erase the word 'ghetto', we will."





Bill, Vera & Jennie in clothes from MARLOWE
Photo: Babelle Dungalas
Makeup: James Vizoso
Hair: Romeo



Lisette in Byzantine-inspired Original by JUDY ROSS; accessories & shoes from BURGHARDT'S
Photo: Miriam White
Makeup: Marilyn Urraya
Hair: Romeo

Lucille in "Viva Espana" Dress, designed by ROMEO; hat from GIRL LOVES BOY; shoes and accessories from BURGHARDT'S
Photo: Virginia Libertore
Makeup: Lucille

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Fig. 600 — THE NOVA OF 1572, whose appearance in Cassiopeia must have been something like that shown above, caused widespread alarm and despondency.

By ZOLTAN QUINTZ

ARIES—'82 wardrobe takes shape in form of water-closet. Don't be shocked when you wake up and find you're a member of the middle class in New Jersey at a garden center buying diondra. Second-hand dinners and used desserts. Petty hatchet jobs pervade corporate structures. Red donkey portends political hangover and a crack in time. Selfish sex safari leads to gang rape in subway tunnel — this time it's not who's on top that counts...

TAURUS—Adult situations, nudity and strong language. Roundtable encounter with loathsome club-rat wearing miles of plastic. Desperate klonettes and monologue from your liver insures your seat on the rear of the wagon. Supernatural mumbo-jumbo finds you teasing cab-drivers and working nights. Leaches diminish when host dies — he awaits you in backroom with grunts and kisses. Accept gifts. A view from the top means asshole from the air. Consult a veterinarian...

GEMINI—The "scene" cracks around you and again you end up a victim of your own pretentious pleasures. Catatonic states lead to acute embarrassment in front of publicist — snide innuendos in bold type — is bad press really better than no press? Drive-in lip service forces you on the road to Oregon. Boiled potatoes and centipedes. Deviated septum triggers analgesic fit. Blue-eyed Nazi inspires desert warfare — why fuss with guns when you can insert the bullets manually?

CANCER—Stop clawing at the wallpaper so that peace and sanity may flourish. Midmonth finds you pants down with a bad case of exposure. Cheap magician tricks out under familiar lamp-post. Watch for hidden panels and neutered house pets. Social calendar thickens with jovial Greek with goat breath and one-night stands with fleas in the dark. Live sporadically. If secret karmic sorrows surface try enameled nails that blaze trails. Midnite jaunt with dancing bear provides a needed break...

LEO—Precautions regarding poisons should be noted. Situation comedy with manic hispanic wearing liver-colored jumpsuit with mocha pullover. Peripheral subversion at club opening brings wine cup meltdown and lame excuses. Perpetuate lies with mercenary spies. All your cruising leads to naught — limp dicks and leather lips. Go straight home and read Spinoza. If you lay an egg — protect it...

VIRGO—Update seduction techniques or rough nites await you. Breakthroughs coming soon though idle pleasures and thirsty rumors abound. Extract those nails from your hand and get down off that cross — Glamorous occupation over the next hill. Uncommitted whores and female cohorts tire of your immaculate deception — get it up or get out. Suggested menu: fish sans chips and pulverized lamb. Mint sauce on the side. Rattan in the kitchen and mirrored tiles. Nifty hutch for new-wave posters, ticket stubs and so on...

LIBRA—Expect threadbare bonnets, insect-chic and cute Japanese boys over frothy cocktails. Jupiter gives an extension on your deadline until Saturn brings overloaded outlets and frazzled chords. Be spontaneous. Memory of past-life leads to boring evening at home lifting weights with your father. Your ears are a constant nuisance to film directors. Avoid philosophers.

SCORPIO—Slow bucks and fast fucks. Odd religious practices and attempted glory force you to use your mind this month. Tough luck. Uranus unveils bruised armpits and Charlie Manson-eyes — they'll use you, and abuse you... Downstream dream of ditching lover finds you uptown in monk robes eating hamster in pita bread. Brave the undercurrents, rip the tide, the underwear — and stick it back in if it falls out. Get on the beat but beware of poolsharks, angora sweaters and queens that scream for money in public...

SAGITTARIUS—Mysterious allusion to monkey god and perilous alleyways of desire. You've got great legs — it's just a shame you can't wrap them around your face. Numerous trips to Chinese laundry with cum-caked comforter from white-collar jobs — how much coke do you have to sell to pay off da big boys? Barking sounds in bathroom lead to unseemly coercion in gay bar. Keynote: tired scenarios, concerts and musical decomposition...

CAPRICORN—Questionable social life ahead and closet republicanism. Lackluster fling with poorly dressed Arab emissary leaves you high and dry. End of the month finds you in jail in Bangkok on a diet of bananas and vallium. Subliminal satisfaction with guard — you'll think he's Mr. Right till you discover he's just a used fag in the ashtray. A bad month for bribes. Don't write home...

AQUARIUS—Reptiles emerge from the marshes sporting helmets and rubber stamps. Wingless adults clog the off-ramps of your mind. Relief is on the way in the form of success. You're going to Russia and not only for vodka. Hold it up to the mirror and it sez excess. Blind dates with second-class ambitions give cosmic cramps on full moon. You'll create absolute pandemonium at barmitzva wearing cranberry tights topped with shredded cabbage and a punchline at the end...

PISCES—A murky month ahead. Heavy infestations in defoliating trees, strange embraces and bouillabaise. Picking up pennies leads to one foot in muddy water, the other in Bessie Smith. Internal derangements and ruined hair-dos lead to social disgrace. Alleviate January accidents — jump now. Eyestrain caused by trendy frames and myopic voyeurism on rainy days. One-shouldered celery brocade tunic over eggplant tunic perfect for dates with garbage-men in the name of the Lord. Avoid penpals, vibrators and DDT...





CAMPING OUT WITH VITO RUSSO

by MARY ALLEN

Vito Russo was a pioneer in the gay liberation movement. In the late Sixties, he made waves as one of the most vocal, committed, and in short, radical proponents of homosexual rights. Back in those hysterically halcyon days one gay protest after another was a media event, beginning with the famed Stonewall incident of 1969, in which homosexuals, for the first time, retaliated with physical violence to a police raid on a Greenwich Village hangout. It was then that Russo and his Gay Activist Alliance cronies, took over the offices of Harper's magazine, inviting office workers to meet a real live "faggot" on their lunch hours. But now Russo has taken the "straight" route in getting his message across on what he feels is the public's perverted views of the sex roles: he's written a book explaining how Hollywood has duped us into believing the lies about gays in particular and about the "Me, Tarzan, You, Jane" mentality in general. It's called *The Celluloid Closet*—a sort of homosexual's *From Reverence to Rape*—which will be published by Harper & Row in July. Russo shares his thoughts on the book and the status of the gay movement in the Eighties.

Why did you write the book?
I wanted to write a book that my mother could understand where she got the impression of homosexuals that she did. So that anybody who picked up the book—whether they were gay or straight or whether they had a high consciousness or not about sexuality—could understand some of the images that they were force-fed. I just think that sexist attitudes in films are the

norm. I just don't think there are many enlightened films about relationships between men, between women, between men and women. Hollywood is never going to make a radical statement about sexuality.

In your book you say that Nicholas Ray's Johnny Guitar has present-day gay audiences howling. Why?
It's a camp situation of having Mercedes McCambridge and Joan Crawford being so incredibly butch. And they're both acting out essentially male roles. They both have on cowboy suits, and they face each other with guns, and they spread their legs apart and they say, "I'm gonna kill you," and they chase each other up cliffs. It provokes laughter first of all, because of what's obviously being commented on: the role.

Is that funny particularly to gay audiences? Extremely tough women are camp?
Yes.
Why? Because they mock the macho?
Well, no. It's a mixture of sort-of-camp, respect and love. Because I think that they admire a strength and they laugh at the role—for the same reason that they liked Garland—for being strong and such a survivor.
Buy why not admire a man for those qualities?
Because a man is supposed to be strong. For instance, gay men admire a man who is, vulnerable on the screen. Who displays some of the qualities that one is not supposed to have. It's funny between Crawford and McCambridge because it's also funny when Barbara Stanwyck (in *Ball of Fire*) says, "Call me a cab, you crumb!"

I know why I think it's funny. But you say gay audiences especially.
In the book, I talk about gay sensibility and how you grow up gay and

everybody thinks you're straight until you come out, and there's a way of looking at film—there's a way of looking at anything, really—that doesn't corrupt it; it simply gives gay people a chance to imagine what it would be like if they were not hidden.

I think what I'm getting from you is that camp.

Is an "in" joke.
Is a distinctly gay sensibility although everyone can enjoy it.

Yes.
All right. Buy why?
Because it's funny. All right, let me try to... okay. A long time ago, when I was growing up, I used to ride around at night with a bunch of gay guys in a car like teenagers do. We used to stop at Mr. Frostee and then maybe see *Bye, Bye, Birdie* at the drive-in in Paramus, N.J. And a cop pulled us over, and the guy who was driving was named Arthur, and Arthur was a camp. Now the cop says to Arthur, "What's your name?" And he says, "Arthur Kerwin." And the cop says, "Where do you live?" And he says, "I told you, Arthur Kerwin." [as an aside] Arthur is a little deaf.

Is he really?
Yes. And the cop says, "Are you trying to give me any trouble?" and Arthur looks at us in the car and says, "Who's she calling a cocksucker?" This kid Arthur is a camp.

I don't get it.
[Exasperated] Ahh-hh... He's funny because of the way he is in the world. There are just people who are strange, exotic creatures.

Did you just explain camp to me?
Sort of. All right. The only answer I have been able to come up with is that, and I think *Bim* was an outlet in the film—maybe I'm wrong—for a gay character.

Why?
Because it was suppressed elsewhere. I think first of all because a gay man wrote the novel. Because the homosexuality of the hero was the basis of the novel. [Editor's note: In the film version, Ray Milland drinks because of writer's block; in the book, it was because of his homosexuality.] I also think it comes out with Nat the bartender. I think there's something in the way that Ray Milland plays the character of a weaking, of a baby-face, of the dependent figure that brings out a tension—I'm not even going to say homosexuality—between the male characters that doesn't exist in a lot of films. There's a sarcasm—I don't know, there's something going on—he plays husband and wife constantly with Nat the bartender. And in the drunk tank, *Bim* comes in and *Bim* is taking care of Milland in the absence of Jane Wyman... there's something deadly and alien about it.

I didn't find anything malevolent about him. I just thought he was a little weird.
Even when he says to Milland, you know, "Delirium is the disease of the night, you know. Good night, sweet!" I think it's very suggestive. What does he call him at one point? *Lover boy?*
You think that's enough to characterize *Bim* as a hidden gay?

What I'm saying is that I think there are clues to gay behavior in his character, clues to stereotypical gay behavior.
What about the movie *Caged*?
It comes the closest to stating homosexuality that I think I've ever seen. At one point, Kitty Stark, the tough one who kills Harper with the fork in the lunchroom, she says to Eleanor Parker, "If you stay here long enough, it gets to you, you don't think of men at all," and she smiles at her. And it was like stunning, because [Hollywood] had never really gone that far.

One thing that bothers me about the gay movement is that lesbians are virtually ignored. Your book makes an honest attempt to deal with them, but still you predominantly deal with male homosexuality in films.

My responsibility is to analyze in terms of sex roles—for instance, how most men don't want to be called effeminate because it means they're like a woman and therefore less than a man—and to examine how the roots of defining gay men has to do with sexism. And I felt

qualified to discuss those aspects of it. **The roots of male gayness is sexism?**
I mean the roots of the way gayness is defined. Lesbians and gay men have not traditionally been in the movement together. There's been a tremendous separatist thing.

Why? Because of the inherent sexism and the economic superiority of men?
Exactly. Men, gay men, have enormous amounts of discretionary income as a rule; they're single men, they have better jobs than gay women. Gay men are trying to be more and more macho and masculine all the time, I find. I find as many or more gay men to be as sexist as straight men about women. Sexist in the sense that they consider women to be inferior, and that masculine values and masculine pursuits are much more important to them than anything that you can consider to be feminine.

I used to think that because men were gay, and because they were sort of in touch with a feminine side of themselves, and because they would give up the masculine role-playing and all that sort of stuff, but I see how foolish that was of me to think that now. A lot of gay men reject things that are feminine because as they grew up, being gay, they were always taught that if you were queer that you were like a woman, that you had to be some sort of a sissy or a drag queen or something like that. And now they try to show the world that gay men can be as masculine as straight men, which I think is a waste of time. I thought [the gay movement] was a redefinition of society, not only sexually, but in a lot of different ways. The phrase I always use is that lesbians and gay men could sort of lead people because they had an edge, you know, they've been forced from early in life to redefine their relationships because they had no traditional models. Instead, they all want a piece of pie; they all want to become American, American in the sense of wanting the American Dream. I'm appalled by it. [Laughs.]

Let's talk about current films. *La Cage Aux Folles* II.

I found it insufferably bad farce. And then, I thought, maybe I didn't like *La Cage Aux Folles I* either; maybe it was just the lull of the Carter administration that made me more tolerant of stereotypes on the screen, but during the Reagan administration, I don't want to see them. In part I, it was very funny to see a supposedly effeminate gay man try to act straight—to show that it's really all a pose, and that one could learn that behavior if one had to. Boys in the Band was attacked by gays when it came out in 1970.

Not by gays but by gay activists, decidedly the minority in the community. Most gay people didn't give a shit one way or the other. The gay activists picketed the theater occasionally and wrote about it, but only because it's a natural reaction on the part of an oppressed minority first coming out to react to the first big Hollywood film on gays. The world has changed in ten years; hell, we're so much more visible now. So *Boys* doesn't look as damaging

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MENSCHEN-FRAUEN

a film by VALIE EXPORT

Script by Peter Weibel and Valie Export. Camera: Wolfgang Dickmann, Karl Kases. With: Renee Felden, Maria Martina, Susanne Widl, Klaus Wildbolz, Christine von Aster

By GARY INDIANA

At first glance *Menschenfrauen* looks as delightfully preposterous as Valie Export's first feature, *Invisible Adversaries*: Franz, a journalist, tries to satisfy the emotional needs of three mistresses and a wife, falls all of them and unwittingly promotes feminist independence.

Bracketed by farce, the story opens into a grim inventory of experimental scars: abortions, sexual harassment, employment problems, child-rearing. Past traumas, which have led all four women into a state of dazed susceptibility, are shown in video images, ugly memories one flicks on and off like a TV set. In the credit sequence, each woman is dreaming about a gift of affection. Unwrapped, it's revealed as something ghastly, nauseating.

Franz doles out honorary pieces of himself to the "human women" in his seraglio, tells the same stories, whispers the same assurances. Eventually everyone catches on and makes some effort toward independence. This is not the happy saccharinism of Agnes Varda, since one of the characters chooses suicide and another gets sucked back into the mistress role. *Menschenfrauen* bestows quite a lot of compassion on Franz himself — he's the most pathetic victim of his own game, unable to break through to a relationship with anybody.

As in *Invisible Adversaries*, Valie Export uses experimental techniques in *Menschenfrauen* as narrative devices. A page in a typewriter becomes a screen on which a character's fantasy flickers into view. Moving figures in a public square freeze into parts of a photographic enlargement. Export is a virtuoso of *l'image juste*, and despite some misfired jokes and ham-handed dialogue her skill in delineating characters through off-beat special effects has evolved into an authoritative signature style. Her films take place in a world slightly outside this one. Objects and people travel between them without warning and retract, telescope style, into parts of someone else's memory, nightmare, or photography collection. Characters trade voices, scenes replay in reverse-point-of-view, landscapes are caught at angles that give them the enigmatic contours of mirages. Export is the heiress apparent to Bunuel, with a different repertoire of fetishes. The feminist argument that runs through her films is always carried to reckless, self-parodying extremes: e.g., two outstandingly pregnant women kissing and caressing each other in a restaurant as one scandalized customer after another begs the maitre d' to throw them out. *Menschenfrauen* posits feminism as one equivocal reply to an organic world that behaves with as much mercurial nastiness as the people in it.

A protean image maker in another media (she represented Austria at the 1980 Venice Biennale), Valie Export uses her films to collect ideas and artifacts disseminated in her sculpture, videotapes and painting under the umbrella of cinema narrative. *Invisible Adversaries* is riddled with quotes from

other Export products; *Menschenfrauen* is, at least superficially, more restrained. In the first film, numerous contrivances (pedestrians with mirrored sandwich boards, prostrate conceptualists blocking trolleys) intrude on a naturalistic mise-en-scene. Similar interventions appear in *Menschenfrauen*, but for the most part reality provides the grotesque detail. A bizarre concrete slab under which two women walk in one scene is a Nazi air defense tower that disfigures the center of Vienna; one character, in the course of an obsessive personal investigation, looks over morgue slides of real electrocution victims. One of the most disturbing scenes is simply a videotape of a real priest serving real communion. Nearly everything in *Menschenfrauen* that looks unreal, horrifying, or exaggeratedly atavistic is pulled directly from life.

One continuously surreal element is the way Franz looks. This ostensible sex object is a far cry from Richard Gere; he's over 40 and, among numerous

what were once mischievous, ratty, petty, vengeful personalities have been neutered to inoffensive, humorless nothings — and, most sadly, in Bugs' case, into a pasty-faced toadie, a castrated version of Ed McMahon. "Nice." Nice, like Ozzie Nelson, Eisenhower and Zeppo Marx. Not all Frelleng's cartoons are like that, but the cut-and-pasted assortment he shows here — mostly from the fifties and sixties and eighties — is a long shot away from the WB heyday of the war years (for those samplings, wait for the Cartoonial Knowledge program at the Thalia). Thankfully, Frelleng's own creation — Yosemite Sam, the "roughest, toughest, roughest, roughest hombre west of the Pecos" — is here from a 1948 clip — with all his "ya-lur-bearin'-critters" and his "ya-flea-bitten-varmints" intact. Regardless, these little bonbons only make you want the whole two-pound box. Bring me the thoughtlessly nasty Bugs, the ruthlessly competitive Bugs; bring me the Daffy

to Daffy Duck, he proves that, yes, he can act only with his head.

Taxi Zum Klo (Taxi to the Toilet)

People who think all gays are self-obsessed, elitist sex maniacs will find their convictions buttressed in *Taxi Zum Klo* — German filmmaker Frank Ripplow's autobiographical ode to charming (?) narcissism. Much has been made by those with scorecard mentalities of Ripplow's sexual batting average despite his ugly puss (it's a cross between Snidely Whiplash and Edward Everett Horton); but the main point he brings home is his stinking selfishness — he regards people as either ends to his own satisfaction or as pains in the ass. Most noxious is his tone of supercilious hipdom. I never thought I would feel fascistic for wanting child molesters punished, and I've never imagined I'd be embarrassed to admit that golden showers, for me, were at worst, unhealthy and at best declassé. The film is anti-woman and anti-hetero, and Ripplow's ostensibly laissez-faire rap on morality reminds me of ex-Catholics such as Phil Donahue, who secretly wish they were the Pope so that their rules would be the ones followed. Visceral polemics aside, the film is a little work of art: Ripplow is a filmmaker of honesty and wit, with a delicate feel for metaphorical and fanciful images. But *Taxi* is art mostly because Ripplow succeeds in making his unappetizing air permeate your senses long after you've seen or re-seen the picture.



Menschenfrauen

flaws, sports the mammary development of a man who's eaten too much schnitzel and drunk too much beer since early youth. His good looks sometimes slide off his face; he is alternately over-the-hill or mildly attractive, but certainly never beautiful, never compellingly sexy. It seems incredible that four women depend upon him simultaneously, but this also has the unreality of social fact. Romantic love is legally blind and quite commonly stumbles into men like Franz. They can, in fact, be found in every city, riding the sexual gravy train of other people's desperation long after their ticket has expired. This one, fortunately, gets thrown under the wheels.

Duck who's greatest pleasure in life was making fools of people who deserved it; bring me the Tweety who gloated at Sylvester's failures; Bring me the head of Alfredo Garcia — anything but these animated eunuchs.

Who's Life Is It Anyway?

The story, based on the hit Broadway play, equates a quadriplegic's human dignity with his freedom to choose between life and death. It's abstract, but how many people get to deal with the more universal esthetics of life and death. In a world filled with sniveling corporate termites whose souls are sanded down day after day, or with begging artists who live four to a room and have the hungry look of a Bowery ferret when the rent comes due, this freedom of choice thing is more or less cotton candy. The film is a neat, clean filmization of a tightly structured play, and its best point is that its pacing is fast, fast, fast, in tandem with all the high-clipped talk, talk, talk. Some of the dialogue has the tone of an analyst who has OD'd on treatment and says things like "I am obsessed with making double entendres only because of my frustration concerning the fact that I have a knotted string in my pants." Cassavettes, a brilliant director, is wasted of course, as he plays a didactic Dr. Kildare. His face, with its oversized forehead hurling ominously toward the screen, and his maliciously twisted features are fine, though. He'd be great as the lead in a Herschel Gordon Lewis flick. As for Dreyfuss, filmdom's human equivalent

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MOVIES

By MARY ALLEN

The Looney Looney Looney Bugs Bunny Movie

I once had a big fat bully of a cat named Butterscotch, and when he wasn't siring little Butterscotchs, he was beating up on the other cats in town. And then we had him fixed, and thereafter he seemed no more than a ball of fur, a foot warmer. What Fritz Frelleng has done to Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Elmer Fudd, Sylvester and Tweety Bird is virtually the same thing —

EACH
MOOD
CRIES
ITS
STREET
CORNER

CORBER

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SW: What is Wild Style?
FFF: It's a new style of lettering that changed all the styles that came before it. Balloon letters were what people used before. Wild style as a style of graffiti kept advancing and grew to encompass more on the social and cultural scene. It acted as a catalyst. A lot of things came to a leveling off point, when (after) artists like Tracy 168, Slave, Fab Five. There is no more Fab Five.

SW: What was it? You were associated with it.

FFF: That was all part of a myth. Any Fab Five exists more in the abstract. As far as graffiti is concerned the Fab Five laid their paint cans to rest long time ago. But the only reason that people mainly in rock on the new wave scene know me as Fab Five Freddy was because Rapture was an homage to Fab Five Freddy, a name that she put together.

SW: What about people like Jean Michel Basquiat who took their graffiti art and now are becoming successful artists in the mainstream? i.e., articles in ArtForum?

FFF: It's hard for me to say because I've experienced a lot of that stuff over in Rome.

SW: You were the first person who actually made paintings out of a graffiti style.

FFF: Me and Jean Michel were friends for a long time and we knew each other

would make it. That was long before the media bullshit. It definitely helped sales. There was this guy Stan Peskett had a loft on Canal Street, and he invited me and Lee Quinones, formerly of the Fab Five to use his loft, and Jean Michel popped up and was still doing Samo at the time, and Stan had big plans for all of us and then he went to Europe and we had this big space, and me and Lee were making these big murals and Jon was in the back making baseball cards. That was in '79.

HK: What about the film? Have you done the music yet?

FFF: Yes it's coming up on the tape.
HK: Does anyone rap on it?

FFF: What I am doing is very new. It's the first time music is being recorded specifically for the DJs. It's for them to cut and manipulate and then rap to it. It's made up of fifteen one minute songs. I recorded the bass and drums and then Chris Stein came and did the guitars. The DJs will be able to make these songs as long as they want. It's what they've been looking for all year.
HK: Where do you see rap going from here?

FFF: The problem is that some people now think that they can just rap to the beat. But you can't, if you want to land a hit in New York you have to get your shit together first. Not like all these clones who come out and don't know anything. It's like when I see a Picasso and say "any child can do that". But it doesn't work like that.

BOOKS

By RICHARD FANTINA

Shock Value
 by John Waters
 Delta Books, 1981

POPism, The Warhol '60s
 by Andy Warhol & Pat Hackett
 Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1980

"You're going to be shot one day, boy. I don't mean assassinated — you're not that famous — just shot."

John Waters Sr. to his son

"I heard a loud exploding noise and whirled around. I saw Valerie pointing a gun at me and I realized she'd just fired it. I said, "No, No Valerie. Don't do it," and she shot at me again."

Andy Warhol

Warhol was shot by a disgruntled, misanthropic lesbian in 1968; Waters hasn't been shot — at least not yet. Why do these two mid-mannered, slightly swishy figures inspire such extreme feelings in certain people? What do Andy Warhol and John Waters have in common? They are both social barometers, telling us more about American society than all the commentators and sociologists put together. And it's a time-honored tradition that if the news is bad — shoot the messenger.

These two "prematuration memoirs" should be companion reading. One is chronicle of the 60s, the other of the 70s and, taken together they make sense out of an "underground" that is totally American. Warhol's book, co-written (probably mostly written) by Pat Hackett and published last year, captures perfectly the amphetamine-animated post-beatnik N.Y. "underground" (a term Warhol is baffled by). *Shock Value* profiles Baltimore and elsewhere in the sloop-py 70s.

Both Warhol and Waters are obsessed with the flip side of the American Dream — perversity, neurosis, psychosis — sleaze! But whereas Warhol has always been attracted to a sleazy glamour, Waters' forte is glamorous sleaze. There is a difference. Warhol has always wanted to be accepted by the establishment on his own terms and he's certainly succeeded (especially now with his ties to the Reagan family). You get the impression that Waters could care less about acceptance by the elite — what he holds dear is considerably less than the lowest common denominator of humanity. (He claims that the response of a prison audience to one of his films meant much more to him than what the N.Y.

Times had to say.) Look at their idols. Warhol always wanted to be noticed by Picasso; Waters' dream-come-true was a meeting with Russ Meyers! A quick look at some of their films throws their affinity/antipathy into sharp relief. Compare *Heat* (Warhol-Morrissey's remake of *Sunset Boulevard*) to *Pink Flamingos*. Joe D'Allesandro wants the big time — the real big time (wealth, fame, power) — and he's willing to whore his way to the top. In *Pink Flamingos*, Divine and family want nothing more than to remain secure in the knowledge that they are, indisputably, the filthiest people alive — a very modest goal. It's only when they are threatened by pretenders that they become aggressive. In *Polyester* the theme is repeated with a twist: Divine, this time a pillar of middle class morality; has to deal with a unfaithful pornographer husband, an oversexed out-of-control daughter, a criminally insane pervert of a son, a venal parasite mother. She tries to carve a niche of peace out of this lunacy and finally survives, in a violently haphazard way, with part of her family more or less intact. No matter how ridiculous Waters' characters are, there is always a genuine sympathy in the way he portrays them — in marked contrast to Warhol's almost total detachment. Even in films like *Chelsea Girls* or *Trash*, Warhol's perspective is that of a voyeur.

If you've ever wondered what kind of sick mind could produce a John Waters film, *Shock Value* will answer that question. My favorite quote from the book's a review from a local film critic after *Desperate Living* opened: Waters proudly cites R.H. Gardner of the *Baltimore Sun*: "Personally the most charming and inoffensive of men, John Waters specializes in works of an unbelievably offensive nature. No other contemporary filmmaker has presented the human race in so disgusting a light. Waters' characters are not simply hideous, they affront the soul. They exude the aroma of outdoor toilets. They achieve a grotesqueness for which the adjective 'repulsive' leaves something to be desired." But as Waters reminds us from time to time, "I only think terrible thoughts, I do not live them... If audiences can laugh at my twisted ideas, what's the great harm?" He readily admits to what most of us are fascinated by but deny: a morbid attraction to auto accidents, natural disasters, kidnappings, murders, mutilations, rapes etc. (cf. Warhol's *Electric Chair* and *Car Crash* series.) Waters is an admitted crime groupie and spends a considerable amount of time attending gruesome trials. The title of Chapter Two is "Why I Love Violence" and if you don't identify with a lot of what he says you're either fooling yourself or you're a saint. He regularly visits Manson-family killer Tex Watson in prison and one of the people he'd most like to meet is Son of Sam vic-

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a high-ranking international security official. Caspar's courtesy call on the way to Turkey may encompass more than a couscous. If only Caspar knew. Hassan's real toothache lies closer to home. Not only does he fail to recognize the Polisario or the Sahrawi Arab Republic *contra* international consensus. Not only did he order his special police to gun down a crowd of starved teenagers. He also had the leader of the opposition arrested for allegedly opposing his Western Sahara policy (imagine the FBI driving up to Ted Kennedy's mansion and carting him off in handcuffs). He has stopped the presses rolling, banned the publication of all opposition newspapers. He has put numerous members of the opposition party under lock and key.

The Saudis pay for those American M-16s, F-5s, and OV-10s in petro dollars. Otherwise, Morocco has few friends. The Western Sahara question was under debate once again in the Fourth (political) Committee and in the General Assembly of the United Nations for the umpteenth time. A resolution condemning the Moroccan action and calling for a negotiated ceasefire, a cessation of hostilities, and the conduct of a full referendum on self-determination for the Sahrawis was passed by 73 votes to 7, with 54 abstentions.

Guess who voted against. El Salvador and the United States. The U.N. delegation may have a conscience, but its directives are issued by the State Department. "They tell us how to vote."

Study missions and congressional investigations in '79 and '80 found the Moroccan war effort to be "an unjustifiable and unwinnable" situation. A film shot by Hungarian TV shows how passionate, resourceful and attuned to the desert are the Sahrawis. They know every rock dune, water hole, and scorpion in the Sahara. The wind scours the dunes into parabolic reflectors amplifying sound, and the Polisario hear the advance of the Moroccan troops from a distance of many miles. On October 13th they stormed a Moroccan garrison at Guelta Zemmour that guards the route to Dakhla, a port on the Atlantic. Three weeks later this and Bir Anzaran, a further outpost deep in the desert, were abandoned by the Moroccans who claimed the use of ground-to-air missiles and T-54 tanks made the forts too costly to defend. Since 1978 Hassan pleads, give us more arms and we'll end the war. A real friend would tell him to stay home and help rebuild the vast congested warrens where hundreds of thousands of Moroccans are forced to live without hope.

tim Stacy Moscovitz's mother because she "gave press conferences concerning her grief." People he'd never want to meet include: "Barbara Streisand, because of her very existence; Steve Rubell of Studio 54 (snitch); Charles Manson, because he could never live up to his image; and Son of Sam, because he's so ugly and was such a disappointment after his big buildup."

The cross-references in these books are uncanny. Warhol comments that most people look better at age 30 than at 20. Waters provides the proof with then-and-now photos of Cookie Mueller. Both books are peopled with the oddest lot of lunatics, hipsters, neurotics, psychopaths, imposters and true misfits most of us will ever read about, much less meet: Warhol's "Superstars" — Taylor Mead, Candy Darling, Holly Woodlawn, Eric Emerson, Gerard Malanga, Edie Sedgwick, Andrea Feldman, Geraldine Smith and so many more; Waters' "Dreamlanders" — Mink Stole, Susan Lowe, Mary Vivian Pearce, Jean Hill, and, of course, Divine and Edith Massey. (Extensive interviews of these latter two appear in *Shock Value*.) Most of Warhol's nutty friends seem to come out of a Kerouac novel; Waters' compadres are much less intellectual. Edith Massey once spent a whole evening at a Warhol party and asked Waters after they'd left, "Which one was Mr. Warhol?" Both AW and JW are self-effacing about their notoriety. Warhol says that he was never the attraction at the Factory — it was the speed freaks and superstars who constantly hung around there: Waters downplays his own importance and constantly boosts his "Dreamlanders." Both can wax sentimental at times — Warhol is unusually human in recounting the death of dancer Freddy Herko (one of the numerous suicides among his associates) and Waters eulogizes his friend David Lochray, the star of all his early films. Warhol shows a genuine affection for his mother; Waters final chapter on his parents is nothing less than a loving son's tribute. And perhaps most importantly both Waters and Warhol are addicted to gossip. Both confess to spending hours on the phone "dishing" friends to other friends. Celine said many years ago that, "the world is ruled by women's gossip"; in these post-feminist times both sexes can indulge without shame. *Shock Value*, which I think should win this year's American Book Award, is presently available in a trade paperback at the ghostly price of \$9.95. So if you can't borrow or steal one (like I did) you should probably wait until Delta issues a mass market paperback. *POPism* can be found in hardcover in some bargain bins for around \$3. Both are highly recommended. This is our heritage!

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FEAR OF LIVING COMICS VS. 31 ASKS THE MAN ON THE STREET



Last Tuesday night I went to Tin Pan Alley in the theater district (49th between 8th and B'way). The place is the sort of dive that St. Mark's Bar & Grill used to be for about one week after it opened—great juke box, cheap drinks, male model types, bikers, the odd sailor, artistic louts, NYU blacks, 42nd St. blacks. What I was doing there, besides having cheap drinks, was straining to catch a glimpse of Max Blagg. He was reading his poetry, or maybe he had it memorized, I couldn't see. But I heard it all right, with sideways guitar jags and synthesized oblique strands from Jimmy Farmer, and so did everyone else. They were watching the Girl Scout Chorus, shuffling in tight spots, sometimes shouting, agreeing rhythmically with everything Max said. Max was saying some very sensible things, because he thinks with his heart and his cock and his guts, which is sometimes the most logical way—if you can make language do exactly what you want it to. He makes it melt, throb, double back on itself, fight its way inside where it's impossible to deny it. He also makes it work very efficiently, which is why it is poetry. If the words weren't so precise, stretched and tuned, it would be some sort of tough rock 'n' roll. What it feels like anyway. (Tuesday nights, 10:30 p.m., poetry at Tin Pan Alley.)

BETHANY HAYE

So I look at this pitiful whiteboy and I say:
Do not . . . remove yr sunglasses
Because I don't wanna see the pins in yr eyes
You are not beautiful
you are UGLY
and before I beat you to death with this dictionary read this page:
Ugly like horseface
Ugly like hopeless
Ugly like a hop louse
Ugly like hollow
Ugly like Hepatitis
Which means you're Hospitalized again
& NO I ain't coming to see you
I don't wanna see yr ragged arms
the tracks of yr years
I don't wanna look at you lying there
sniffing and scratching yr yellow flesh
Scratching and sniffing STOP SCRATCHING THOSE FUCKING SCABS ON YER FACE!!!
I don't WANNA see you
one more for the road
one more for that shithouse spike . . .

& those that aren't dead yet well you've crippled enough
More like assholes than heroes
In fact DEFINITELY assholes & NEVER be heroes . . .

Smack Yourself Senseless

By MAX BLAGG

And what's this shit you're mumbling about "It's my wife/ it's my life . . ."
Your WIFE? Krist!

Is that your EASY WAY OUT?
Sure, no-one can touch you when you're cruising on yr little cloud
and OH the romance of the spike and the spoon
the absolute safety of the nod
the cigaret yr fingers don't feel as it burns down to ash
the garbage gathering in yr ratty apartment
the sick whine that smack puts into yr vocal chords
the ease with which you'll fuck over yr best friend
or your mother or yr Grandmother if she's still around—
Anybody or anything just for that next taset . . .

Yr bleating lines yr tired whine you remind me so much of the sheep standing in line for the abattoir . . . & that's exactly what you are—
And there you go, there YOU go bleating sheep led on into shithouse heaven by the Romance of junk and copping it and tying off and shooting up
and thinking that makes YOU just as hip as Burroughs or the basketball boy and those other few survivors like the ageing mr Richards, the original blood change boy himself.
But can YOU afford a trip to Switzerland every six months dear?
NO YOU CAN'T
You are not so special, cretinous victim and when you do go bluelipped down the outhouse tubes with that moldy spike in yr arm
Well in two days or two hours (since Junk Time doesn't align with Greenwich Mean Time
or Standard Time or crying time again or ANY kind of real time) well then
Nobody will even remember yr Name . . .
Yr death will have no grace, no style, and absolutely No reason . . .

Ah but life is hard you say, life's so hard . . . Yes!
so why do you chumpchange pavlov slob make it damn near Intolerable by getting into a habit you can't Possibly afford
and NOTHING gets easier except that couple of hours sucking on mammy's tit and then BOOM! dreamland disappears
You're not in Kansas anymore Toto
You're down here with us that's trying to glide by too,

Living on the edge, all of us and you make that edgy life even more difficult for the people around you who not only have to nail down their valuables
and keep you from clogging up the toilet with yr gimmicks and yr bloodstained paper towels—
not only this kind of tedious grief
But they also have to listen and listen and listen to your dreary self-pitying line of horse/shit . . .
the stultifying descriptions of yr tacky version of paradise
the endless litany of junk and copping it or kicking it
or getting just a little to sell so you can make epough money to get yrself straight
and please I'm so cold I got to have another lude or tuinal or percodan or ANY goddam thing just so you don't have to feel that monkey crawling all over you
and PLEASE, I do want to kick . . .
Baby, you have *been* kicked, you can't get no further down,
so why not just go out, like permanente?
Instead of all this grief why don't you halfwit boosters hoot up for real the next time yr little junky clock runs out?
Don't be stealing anymore from yr friends or hocking yr tattered parts to some rich old queen . . .

Just beg steal or borrow a gun and make sure it's loaded and cock it and put the barrel in yr mouth
AND PULL THE TRIGGER . . . you will really get off . . .
'Cos you're not in the world Yoyo, you already dead, or at least standing in line with the other sheep inside the abattoir
And sooner than later, like those meek little muttons,
You too will be dead meat on a cold white slab . . .
If you're not a terminal cancer patient or terminally rich
(and x ought to equal x in that particular equation)
then your only excuse for booting that shit into yr body on a regular basis is that

you are stupid and worthless—
you don't deserve to live . . .
Like Brion Gysin told you 20 years ago:
"Junk is NO GOOD baby
NO JUNK is good baby
Is junk good? NO baby
Baby junk is good? NO!
Good junk is NO BABY!
Baby, JUNK IS NO GOOD!"

copyright Max Blagg, NYC 1980

* Brion Gysin, 1960



Nothing happens
that you don't relish
in some weird way.

CORBER

Buns of Fun

1 pkg. Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs
2C. biscuit mix
1/2C. water
1/2C. grated cheddar cheese
1/2C. sauerkraut
1T. mustard

Add water to biscuit mix. Using a fork, stir into a soft dough. Then beat until stiff but not sticky. Turn onto a floured board and knead in the cheese. Slit hot dogs lengthwise and cut into fourths. Mix sauerkraut with mustard and place small amounts into the hot dogs. Pat dough around hot dogs to form a thin coating. Bake in 400° F oven for 8-10 min. or until brown. Makes 40



Rocket Dogs

1 pkg. Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs
1/2C. tomato catsup
1/2C. corn flake crumbs
wooden skewers

Cut hot dogs in half and insert skewer in one end. Score hot dogs lightly in a spiral. Roll in catsup, then in the crumbs until generously coated. Place in shallow foil-lined baking dish and bake for 15 minutes at 350° F.

Serves 4 to 8



ART
TO
EAT

Party Bobs

1 pkg. Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs
1 small can pineapple chunks
5 slices bacon, partially cooked
vegetable oil
wooden skewers

Cut hot dogs into medallions about 1/2 inch thick. Cut bacon into pieces about 2 inches long. Onto the skewers, place hot dog slices alternating with pineapple and bacon. Brush with oil and broil for about 5 min. or until brown.

Makes 20



This project made possible with help from Nathan's Famous, Inc.
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THE SMALL MIRACLE OF 7 LOAVES

By LEHMAN WEICHSELBAUM

Seven Loaves, more recently known as the Lower East Side Arts Network, aims to keep some of the cultural glue flowing for one of the most wildly polymorphous plots on this planet.

"The Lower East Side is the most diversified community in the country," says Seven Loaves president Julio Colon. "We find that it is to our advantage to work with that diversity. We're all in the same boat. We should not have a color barrier between us. We believe in sharing as human beings."

As Colon describes, Seven Loaves is a kind of training ground for local arts groups. Colon, a youthful, athletic figure, calls it an arts service organization that introduces its members (and non-members who ask) to everyday intricacies like fundraising, fiscal management and festival making.

Seven Loaves started in 1972 with seven members (hence its name, borrowed from the cornucopias Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes). Most members lead a terminal life within Seven Loaves, because once they get the arts management basics down, they are able to fly

the nest and wing it all on their own.

Today's 10 members, cutting straight through ethnic lines, includes Charas, an Hispanic multi-cultural group; Tompkins Square Neighborhood Artists, who run exhibits in the neighborhood; the multi-media documentarian Tyllis Photo and Documentation Project; Tu Casa, music/dance activists; and other groups that offer theater and musical workshops, children's activities and magazines.

But Seven Loaves' longest standing, most prominent member is the East River Park Amphitheater Development Corporation, known simply as Amphitheater. Located on the southeast bulge of Manhattan island, Amphitheater has had an on-again, off-again existence since the W.P.A. days of the '30s. Rescued from the death grip of the 70's budget mess, Amphitheater has been undergoing a slow restoration under the tutelage of director Rafael Jaquez. Amphitheater alumnus Joseph Papp has been a prime contributor toward the planned reopening next spring.

Until recently, Seven Loaves set up headquarters at the big, old, red schoolhouse at 605 East 9th Street, formerly P.S. 64, now made available by

the city as a funky neighborhood culture palace. When Seven Loaves' dollar-a-year lease ran out in June, Colon and organization coordinator Fred Good were forced to relocate their office to Amphitheater's down on South Street. In the process, Colon himself lost his salaried position. Not your typical arts bureaucrat, he logs time as an unpaid Seven Loaves volunteer — when he's not spending it on the unemployment line.

Doubts about the future status of the schoolhouse itself have been lately resolved. El Borhio — a coalition of groups that share the school, including (besides Seven Loaves) Charas and Adopt-A-Building — have scored \$40,000 toward retention of the structure, with another \$200,000 to come. Seven Loaves hopes to renew its lease there very soon. Meanwhile, it continues to hold events there, like the summer's Survival Show (see last Eye).

In all, Seven Loaves is in a confident, expansionist mood these days despite its troubles of the moment. It welcomes new cultural groups to join its ranks. A community (ie. Lower East Side/East Village) orientation is helpful, though not necessary. If you're interested, drop a

note to Julio Colon, Seven Loaves/Lower East Side Arts Network, 286 South Street, New York, NY 10002. State your purpose, activity, why you want to be a member and any supporting information. Phone 619-1439 for more info.

Likewise, Colon reports there is a lot of available space at the 9th Street Schoolhouse for both non-profit cultural groups and artists and neighborhood commercial enterprises, though a waiting list of applicants is growing. Rents start at \$200 a month for a classroom-sized hunk of raw space, plus utilities. If your group would like a piece, write to Julio Colon. Describe your organization and make clear you can cough up rent money.



Artists' Space Show

selected by **Walter Robinson**

It is no accident that the faces and habitats of ghetto live-ins have become poetic inspiration for artists from white middle-class backgrounds during a period of economic contraction and racist backlash. Because the racial situation in the country is increasingly divisive (and that rift skillfully being manipulated by the current Administration) it would be naive in the extreme to suppose that this development would not be echoed in the current production of art. My intent is not to fuel this disintegration, and I certainly do not feel the artists themselves wish to, but to avoid confronting this complicated issue would be irresponsible. Much of the painting done by the Colab artists presently on view at Artist Space offers mute evidence of this retrenchment. I use the word retrenchment because apparently lines have been drawn: of the seven artists exhibiting not one of them is black.

An act of observation, aesthetic or political, creates a peculiar distance and therefore mastery over what has been examined. The subject at hand is the extent to which white artists perceive themselves as distinct from a black world they want to pictorialize. Pointing a video camera at . . . doing a drawing of . . . setting up studio in . . . are the sort of mobile artistic activities not usually considered parasitic. But when the video eye sees black kids fraternizing outside their housing projects, when the hand draws a picture of an anonymous black face, and when white artists decide to set up home and studio



John Fekner and Johnny "Crash" Matos collaboration is called "The Suffolk Street Fallout Shelter". The mural, painted on an abandoned building on the Lower East Side, depicts a nuclear bomb exploding in New York City. A statement, stenciled on the building in English and Spanish reads, "IN CASE OF NUCLEAR WAR STEP INSIDE". The irony is that it does not offer any shelter at all, for its entrance has been sealed with cinder blocks by the owner to prevent anyone from entering the building. The metal staircase is a cul-de-sac; leading to nowhere at the moment a nuclear bomb is dropped.

The mural was done to draw attention to a typical non-functioning building, which the city of New York allows to remain standing as a useless object - a misfit in a city filled with greedy landlords and profiteers. The City of New York should turn these buildings over to the poor, and not to outside speculators. The people who already live in the neighborhood should be allowed the opportunity to make the buildings function again.

John Fekner 1981

black men (could be Puerto Rican) and overheard up in the sky above the black phallic projects fly seven American choppers. Hence the title "Choppers over the Projects." The narrative implications are almost operatic . . . will the projects be utilized as detention camps, or are they already detention camps . . . will historical Rivington St. be leveled for luxury co-ops, or merely con-

A most peculiar acknowledgement exists between two paintings hung on opposite walls. Jane Dickson, whose images do their best to upstage darkroom castration complexes, has painted the face of a black teen who is wearing shades. Cara Perlman has painted a quite large facial portrait of a black man also wearing dark glasses (whom a German friend was certain portrayed Prince Tutankhamen). If the viewer imposes himself midway it is noticeable that the faces are looking over to one another. They appear to be sharing a secret, or a private joke, and I get the feeling the joke is on us.

ADDENDUM: It is counter productive to discuss the work of Rebecca Howland or Kikki and Seton Smith within the context of the previous fake criticism. Because their aesthetic bypasses the forged idiom of fake race relations it will have to wait for explication by a real critic. Fake criticism does not know how to respond when the old crown meets the new crowd. I would suggest to those white artists who willfully depart mainstream white culture that facile representation of the 3rd World phenomenon is not enough. Perhaps the mimesis should occur in gesture and attitude rather than in representation.

That might be truer to the situation at hand.

RICHARD ARMILIO

UP AGAINST THE WALL!

by **BETHANY HAYE**

The difference between San Francisco and New York essentially is that New York has the Poster Mafia and San Francisco has the Poster Brigade. The Poster Mafia will assure that 1) your flyer is stuck on every wall and Marlboro ad in profusion, 2) it is not pasted over by anyone else's, 3) anyone caught defacing it will be duly sorry. For a price. Hired wheatpaste. The Poster Brigade, on the other hand, is the ideological opposite. Their concern is getting the word out — for free. They've been making their own posters with revolutionary zeal and compugraphic precision for seven years, originally out of newspaper, to adorn favourite walls in the San Francisco Bay area. Recently, they've been organising mail-in graphic art shows, an idea developed from the ongoing exchange they've had by mail with poster makers from all around the country and the world. The collection now touring — it was in Manhattan at Parsons School of Design through July '81 — is an intensely committed, visually striking, urban-aesthetic assemblage called the Anti World War III Internationalist Art Show. Not too many publications saw fit to cover the show, so you may have forgotten about it by now, but it will be back eventually.



Paintings shown here by **Cara Pearlman**

in a Puerto Rican neighborhood, obviously the usual hands off policy toward the underclass has been breached. These artists are taking, but what, if anything, are they offering in return? And who benefits?

A note concerning settlement patterns: I believe that it is progressive to disembark from one's particular background and commingle, but not if it will mean the displacement of low income families more indigenous to a neighborhood. Artists must be aware that we too are subject to exploitation and displacement, that we have this in common with our neighbors, and we had better work together or we will all be out on the streets. It is the net effect, positive and negative, of integration that artists must be responsive to.

The acknowledgement of black culture in a work of art ultimately destined for a gallery might possibly serve to demystify the relationship of black to white, white artist to black Muse, and ghetto informed imagery to a gallery scene never remarkable for affirmative action. On this occasion, on these three issues Colab strikes out.

Bobby G. depicts the Lower East Side, in particular a portion of Rivington St. which houses the art workshop ABC No Rio. Figuring into his extended triptych are the truncated images of three

solidated for artist housing . . . will the blacks be gunned down, or subjugated to build the New Metropolis?? Stay tuned for a possible future exhibit at the New Museum.

On a more or less quasi-political note are Ellen Cooper's paintings, two of white women "et au centre" sultry black femme fatale. Utilizing a proto new wave palette Ellen edges her women into mnemonic ambience. One woman, in the final throes of a cheesy twist and surrounded by a gigantic pink champagne cup, and with the specter of a naked man behind her . . . in each portrait first there is a mental waiting game, then all hell breaks loose. The paintings seemingly address what is on the female mind. Importantly the artist has also chosen to depict a fake jazz musician (there are other instances of forgery but more about that later). Fake jazz, fake poetry, fake criticism, fake race relations: the implications are compelling. Her most complicated canvas is of an Afro-American, in a strapless gown, and with an afro hair-do. We may assume that she is Afro-American and not Nigerian nor Yorubic nor European because as suggested your white new wave neofauve artist is at sazen as regards his/her 3rd World compatriot. So far the satori is local.



SPAIN

Russo

continued from page 3

to me now because it can't be taken to be that typical anymore. People used to see *Boys* and say, this is what gays are like. But now they just know too many gay people who are not like the ones in the movie.

What about William Friedkin's second film on gays, *Cruising* (1980)? I think it was an interesting progression—going from *Boys* in 1970, with its sort of self-pitying, soul-searching, closeted homosexual, guilty Catholic, nelly queen characters to a lifestyle (in *Cruising*) that is so far beyond the hiding of the Sixties which produced *Boys*. How can you reconcile your admiration for a brilliant director such as *Marlin Scorsese*, who has featured at least one vivid moment of vicious homophobia in his films?

This is not only a problem with Scorsese. The achievement of the filmmaker is to create life so brilliantly that . . . [In Scorsese's films], that's the way those people really do feel about fags. They would be lying if they weren't homophobic. I am more likely to tolerate homophobia used brilliantly to achieve a believable character than to sacrifice the believability of that character to make it politically correct.

Name a film that is politically correct but bad art.

Norman, Is That You? The Ritz. There's a whole slew of them.

The worst gay film of all time.

Carl Reiner's *The One and Only*, with Henry Winkler. Why?

There were so many fag jokes. The best film.

Once Upon a Time in the East, *Sunday, Bloody Sunday*, *The Autobiography of Quentin Crisp*, which was TV. *A Question of Love*, also TV.

Was your book a personal statement for you?

I wrote the book first, to make a statement that had never been made before about the way that commercial films af-

fect people, the ordinary moviegoer, instead of a statement that was only for gays or for straights: to give [the American filmmaker] an idea of how their feelings are manipulated by film and to give them an idea of what America thinks of the male/female role and to caution them to begin to notice what they're being taught by film. Also, because I felt it was my statement. I believe film is essentially fantasy. We were talking of how our images on the TV screen as "Father Knows Best" makes us feel that this is the American family; well, movies do the same thing. And I really think that movies are taken as fact when in fact they are not; they are fantasy. And that now, movies are a relatively young art: the body of motion pictures we've had for the past 85 or 90 years began as vaudeville, as an entertainment, and ended up being the popular art form of our time, the social commentary on our culture. And what people once looked to for entertainment, they now look to for an image of the way their lives should be. I wrote the book because I wanted to expose, even in a small measure, the life that we have been fed—at least about gays—and I think by extension, about straights, about sexuality in general.

Malaria

continued from page 16

EYE: Lydon was at 54 the night of Bow Wow Wow. I mean Johnny Rotten at Studio 54. What's the world coming to? **EYE:** He was checking out Malcolm. He said once, "I hope he dies of cancer and you can print that."

Laura: Yeah, I don't think they like each other too much. **Bettina:** I didn't like Bow Wow Wow much myself.

Christine: In a way I thought it was great. It was so commercial.

Bettina: But not commercial enough.

EYE: Anything with 15-year-old girls in short skirts. . .

Bettina: They were too young. I don't like this.

EYE: It was really disgusting.

Bettina: Young boys are alright but not young girls.

(Laughter) No really, I really like young boys better than young girls.

Gudrun: I prefer older girls and younger boys.

Bettina: Jal

EYE: Sounds okay to me!

Laura: I like older girls and younger girls

Bettina: I like older girls and younger girls and very old boys.

A7

continued from page 12

pommade job with grease monkey overalls into a nice bit of blues on "Honey Hush" ("This is Chicago, 1953 . . . before Elvis." Good of him to keep the record straight). Lisa comes back on with the lead guitarist of Nada to punch and woogie her way through an incredibly sloppy version of "The Joint Was Jumpin'." (Earlier comment from J.A.P.'s escort: "Hey, you . . . the girl-in-the-leopard-skin-coat, get back on stage . . . you're terrific!") You sometimes get what you want.) And that was it from Nekron 99.

Who's up next? Hah! — can't tell without a scorecard. The bassist, Pamela, alleges: "Some people call us the Schoolies but we're actually the Spoolies." Whatever, she and the girl in the green spandex pants and sequin top put up the most diverse set of the night. The Bush Tetras were crossed with a touch of Shirelles thrown in for heritage's sake. There's more than a bit of funk to this gal trio and Madge, the guitarist, even puts down her main axe (demurely bringing out a music stand and carefully depositing her ever-present chewing gum wad on one of its prongs) to get all brassy for a few measures on French horn. ("I normally play tuba," she asides.) The vocals weren't too well mixed but the phase shifter compensated with an octave split that turned what came through into a chorus, and, although they had a few beats that even my numbed ear found missing, their sound made them come off as real party troupers. Schoolies of

Spoolies, they're not a group to be mistaken often, I wager.

By this time it becomes obvious that there is very little dividing line between the bands and the crowd; as a matter of fact, anyone in the audience is part of a band — a follower, friend, or supporter of maybe one or two but rooting for them all, in the final analysis. The intimacy expands to make the room even more of a cloister, a special place outside the continuum to join in a private bash. Call it "The Crowd Syndrome." Call it palsy-walsy chuminess. Call it cabin fever. Whatever. Whenever you get that much enthusiasm and camaraderie in a given zone, you're gonna have smiles break out faster than acne.

And speaking of smiles, following a delay to get their balance right, a brand new trio called Glad Corps got underway with a sound that was as different as any that night, or in recent memory. Tom played subtle-to-powerhouse on drums with Mark on vocals and bass, looking like he was the Somnambulist stepping out of Dr. Caligari's cabinet and sounding about the same. Rounded out by Steve, on lead guitar (playing slide in ways that one shouldn't) and melodian, they issued forth a set of original material that brings few other units to ear: some hip pocket P.I. and the weirder moments of Joy Division before their braintrust/singer went off the deep-six end. Spacey yet sinuous, abstract yet functional, just the sort of stuff to grab you at 5 a.m. and get the feet (and blood) moving again. Yes, new — for even when they'd run out of tunes they know they can still get up a jam for those activists out dancing on the bottles.

Given credit where it is due, there is a point reached here when the leftovers become responsible to the players to keep the energy flowing — and they do. Symbiotic as siamese twins, the exchange of entertainment and interest provides a grand way to break-in a weekend . . . waiting for the sun.

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Post-Gonzo Checks in at the Roosevelt:

a non-prejudiced view of the American Writers Convention

By LEHMAN WEICHELBAUM & CARLE VP GROOME

Groome passed Weichselbaum coming out of the Madison Room where he had been told by Kurt Vonnegut to leave. It was too late for that. And it wasn't anything personal. He told EVERYBODY in the overbooked room to leave, it being too crowded for minimal human comfort. The NATION couldn't bear to turn anyone away, until after the last possible moment, in its left-liberal fatal generosity.

They exchanged pleasantries. Groome, of course, was the erstwhile music editor of the *East Village Eye*, where Weichselbaum was also involved as a utility reporter with a speciality in culture and semi-professional voyeurism. Groome was feeling thirsty, saw unoccupied glass of liquid on table, was asked by Weichselbaum if he was the owner of that drink.

"No," he replied, "I have a cold and any germs I have aren't going to object to others."

"That's very post-Gonzo," said Weichselbaum.

Thus a bold, new innovative style of journalism was burped.

Post-Gonzo journalism is a genre at least five years old, at least since the sainted Hunter Thompson, arch Gonzo-monger, dropped like a vagrant tear out of the public eye. The fact that post-Gonzo had been around as long as it had without being officially acknowledged until the American Writers' Congress is itself *tres* post-Gonzo. Post-Gonzo is whatever is happening in 1981. Post-Gonzo is the *East Village Eye*, Ronald Reagan and a cash bar at a very expensive lost weekend at the Roosevelt Hotel.

As such, it was Groome's recourse to find drinks, one of which he gave, generously, to Weichselbaum. Weichselbaum, after enquiring from the lady at the ticket table, "Is this the site of the 'World's Largest Literary Cocktail Party?'" decided not to buy any drinks anyway. Groome bought tickets, but went out to look for abandoned ones as Weichselbaum launched into some serious buttonholing.

The buttonhole is the art of serious solicitation of people with coats worth tugging on. Weichselbaum stalked the plush Roosevelt corridors and in a matter of minutes bagged a brace of infamous counterculture honchos, notably Abby Hoffman, looking tired but being friendly, and Paul Krassner, his boyhood hero, in a red satin varsity jacket with a ravenous dragon embroidered on the back. Weichselbaum confided to his idol that his father banned two things from the house in his Yeshiva youth, one the novel "The Catcher in the Rye", the other the hipster's yellow journal "The Realist". Krassner responded graciously to his gushing admirer with the admission that "Catcher" was the first novel he'd read in his pubescence.

One of the many frustrations of the conference was the name-tag problem. Hunters after treasured bylines were compelled to peer intently and rudely at monikers typed tiny behind sheer plastic strips, or not peer at all. Writers, after all, tend not to have faces with the universal visual currency of, say, movie stars.

Weichselbaum, who, it should be mentioned, came to the Congress to

hawk a pet Utopian project for a revolutionary tabloid and would otherwise never have dreamed of approaching any place with close to 3,000 writers under one roof, was pointed by Groome in the direction of Studs Terkel, in deep conversation with Calvin Trilling.

Approximately here the pace of the evening began to quicken. Weichselbaum dove for Studs. Studs made a break for the bar.

Weichselbaum effected an introduction between Groome and Alex Cockburn. Groome, closet Irish terrorist, effused his appreciation of Dr. Pressclips' pro-PLO stance. Cockburn modestly thanked Groome in his impeccable Etonian manner and excused himself for the bar, with the promise of a forthwith return, which everyone knew was never to be consummated. Not that he and Groome were having a bad time. It was dizzy thrill all around.

Weichselbaum and Groome broke for the night.

In the last, gasping hour or two of the evening, Weichselbaum found himself at the Roosevelt's Growing Cock bar, the cheapest feature of the place, where he was shunned by the bartender, then rudely chastened by the manager for scarfing the happy hour grub without buying a drink. Groome, for his part, wandered solo like an uncartooning Stan Mack, catching undigested snippets of dialogue, like "Well, I'm trying to integrate the form of my past into the function of my present" and "Hell, it doesn't matter. I don't pay any attention, I'm just here to enjoy the people." Post-Gonzo went home.

SATURDAY

Weichselbaum arose before nine A.M., for him an unconscionable hour, in time to make the morning keynote panel, "The Writer in American Society." Moderator Jules Feiffer was a lot larger than Weichselbaum had thought from the cartoonist's own self-portrait. Panelists were, as expected, funny, eloquent, and just a touch longwinded. Of course, this proved to be the general state of affairs for all panels to follow.

After the sunrise session, Weichselbaum executed his first yo-yo of the day, taking the subway home, only to return a scant hour or two later.

Groome, meanwhile, dropped in on the noon panel "The Varieties of 'American' Literature." Laden with vitamin C's and armed with a half-pint of Southern Comfort to quell a burgeoning cold, Groome heard a procession of speakers venting their Third World bile against the encrusted establishment of American *belles lettres*. Ishmael Reed spoke for Revolutionary Reason and his own Pre-Columbian Foundation. In a post-panel klatch, Groome buttonholed Reed (see above) and held forth on the historical continuum between Reed's *East Village Other* and our own *EAST VILLAGE EYE*.

Weichselbaum and Groome reunited for the post-lunch keynote, "Concentration and Conglomerates: The Political Economy of Culture." Joe Papp, garbed in a fine-cut Euro suit and waving a big American stogie, easily got off the best line of the panel. In a deadpan delivery deserving of the center stage spot at the Anspacher Theater, Papp intoned: "I recognized a few drama critics skulking in the back of the room." Pause. "It seems that the Congress has greatly enlarged the definition of 'writer'."

Much somber oratory ensued, giving the glitzy Grand Ballroom the air of an overstaffed college lecture hall. Like a welcome class clown, Michael Arlen lightened the proceedings with a tale of the Great American Prairie, where two rival, local TV stations ran hours of weather reports and played dueling reruns.

At the apres-panel question session, Weichselbaum gamely commandeered the audience mike to make his pitch for his

newspaper, abruptly lopped off, though happily at a less than critical juncture, by moderator Alex Cockburn. At least he'd managed to broadcast the vital phone number to the assembly, most of which, he learned not much later, seemed to have gotten it wrong anyway.

Groome, having finished his half-pint and Whopper-starved, beelined with Weichselbaum in tow, for the Burger King at Sixth and Forty-Fifth. After Groome's repast, he and Weichselbaum ventured into a liquor store where Weichselbaum advanced a dollar for another half-pint of Comfort.

Bryant Park looked deserted and rudely inviting in the clotting autumn twilight. Weichselbaum and Groome situated themselves under William Cullen himself, author of "Thanatopsis" and mute three-dimensional graffiti board. They uncorked the Comfort and hung loose, watching the Park's rats scamper like the squirrels that had long since departed for the bigger, greener pasture seventeen blocks uptown.

Weichselbaum then reyo-yoed home as Groome returned to the hotel where he promptly buttonholed Donald Barthelme. Subjects covered included Groome's avid fan status, the surfeit of Japanese conventioners, and the natural superiority of the Mazda. Groome repaired to the Terrace room, site of the immanent third World Feminist poetry reading. Outside the door he overheard Kurt Vonnegut talking about a symposium he'd just attended in the same room. "What was it about?" he was asked. "I haven't the slightest idea," he replied. Groome took his seat in the sprawling chamber, lit as sepulchurally as a Bunuel set. He noticed Toni Morrison in conversation with Ntozak Shange, clad in a hot-pink jumpsuit and grey fedora. Groome settled back in Comfort as the poets filed by. The Third World writers, he noted, were the angriest of the conference, the rage in their verse echoing vividly their vehemence of the workshops elsewhere.

Weichselbaum dropped almost noiselessly into the seat beside Groome. He accepted the half-pint gratefully. They watched the almost dwarfishly small Luis Rivera mount the platform as attendants adjusted lectern and microphone to accommodate him. Declaiming preacher-like in a voice ten feet tall, Rivera read his many-layered epic of Caribbean colonization.

Weichselbaum headed solo for the Congress party at Houston Street's Chase Park. Weichselbaum once again spotted Alex Cockburn and thought of a funny line for him, to wit: Do you realize that all the writers at this Congress are going home and write about it for somebody? But Cockburn had whizzed out the door before Weichselbaum could buttonhole him. Weichselbaum left for a late Soho party where he received a back massage from a sexy actress.

By then Groome was home, nursing his own disease.

SUNDAY

While Groome festered in his bed of pain across town, Weichselbaum once more punished himself for the Revolution, getting up a half hour earlier than even the morning before in time for panel "Progressive Media and the Current Crisis," comprising an assortment of *Mather Jones* and *In These Times* types. With a somewhat greater degree of success than the day before, he got off his last pitch of the Congress.

Weichselbaum, his string played out, yo-yo'd home for good. He was not to see his newfound partner in post-Gonzo till days after the Congress' close. Weichselbaum reflected on the perverse exhilaration of the past three days and how so much of that was the result of he and Groome feeding each other's sickness. He was glad to get out, but felt good.

Contrary to his collaborator, virtually on the heels of Weichselbaum's departure, Groome arrived, under the weather and a heavy Nyquil buzz, at the Grand Ballroom. The panel "The Tastemakers: Critics as Cultural Czars" was, Groome felt, the most disorganized and pointless he'd attended. John Simon's German accent was almost as thick as that guy's in the Beck's Beer commercial, as he knuckle-rapped the Congress program for spelling "tsar," "czar," Sid Bernard, a.k.a. Mr. Ubiquity, bogated the audience mike for an excruciating five minutes, chloroforming the panel with an interminable parable that seemed to have something to do with rival entertainment guides. Sid waxed proflex even as desks were cleared for the last shmoofest just minutes away.

Groome sat pat as the climactic plenary session filled out. He could whiff the heady fumes of impending chaos as Kurt Vonnegut entertained a reversion flock of newsbuzards while Congress siren Victor Navasky glommed all by himself in the back of the room like an alienated media Dr. Frankenstein. The announcement went out that nobody standing up would have a vote. People clasped for seats in a parliamentary musical chairs. Voting began as doctrinaire partisans of varying shades of red flung amendments into the air like Molotov cocktails. These were big issues, like limiting debate to two minutes instead of three and women's reproductive rights, which Groome, in his Raskinikovian delirium, mistook for author's free access unto the unpeeped edition. Copies of the rules were tossed hand to hand, as even Alex Cockburn signaled as frantically for a specimen as a tourist bidding for the headwaiter's attention at Elaine's.

A wild-eyed incendiary took an audience mike and failed against the rule curtailing amendments from the floor. A foofy challenger countered that he had been to many similar convocations where amendments were similarly limited. "What were you in," the liberation fighter shot back, "the Nazi Party?" The crowd heaved with laughter as post-Gonzo checked out.

continued on page 10

West Coast punks have been known to kill theirs, or at least attempt to (well who wants to bring the 3 ply or 2 ply trash bags neruoses with them?) Others are unconcerned.

As you said, "Americans are apolitical." How do you expect them to see their dilemma — to recognize the abuse? Presently a mythology about living in the "age of luxury" is sustained throughout the middle class press (*NY Times*, *Village Voice*, *Soho News*) whilst the *NY Post* (for the people, ha, ha) encourages fear, emphasizing and sensationalizing violence. The readers feel responsible for their victimization, prepared for war and total annihilation.

British critics are very conscious of historical data and Americans generally don't have a knowledge of their radical history. Why should they? America is composed of pioneers who wanted to escape from the history of their own countries. People who wanted to avoid the limitations imposed by stratification. Take NY's Lower East Side — many immigrants who came here at the middle to end of the last century could give a fuck because their great-grandchildren have inherited the accumulated wealth of the businesses they established with the sweat and force of desire to stay alive, and they're now dead. Their kids are holding on, but somehow don't have the same stamina as their grandparents, dozed as they are by drugs, TV and inertia. Other immigrants who came here more recently, are insipid architects from Finsbury Park who think New York is *tres chic* (especially the East Village, my look at the Ukrainians and the quaint tenement buildings). Junkies see them moving in and notate the valuables. One day they're out gasping at the low low price of tracing paper at Pearl Paint, everything disappears from their apartment. It's unbelievable, Julie. And jolly unfair.

Some of the English punks come here and get laid. What, a real punk? His address becomes widely known and he fucks and fucks, takes penicillin, fucks and fucks, takes penicillin, fucks and fucks. They really play it up.

What do you mean "the only hope for American politics is for black Americans to become angry activists again, instead of defeated criminals."? How many of these blacks do you think want to stick their necks into an FBI warrant? The majority of blacks want to become active members of the American middle class and live a classy lifestyle. They don't want to be stuck with "vagrant with no visible means of support" (like a suss ticket). And these guys have seen history. When the Panthers really looked like they were going some place the FBI cut them loose. No-o Julie, come over and visit and stay a while, check this out. I mean have you ever been to the USA? England is really one big happy family in comparison.

Your in solidarity,

Ms. Daven Tore

P.S. What you say about England's having a lense on political bands that look good — have you ever heard or seen Ballistic Kisses, The Bloods, V-Effect, Victorious Youth? That's just for starters.

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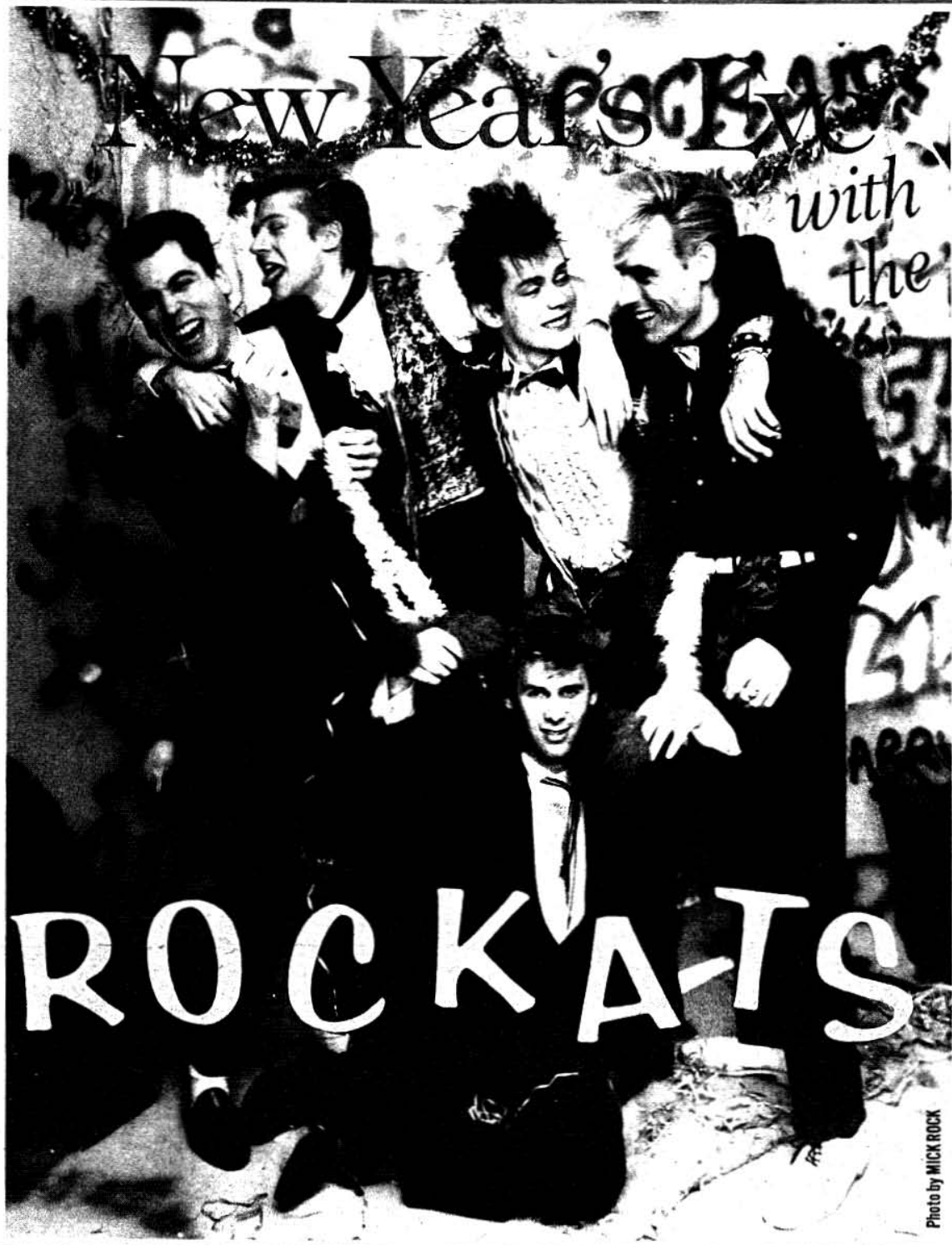
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