

NEUROMANTIC FICTION
A BLACK ICE ANTHOLOGY

Edited by
Mark Amerika, Matt Samet
and Clint Ruhlman

ALTX

Design: Nile Southern
Pub Tech Guru: Jeff Williams
Cover Art: Alan Sondheim
Produced by The Alt-X Digital Arts Foundation

ISBN: 1-931560-06-4

Neuromantic Fiction; A Black Ice Anthology
Copyright (c) 2001 Edited by Mark Amerika, Matt Samet and Clint Ruhlman

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission of the Publisher. Printed in the United States of America. For information, visit the altx ebook site: <http://www.altx.com/ebooks>, or address The Alt-X Digital Arts Foundation, POB 241, Boulder, CO 80306-0241.

Print versions also available on demand.
Visit <http://www.altx.com/ebooks> for more details.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

FROM THE BOOK OF LAZARUS *Richard Grossman*

MUCILAGE *Diana George*

DESEO TEXT *George Chambers*

FROM MEXICO TRILOGY *D.N. Stuefloten*

DIAMOND PENGUIN *Wiley Wiggins*

PIGS IN SHIT *Ronald Sukenick*

ART SHOW *Michelle Albert*

STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME *Matthew Fuller*

PETER *Jeffrey De Shell*

PORKY'S GOOGOL: AN EXPERIMENT IN EXTRAPOLATION *Erik Belgum*

A KABALISTIC DEFINITION OF FIN DE SIECLE ENNUI *Jacques Servin*

GENDERFUCKMEBABY'S PALACE OF UNPARALLELED CYNICISM *Gashgirl*

MURDER.COM *Matt Samet*

WHEN DID SHE INFECT ME *Bayard Johnson*

FROM THIS WAS CALLED WAR AT ONE TIME *Ann Bogle*

PISS MANIFESTO *Mandie B*

BURYING GRANDMA MUGWUMP *Doug Rice*

CYBER-CENTAUR *Doug Webb*

RUNNING BIT *Mark Amerika*

GLOBAL CRISIS "WORSENING AND DEEPENING" *Alan Sondheim*

THE REAL THING *Ray Federman*

AGAINST INTERPRETATION *Lidia Yuknavitch*

Black Ice Introduction

When I first took over Black Ice magazine some years ago, I decided to invoke a fun criterion for manuscript acceptance: I would publish anything I couldn't understand, the likes of which I had never seen before. But what about quality? you may ask. Well, I sort of decided to let quality take care of itself – because how do you decide on the quality of something you don't understand? – or on something for which there's no comparison? Quality is a judgment after the fact – after the fact of having classified, processed and digested a piece of work – how boring – compared to the wondering, wandering, speculative experience of encountering something mysterious that provokes your imagination. True, this is not a criterion suitable to those attracted by the satisfactions of a good detective story, but it may prove alluring to readers interested in the surprises of the unknown.

Criteria are measures usually associated with quality or excellence. But what about a criterion that measures resemblance to actual experience, the experience of moving through the world with all its contingencies, unknowns and fragmentary cognitions? – what about a criterion that doesn't measure experience at all but introduces more experience, that introduces ways to approach experience, or even ways to deal with it? Maybe it's time to recuperate the pathetic fallacy – on grounds that boredom is indeed best represented in art that is boring, but not for too long – and boring in the sense that Proust is boring, or Wordsworth in the Prelude – and that excitement should be rendered by exciting art, that is, by excitation in a parallel level of experience. In other words, criteria should measure the quality of experience being offered, whether the experience is an art experience or, let's say, a social one.

But there are differences in quality, after all, and we do need to address them some way.

Such differences are made in heaven – or what we know of heaven, which is the realm of Utmost – where, among other superlative things – reside Knowledge, Expertise, and Experience – that issue in authority. And authority is persuasive, it persuades us that it is worth paying attention to – because it is engaged in a mission of discovery, a mission in which it may fail, but in which it is the best equipped to weed out the stale from the new, and the interesting from the merely new. In this mission there are many mistakes to be made, mistakes that can only be corrected by succeeding, and more accurate, missions. It is this risky mission that I thought it could be fun to take with Black Ice magazine – for better and for worse. Luckily, coeditor Mark Amerika and succeeding editors likewise proved to be explorers.

When Black Ice went electronic, a new consideration became apparent: this is a medium in which everything is new, in which even the most traditional work is new because it is framed in a different way. Writing for the screen is not the same as writing for the page – there is a malleable, plastic quality in the screen that makes evident writing's continuity with fine arts, beginning with calligraphy. All sorts of possibilities arise, from type that can be moved around on the page and drawing that can be continuous with writing, to using motion and sound in various ways – for example, I am dictating this to my voice recognition program, which has its impact in terms of style. So one of the variables in choices for this collection is exploitation of the possibilities of the medium. The multi-dimensional aspect of the computer is fascinating – it spans a possible range from haiku to grand opera. Get ready – all sorts of hybrids are about to be unleashed into the world.
– Ronald Sukenick

from The Book of Lazarus

Richard Grossman

go downstairs and in the cupboard were drugs and i shot up and that made me satisfied although not with any sense of release but with a taste in my mouth of fish oil and paprika from a cheap hungarian restaurant and i got down on my hands and knees and crawled out the door and wound up kneeling in front of a naked woman with a voluptuous body who was holding a thermometer and wanted to jam it up my rectum and i was afraid that if she did i would come which i really wanted to do and i needed to fix again immediately in order to rearrange myself and especially my liver and the needle was in my arm and i felt that tiny hurt that signals an end to misery and found myself at a dinner party that was taking place onstage at a theater with favors and noise makers and heaping platters of double patty burgers and i was aware of the presence of a large audience and felt a spontaneous desire to entertain and satisfy them and a waiter came around behind me with champagne and murmured something in my ear while across the table sat an elderly couple and the man was wearing an ascot and double breasted jacket with a yachting emblem on the pocket and there was a diamond in each of the older womans upper teeth and a tiara was clasped on the front of her hairdo and the man had on a yellow boating hat with a black plastic bill and they seemed to be talking disapprovingly about me since they were snickering and so i left the table and walked into the wings of the theater where several ropes were holding a scaffold that was hanging over the stage and i grabbed one of the ropes and untied it and the rope hurt my hand as it flew into the air and there was a high pitched whine and the scaffolding tilted to one side and fell against the far end of the banquet table and several chairs fell over and the old woman was running around the stage with a gash in her forehead and her tiara had fallen off but the audience stayed silent and the man with the boating hat came up and said that something had to be done but i couldnt make out what he was complaining about and i stumbled up an aisle and

hurried towards the exit and was a few steps away from the swinging doors when the audience went rushing down tunnels in the upper balconies and passageways buried in the buildings interior and were shoving each other and pushing shopping carts and seemed to be searching for things to buy under the neon lights of a theater mall whose anchor tenant was a vast discount toy warehouse and there was a section in the store where catechism lessons were being given and a line of wooden ducks stood on a shelf next to the class and one of the ducks began to talk and had a hinged mouth like the mouth of a marionette and there was another section of the store that carried table saws and lathes and the man with the yellow boating cap was busy working a drill into a block of wood that turned out to be one of the wooden ducks and the metal was whirring into the ducks asshole and the duck didnt seem to mind as its mouth moved on its hinge while quack quack quacking very rapidly so that it sounded like an engine sputtering and blood poured like a river out of the asshole of the duck although the river had globs of yellow fat flowing through it and the fat fell to the floor of the warehouse in soft piles and began to melt slowly into the blood that was covering the floor and the man in the boating cap rolled up his sleeves and had scars on his arms that werent precisely tracks although they moved along the tops of his veins but were more like cross hatched welts with hairs like the hair on the forearms of women growing out of them and his rocky muscles traveled up and down between his wrists and shoulders and he turned away and was wearing an apron and i thought for a moment it was giappetto from the pinocchio story and that we were in that kind of workshop situation and i began to back away because the duck was on the floor and attacking my ankles as it waddled through its own fat and blood and i was becoming apprehensive and started to panic because i felt that the duck was poisonous and contained black widow spider venom and i had been told a long time ago that there was a cure for this venom but that you had to search out a tree and i began to think that there might be a department in the warehouse that specialized in the kind of tree that would relieve the pain of a black widow spider bite and wandered among the avenues of toys while keeping my eyes peeled for the duck that i knew had its own attack path because the duck understood where i was going and had planned out a strategy and had a map in its brain that contained all the aspects

and intricacies of the warehouse and there were arrows on its map that traveled at right angles around the store and at a certain point the forward moving tip of the ducks arrow path would intersect my feet as they moved down the aisles of the warehouse and i would become poisoned before getting access to the tree i needed but as luck would have it there was a book store across the street and i hurried in to look for magazines because i wanted to learn how to escape the black widow spider bite and a number of body building journals with pictures of women with huge physiques who were squeezing dumbbells and making grimacing expressions and were ridiculously happy to be lifting and men who were holding them up like prima ballerinas but hadnt shaved and werent presentable were in the racks and one of the magazines was entitled dumbbells in hiding and another was called precious moments and then i was standing at the bow of a boat that was bringing me over from a distant country and staring into the water as it folded back along the keel and dreaming about what it would be like to get to the distant country and had a vague idea i was heading in the wrong direction and was singing to myself but couldnt make out what i was singing and was unaware of what was coming out of my mouth or even of what i intended to sing although i knew i was singing something but there was no way that i would ever be able to tell what kind of singing i was doing as the waves folded around either side of the boat that was taking me in two directions at once and i was looking at a contraption resting against a bollard which had a lever sticking out the top and grinding jaws made of openwork bronze and i thought that it was office equipment or used in cutting cloth but it began to move like the duck moved and the lever jerked back and forth and the various parts of the machine worked together in such a way that it assumed some of the behavioral aspects of a mallard although i realized that it couldnt poison me because it was totally empty and fabricated out of metal and sea air and this made me comfortable until i felt a sharp pain in my side and realized that somehow the machine could jump high in the air and attack me at any soft and vulnerable part of my body and eat out my eye for instance or bite me in the balls or snatch away one of my fingers and i knew that as long as this machine was around i had nowhere to hide

Mucilage

Diana George

I know the woman only wants to bring this and every session to its conclusion with the least effort possible. She offers nothing in simulation of a conversation while I undress. She puts on the gloves. She oils my body. It is cold in the room, and dirty. I crouch down, as if commanded. (She would command me, if I wanted, but this too has been dispensed with. We know what we're about, in this room.) I roll on the floor. Sometimes I roll with my legs long and my arms at my sides; I move up one side of the room and down the other. The room is just a little too narrow for two such full-length passes, so I tuck in my chin slightly, to prevent any overlap. This time I somersault aimlessly about, repeatedly bumping into the radiator. Dust and hair and bits of things stick to my oiled skin. I roll in the filth until I am covered with it. I roll and roll until I am coated like a filth truffle, a filth croquette.

When I first began, I worried that I would one day use up all the filth in this room. But no matter how much dust, lint, and hair I walk away with, no matter how many coins, gum wrappers, bottle caps, cigarette butts, cellophane strips, betting slips, insect carapaces, pull tabs, and bus transfers I carry away with me, there is always more filth here when I come back. Does she roam the city collecting it? Is this room, when she and I are not in it, inhabited by a great roiling crowd, chewing and smoking, betting and drinking, arriving and departing at appointed hours, as predictable in their course as heavenly bodies, trailing these bits and scraps like so many showers of sparks?

When it's time to go, I put on my clothes again. I tape my shirt cuffs and my pants legs closed. I tape my collar to my neck. Then I put on another shirt, and another pair of pants, to hide the tape. The woman lazily runs a lint brush over my topcoat, as if she were my wife seeing me off to work. A wife who views me with contempt and disgust. I am not complaining. I have purchased her contempt and disgust as well.

Careful as I am, there is always a danger that some piece of refuse will creep out of my clothes. The rest of my day is clouded by this danger. Sometimes, at work, when I ought to be crossing off an action item or casting about for a pilot project to drive or generally helping or at least not hindering my team's effort to grow the enterprise, I can do nothing but sit in my cube and tremble for fear there is some piece of litter showing. In fact it does happen, frequently, and no one ever guesses that it comes from inside my clothes. From me. A woman I am talking to will nonchalantly pluck an errant hair from my shirt sleeve, flick it away and go on talking. Or a man will point and nod, and as I gratefully reach down to brush away the scrap of paper, we exchange a rueful smile, two clean and forthright men toiling in a dirty world.

I dream about buttons that slip free of the buttonholes of their own accord. Tape that spontaneously uncoils itself from my wrists and ankles and slithers to the floor. My shirts, both of them, fling themselves open, my pants drop as if by prior arrangement with the shirts. Everyone can see the clotted, flattened impasto of oil and filth that I wear all day, every day, right on my skin, right beneath my clothes, right under their noses.

Things I must not involve myself in: an auto accident, a comparison of smallpox vaccination scars, a pool party, a "sexual relationship."

All day long this second, secret skin commands my thoughts. At first, it was a torment to be unable to see it. Now, though, after long practice, I can inventory myself without even looking. In the crease between thigh and buttock, a popcorn kernel. On my chest, just below my clavicle, a drinking straw wrapper. Oil mixed with coarse grit abrades my inner forearm as I write. Oil mixed with fine dust trickles slowly down my calves. This is all; this is enough, to feel it. Once home, I go directly to the kitchen and begin to forget myself; I no longer pause at the hall mirror, as I once did, to see myself transformed.

When I die, I will be washed before I am buried. I cannot see a way around this. They will wash me, inside and out. Once, foolishly, I tried to explain to the woman that this would be a crime, that she must perform one last office for me. "It would be like being buried unshriven," I said. And then I saw my mistake. She didn't know the word "unshriv-

en,” but she knew a sucker when she saw one. She demanded payment, triple the usual, up front. She delighted in her patent betrayal. I could not refuse without openly accusing her. I could not accuse her and continue to come to the room. So I paid.

I will be resurrected in this second skin or not at all.

The woman grew bored with me. At first, her contempt and disgust had seemed total; I thought she was already as bored as she could be, from the start. But now I look back and see that that boredom was as excitement compared to the second boredom. True, it was never possible for her to be less interested in my coating of filth. But then, having cheated me for an extreme unction she would surely never perform, she began looking to increase her take in other ways. The regularity of my habit made this difficult for her; I never once asked that she bring a “friend” to watch me. I never asked her to bring in a man or a woman to beat me or jeer at me or masturbate me. When she offered these things, at a price of course, I demurred. I didn’t need to be serviced or witnessed, taunted or praised. I had what I needed.

When she suggested the video camera, I shrugged as before. But I was at once stricken and thrilled. I would have loved to have a record of it all, each hairball fresco, every littery bas relief. But I was appalled at the obviousness of it; when videotaped, I’d be just one pervert among others, no different from the foot-lickers, the spankers, the feeders. Couldn’t she at least have chosen a medium suited to my extraordinary tastes? Could she not fit rice paper over me and take rubbings, as if I were a rare headstone and she a picnicking schoolteacher? Could I not sit in—or be forced to sit in—a camera obscura, knowing that it projected my image on a wall while I was unable to see it? Could she not lay me down in sand or snow or plaster of Paris and cast my death-still form, or swaddle me in carbon paper and gently press me beneath an enormous weight? Of course, she could not. She lacked the imagination, or the interest in me and my perversion, to offer such choices; she was balky and obstreperous enough to refuse, had I suggested them. It was videotape, or nothing.

It was nothing. How could I have allowed such a thing? We met a few more times and the routine unfolded as before, but differently. The purity of her previous boredom had been sullied; contempt, her glorious, disinterested contempt, had soured into dissatisfaction. She wanted something from me now, something I withheld; how I wish it could have continued as before, when she suffered my pleasures without hope or interest. Like a lover aware that his charms have palled, I flung myself into my part with simulated abandon. I writhed ecstatically where once I had rolled methodically. I groaned and shuddered where once I had been still and silent. I embarrassed us both, I knew it, I only hastened the end we both knew was there, but I couldn't stop myself. Nor did she come to my aid, though it would have been so easy for her. So easy! If she had only said, "That isn't working for me," wouldn't everything have been restored to us?

I wonder now whether she was only looking for a way to make more money off me when she suggested the videotape. It was the same with the one girlfriend I once had, right before she left me. We started to do new and different things to each other, to see whether we would feel something for each other. Not sexual things, or not necessarily. We took ballroom dancing, but gave it up when we found that a sickly pall of allegory hung over our every misstep. We had fights in which we tried out insults and accusations previously cordoned off by unspoken treaty. We talked either a great deal or not at all just before sex, to see if our troubles were only a matter of the proportion between words and deeds.

When she actually left (but when was that? And how did it happen? I can't remember what she said, exactly: "I can't do this anymore"? "It's over"? "I'm sorry"? I squint and strain at my image of her mouth, but it always says something different)—when she left, I could not really believe it. Those last experiments, I didn't know they were the last, I thought they would go on forever. I thought that our lives had finally come to rest, as if on the ocean floor. Or that we were finally aloft, at a height where there could be no more obstructions to our continuing together. What we did and said, towards the end, meant to her, "I don't love you anymore." Me, I thought we were saying to each other: "We have reached cruising altitude. You are free to move about the cabin."

Do you expect me to tell you that now I miss the woman in the room just as much as I miss my girlfriend? More? That I did videotape that last session and now I can't keep from crying each time I see the tender pragmatism with which she moves the lint brush over my coat? I make do with slightly less filth, is all. I go down to the laundry room of my apartment building and gather wads of dryer lint for later use. In coffee shops, I take a just-vacated seat and press my palms against the tabletop and then surreptitiously transfer the detritus of the previous diner's meal to my trouser pockets. If there's gum under the table I take that too. I linger at pay phones and, cradling strange oils against my ear and chin, I call the woman to remind her of her promise, her debt. "You're still on retainer," I tell her and hang up before she can answer.

It has made me careless, though, the change in my routine. Preoccupied. And I pay for it. Today I recklessly stood still near a co-worker who was talking. When she stopped talking, I had a chance to escape but I didn't take it: I could have pressed my lips into a shape that was not a smile but a reference to a smile, to indicate that while my reserves of happiness were too low to justify a smile expenditure at this time I nonetheless wished her no specific harm. I just stood there. She took my lack of a closing smile-indicator as an invoice for further confidences. "My parents," she said, "gave me toxic shame."

"Mine gave me the regular kind," I said. "Non-toxic. Biodegradable. Won't stain clothes."

They did, too. It wasn't meant to be eaten, but it wasn't poisonous either. Like mucilage, or salty modeling clay, or school paste. It was cool to the touch and white. We scuffed through our house with great slurpy curds of it sticking to our feet. We slathered each other with it; it formed droopy peaks in our hair and kept our hands from touching. There was nothing to be afraid of.

Deseo Text

George Chambers

Padredos: What we've got here is a naked, greased-up fat man spread-eagled on a stand-up lunch table in the dinette section of an establishment called Apothocary Global in a city of some size and a river runs through it. The fat man, who goes by the name of Motherboard, aka Chick, aka Pooch, was attacked by a rash as he was holding forth with his friends who, evidently, gather at AG for lunch on a more or less regular basis. After this attack, his friends caused him to be disrobed and set upon the table whereupon they took to greasing him down. There he lies now, a chromium plated, double-skinned napkin dispenser for a pillow, more or less restrained by the ladies as they perform certain chant, and other exercises to rouse his sleepy phallus which, earlier in this lunch, Chick claims to have faced. We refer you to the "I have faced my phallus" chunk above. Our other best sense of coherence at this moment is that all of these goings-on are happening simultaneously. that there is no narrative here, although, to be sure, within the non-narrative are tales quite familiar as conventional stories to almost any ear, such as, for example, the shocking story that Sonnerfrator tells Motherboard's kid, see above chunk, a story, if I may say so, I am more and more grateful for the clarity of, given subsequent obfuscations and detours multiple which give no hint whatsoever of any saving linearity. Mamba: Well esaid, Padredos! Bot, hawnie, chew can't ged wed talking like dat! Padredos: What? Mamba: Nod whad, wed . . . wed, chew no, si? Padredos: What? Mamba: Hey, hombre. What ease these guy blowing on my moofin? Chew insalt Mamba! Padredos: Blowing on your muffin? You crazy? Would I blow on your muffin? Mamba: !Yo no se! ?Quieres? Rumbero: Comeon, kids. Easy, easy. You have made a masterful descriptive effort, Padredos. Mamba, you have also made an important contribution. It is true that the descriptor removes her or himself from the "bath," as it were, of experience. That's what she said, Padredos. You misheard her; she did not misspeak. Mamba: Thad's ride! I esaid chew can't ged

wed! Chick: I'm cold, I'm freezing! I'm hungry! I want something to eat that tastes like its good for your body. Maybe if you girls would talk nasty to my little friend in the bush it would happify him. You know, when Bartok came to the States with Ditta. No, I don't mean that! I'm cold, cold! This pillow is hard on my head! The rash sweeps about me like the Black Plague, on ear, on wrist! Look! Somebody get me some Fritos and one of those sausage cakes! Clown! Talk nasty to my penis! You know, threaten it. Bang dirt! Clown: You know, we're all real people here, folk who like to get it on and do it and get real and all that, but there is a decorum that prevails always at our noon proceedings that this request breeches. I don't approve of the tone of your remarks, Chick. Furthermore, I don't like the word "penis." It's too, too, too medical, too, ah, specific. It's like anus, maybe all words than end with the s sound. Popcorn Girl: Ah, shuttup, Clownie. Sappy, sappy. Blow, dirt on that pepperoni, slice thin, quick fry. Who's for pizza? Padredos: While they assault one another, I'll continue with my description of Apothocary Global and environs, the lost art of our century, a craft that was corrupted during the Reagan administration. When the cancerous section cut from his gut was displayed on national television in 1985, description was dealt the coup de grace. Outside our swinging plate glass bullet proof doors, where, in winter the sooted snows pack the walks and wall against us, in the brick amphitheatre where Clown performs her comedies to row upon row of unresponsive vulgarians, one may. . . . Control: I don't know why the girls like this guy! Popcorn Girl: Off, Control. At least he's not like you. Control: Which is? Popcorn Girl: Your the kind of guy who wears condoms not like the rest of us so we won't die. . . . Mamba: Controlie! Chew mean. querido, chew wear a hat on chore banana? Control: I hear all kinds of traffic on my bridge, all kinds of noise. I'll be plucking eyes soon, I'll be burning the sand beneath your feet. Popcorn Girl: He wears rubbers because he doesn't like to be that close to women, I heard him say it to Baby Doll who was jacking him off for a quarter in the alley. Clown: Wow. Rumbero: I want a world that includes Control The Troll but I hadn't realized just how far under the bridge, as it were, he is. The rest of us sexheads are in a pretty narrow boat are we not? I never personally felt so close to all manner of deviationists as I have until just now. There are folk in this world who do not wish contact with flesh other than their own and not even that, I suspect. Control: You're chumming

the waters, Rumbero. A little more bait and we'll have shark. Crib: You know, the Doc's onto something here. There's all of us sexheads dieing to get laid, busting ass for a piece of any ass . . . and then there's creeps like Control who breaks out a Trojan so Baby Doll can milk his pud. Clown: It really is this chunk of the text that I think we should leave untranslated. If they want, interested folk can get information like this from other sources which I won't name here. It seems to me that even the noble Mr Corn, aka Kornei Chukovsky, would agree with me. Mr. Corn: Okh, nelegkaia eto rabota – iz balota tashchit' begemota! Rumbero: Well said, Corny. To continue, however: my point is that we form a very narrow band on a spectrum I now realize. Whereas before, shall we say, I would have imagined that lubricating assholes would have been an activity remote from my own experience and practice and therefore liable to all sorts of emotional, fear-laden assaults on my part, I now see these fellows as occupying a bit of gunnel right next to mine in this canoe. Control: May you capsize! May the jackshark chow down on your cock! Clown: I really see no need for this information. Hypertext is always selective, always concerned with promulgating it's own truths and with fostering a renewal of the reforming status quo. The goal of all activity is rest. We strive to achieve the state of the dead center, do we not? Padredos: It's true that when you meet a person like Control you lose the avidity of your interest in fringe sex practices and are apt to see them as closely allied with your own deviations and therefore normal and unremarkable, but I want to insist that description is the issue here and I want to go forward with a realization of the minimall outside our doors, the minimall which contains the brick playhouse where Clownie struts her stuff, since that is the function of description. Mamba: Chew no, Padredos, thees words chew esay are chewing each awether, si? Chick: I wish I had something to chew on or someone would chew on me. While you all go on debating these baseless debates, I am stretched on this cruel rack, starving, my rashes racing about like sharks in a freshly chummed sea, my phallus on report to missing persons and my self-esteem diminishing like a barometer before a low pressure trough. What I want to discuss while we wait for my phallus to take heart and put up an appearance is the New Impermanence of this glorious world. We can now safely call this old-fashioned talk about immanence and transcendence . . . that's an old dead scale. The social

world, my friends, is finally on fire. Everything is fuel for its own consummation. Skim: Oh, G-d G-d G-d, isn't there something like a maypole around here we can shove in Chick's crotch and pretend he's got an erection? If we don't, he'll go on and on and on, banging his New Impermanence. Youth Farm: How come no one is looking at me? Isn't there something thrilling about my silence and passivity that you find attractive, perhaps in the way a plate glass window on a store is attractive to an attractive woman? Don't you thrill to the idea of such an intense passivity of flesh? Doesn't a presence such as mine stir a romantic agony to possess through me that untouched aspect of yourself? I don't understand how you can go on and on so about this greased sow on the table when you have such a specimen as me, all horse, before you. Mamba: Chew no, thees boy I bet has the goods! !Que! We leeft op Cheeck we sleep Youd Efarm onder heem and pop! how chew esay goes thee weezel! Popcorn Girl: I'd love to see his thing, wouldn't you? Clown: Don't talk like that. I'd love to see it. I do see it. See it along his thigh, that confident mounding from the crotch to the knee? I hate talking this way but passion overwhelms me, it burns away my natural hypocrisy. Mamba: Chew no girls, in the Kubaa of Batista and so on we had lods of stoff like dees for chew gringos. One show at the Tropicana muy popular was thees stawed poking showgirls, my mama was trumpet in the all-girl band she told me mawech. Chew gringo sexcreeps like thees stuff, nod my romantic esteping through you, si? Chick: Ah, ah, ahh. . . . Mamba: Que es, Cheeck? Chick: Ah, ahh, ahh ahh ahh! Menem: Ha, ha, ha. Popcorn Girl: Say, Mendez! Where have you been? Chick: Ah, ahh, ahhh! Menem: I slepted out to buy a book, ha ha Cheek's fats he's shake like chelly, ha ha. Chick: Ahh ahhh, ahhh-ah-ah! Mamba: Cheek nino mio esta excited! Eat ease thee thorn of love, si? Rumbero: I think he's going to sneeze. Chick: CHOO! ah, ah, ahchoo! CHOO! AHCHOO! Ahhhhhhhhhchoo. Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah. . . . Menem: !Que estornado! Clown: What do you say, do you say what a nude? A nude is a painting. This on the table is a mass of fat issue, sneezing. Chick: I sneeze therefore I am! Padredos: Oh no! Not again! Menem: Stuff chore ears! Skim: If I hear that story again I'll vomit my Cheerios and Pepsi. Control: I'll kick him over the moon! Crib: Ansefakuna. Popcorn Girl: What, what? Rumbero: His paternity tale, you know, the story of the sneeze. Popcorn Girl: Oh, that one. Eminently forgettable. Let's

Farm: What are you all so exercised about, I don't see a thing!
 Padredos: There, see the gate just inside the plate glass doors? Youth
 Farm: Ok, so? Padredos: Just under the scanning beam. see her? The
 short lady in the business suit? Youth Farm: I do! A black dwarf,
 dressed in black, carrying a black purse! Padredos: Well, everyone
 says that who doesn't know her. We call her The Avenger, The Old
 Testament, Bad Lock, TOT . . . she's out to do us in. Chick: Oh!
 Mamba: Que! Rumbero: Voyez! Chick: Ohh! Skim: The bird! Crib: The
 bird! A white heron rising from the marshy rushes by the low river-
 bank! Padredos: That's my job, kid! I'm the Descriptor here! Chick:
 Cover it! She's coming this way, she's lowering her glasses, from atop
 her wig to her eyes! Padredos: My g-d, look at it! Mamba: Cheek!
 Chick: Ohhh! Skim: It's bent! Crib: It's crooked! Clown: I've seen,
 everything! Chick: Ohhh! Padredos: It's not that it's so large but that
 it's bent, about 35 degrees, that's the phenomenon of it. It's the Peroni
 Syndrome, I think. Menem: Whay chew esay, chew esay Peron? Chew
 spic of querido Juan in thees manner? Chick: Ohh, ohh! Padredos:
 Peroni, Peroni. Skim: Pepperoni. Crib: Pepperoni. Padredos: Une
 femme apparait! Youth Farm: Je crois le voir encor! Mamba: Dios mio!
 Popcorn Girl: How can we tattoo it with our felt tips! Chick: Cover it!
 She's looking this way, voyez her eyes magnified in her thick lenses!
 Son voile se souleve! Rumbero: Her veil is parting! La foile est a
 genoux! Clown: We're beginning to kneel! We're helpless before it. la
 deesse! [[[Staging Note: Directors will want to ensure the ordered com-
 plexity of this high moment. Actors must be thoroughly drilled. The
 slightest misstep could destroy the illusion we seek to effectuate here.
 TOT moves toward the altar where Chick lies naked, his roused, bent
 penis a cause for wonder and amazement. As she approaches the
 altar, she slowly parts her veil, and adjusts her glasses. Those gathered
 about Chick sing in praise of this much wished for moment and also in
 astonishment and anxiety lest TOT discover the true occasion (name-
 ly, that these priests and virgins have gathered about Chick to deco-
 rate his cock with felt-tipped pens), since TOT serves as landlady of
 Apothocary Global and is ever threatening to evict this band of noon-
 time reveler's. Note also, that the players are singing snatches of a
 lovely hymn to brotherhood from The Pearldivers. This must be sung
 reverentially, with no parodic coloration whatsoever.]]] TOT: Hey!
 Clown: She sees it! Hide it, hide it! Somebody sit on him! Popcorn Girl:

Sit on him yourself. I'm not that horny! Help me up, spread my skirts!
Mamba: O vision O reve! TOT: Hey! Ensemble: Oui, c'est elle, c'est la
deesse/ Plus charmante et plus belle/ Oui, c'est elle, c'est la deesse/
Qui descend parmi nous/ Son voile se souleve/ Et

from Mexico Trilogy

D. N. Stuefloten

PART I BLUE MOVIE

We begin with the woman sitting on her throne. She crosses one leg over the other, as ordered. A single light is to the side-her right, our left. She makes no movement except the crossing of the leg, which she repeats several times. The nylon surfaces of her stockings hiss faintly as they slide one against the other. The camera hisses too. Film races through it at 24 frames per second. These hissing noises-her stockings, this film-are the only sounds audible in the room. The camera is a Mitchell NC. It is constructed in two parts, allowing the hinged body to swing away from the lens. With the body out of the way, direct focusing is possible on a ground glass screen positioned behind the lens. If the camera body were racked-over at this moment-instead of hissing with its racing film-the ground glass screen would reveal the inverted image of the woman sitting on her throne. She is darkened, shadowed by the single lamp situated to our left. That is, the light has the effect of hiding rather than revealing her. The light creates the shadows which obscure her. It is this paradoxical situation that we wish to stress. She is obscured, not revealed, by the light which illuminates her.

The woman sits. She crosses one leg over the other. The camera, and her stockings, hiss.

At last the man clears his throat.

“Do you know what this film is about?”

“No-not exactly-”

“You know it is pornographic?”

“Well, they said X-”

“Not just X-triple X. Pornographic.”

“Will I have to-you know-”

“Yes.”

She sucks in her breath. He says:

“Have you done it before? In front of a camera?”

“Yes-I mean, once-”

“Not simulated-”

“No-no, it wasn't simulated.”

“There's nothing simulated in this film.”

“I understand.”

“What's wrong with your face?”

“My face?”

“That side-your left side-”

“I try to comb my hair over it-”

“I can see that. What happened?”

“Boiling water-when I was a child-”

“Someone spilled boiling water on your face?”

“I don't want to talk about it.”

“All right. What did you say your name was?”

“Dominique.”

“All right, Dominique. That will do for today.”

Good-bye, she says. She leaves. She walks along the edge of the mercado. This is after she passes the bridge, the slaughterhouse, the opera house, etc. At the mercado the Indian woman-they are shaped like turnips-rearrange the plastic tarps which protect them and their merchandise. Their language is indecipherable. Dominique continues her stately walk to the portales. These portales form a kind of porch or arcade in front of the buildings which surround the plaza. There are farmacias, restaurantes, the registro civil, and a ferraterria. All are made of adobe. One large building has a sign: Hotel del Lago. Some years ago, however, its roof collapsed during an exceptional monsoon. Through its unglazed windows is visible the fallen interior of tile and stone and adobe overgrown with bushes and vines. Some flowered stalks-their blossoms are red, yellow, purple-stretch out through the windows, into the portales. Dominique, her stride as graceful as that of any young hoofed animal, passes these blossoms heedlessly. As she walks men lean towards her right ear and whisper. The men are small and dark. Sometimes they have to stretch, like the flowered stalks, to reach her ear. The women-the turnip-shaped Indian women sitting wrapped in their rebozos before their piles of tortillas and ciruellos-stare at her without expression. Each brown face wreathed in wrinkles is expressionless. These faces, that is, are expressionless until Dominique moves past. Then the women look at each other. Their eyes and their lips become mobile. They communicate something to each other, something secret. We cannot decipher these communications. Dominique, in any case, seems unaware of the stir of movement that follows her. Her black patent shoes with their very high heels click on the stone paving. If she is aware of the Indian women, or the men breathing words into her ear, she gives no indication of it. At last she goes into a cafe. She sits at a table. She orders a cup of coffee. She brushes back, with her left hand, the hair falling over the side of her face. No one in the cafe makes any comment. We do, however. It is our belief that her beauty would be incomplete without this disfigura-

tion thus revealed. Could her right eye be as beautiful without the left? That eye, blank, milky, lifeless, protrudes slightly, as though ready to fall from its scarred socket. The stiff parchment skin around it is finely wrinkled. The ear is nearly gone—only a lump of cartilage remains. Her mouth, on her left, does not seem to end but continues as a scar nearly to her throat. Could her mouth be as lovely without this scar? We believe not. Her beauty, her disfigurement, is entire, of a piece. She sits in the cafe, her beauty complete, sipping at her coffee. Soon a man joins her. A cigarette dangles from his lower lip, which seems wet and excessively red. He talks to her. She does not look at him. Occasionally she nods, or makes some agreeable noise. Finally he stands. He makes a last comment. She nods again, looking down at her hands. Then he leaves. After a while she pushes aside the cup of coffee. She stares vaguely around her. She puts money on the table. Then she leaves.

She enters from our left. The door parts; light spills into the darkened room. She takes her place, as ordered, on the throne. She crosses one leg—her right—over the other, her left—

The room has been kept darkened, perhaps for days. As the door parts light springs with a feral eagerness across the room. This intrusion of light has an aspect of violence to it. The light leaps across the room with a tangible force. There is something of the raptor in this leap. Light and shadow are being manipulated in this scene to achieve some effect, some goal, before the filming even begins. The woman, however, seems a willing participant. It is she who slides back the latch. Though well-oiled, it clicks loudly, the metal tongue drawn against its internal spring by a knob rotated counter-clockwise, then released. The door itself appears heavy. The side facing us is ornately carved. We see a gargoyle's face amid resplendent leaves. Lizards coil at each corner. The door moves easily, in spite of its weight, which is supported by three brass hinges, releasing, as it opens, the light which springs unbounded across the room with something very like an audible noise, so sudden is its intrusion. At the same time, thrown obliquely across the floor and entirely within this shaft of light, is the shadow of the woman. The shadow, and the woman, pause for a moment, until the quartz light on its tripod is turned on. This appears to be a signal, for the woman now steps into the room and shuts the door—

whose latch once again snaps audibly as the tongue slides back, then rebounds-shuts the door, we say, behind her, vanquishing at that moment both the light and her shadow thrown obliquely within it.

The camera hisses. A man speaks.

“How is your hotel?”

“My hotel?”

“Your room-your room in the hotel.”

“It’s all right.”

“And your trip?”

“My trip-”

“Your journey down here. Was it comfortable? Easy? Pleasant?”

“It was all right.”

“All right? Not-difficult?”

“No.”

“Yet you were late. A week, is that right?”

“Was it a week?”

“You delayed your flight a week. Seven days, exactly.”

“There were things—it took longer than I expected-”

“As it happens it doesn’t matter. There have been delays here. The set isn’t ready. The script is-incomplete. Have you seen the faces in the mercado? In the portales?”

“Well-faces?”

“I mean the faces for sale. The wood carvings especially. You’ve seen them?”

“I noticed something-”

“Do you know what they are for?”

“No.”

“What is your interest in film?”

“In film?”

“Don’t stop crossing your legs. You can talk and move your legs at the same time, cant you? A little higher-bring the leg a little higher as it crosses. And when you lower the leg, slide it-slide one calf against the other. You have splendid legs, Dominique. It is Dominique, isn’t it? Young, coltish. No, keep the legs parallel-one pressed against the other. Hold them there for a moment. You must give us a chance to admire them, mustn’t you? Then uncross-as before-slowly-”

“Like this?”

“That is fine. You are an actress, Dominique? A real actress?”

“I did another-you know-film-”

“No, no. What I mean, Dominique, is acting a passion with you? Is it your life?”

“I don’t think-”

“Do you know who I am?”

“You’re the director.”

“Yes, the director. The director, Dominique. That’s who I am.”

After a while the film stops hissing. Good-bye, she says. She walks past the slaughterhouse-the abasto municipal-where a steer shrieks as his throat is being cut. Her walk is graceful, slow. She wears very high heeled shoes. Her legs are sleek in fine stockings. Indian women squat on the sidewalk before baskets woven of tule. Mastiffs with swinging teats and drooling jaws sniff at her footsteps. Is she aware of any of this? She passes the opera house without a glance. In the opera house a movie is showing. Posters reveal a blonde woman thrown onto her back before brutal men. Her legs, in very high heels and fine stockings, are sprawled apart. One can see white thighs above the stocking tops. A breast has come loose from a torn brassiere. Para adultos, a hand-lettered sign advises. The film is called La Reina de las Vegas. There is no English translation. The brutal men hold their rifles upright, watching the woman sprawled before them. Dominique continues past the opera house, past the mercado with its faces, faces both carved and living, wood and flesh, on through the portales, at last to her hotel. A man awaits her in her room. It is not clear how he got in. They talk for some minutes. The woman seems uncomfortable. She does not look the man in his eyes. He laughs, finally, and gives her a small cellophane packet. She gives him money. He leaves. The door clicks shut. She goes into the bathroom. Her hands are trembling.

He waits in the darkened room, perhaps for hours. The room is rectangular. It measures ten meters by twenty. He sits with his back to one long wall. A camera-the famous Mitchell NC-is in front of him. A door is behind him. The door leads to other rooms in what seems to be a very large building. At last the woman enters from our left. She takes her place. Her stockings hiss as their surfaces pass one over the other. The man, who has been waiting for her in the darkened room, lifts his head.

“You are late.”

“Am I?”

“I’ve waited for hours.”

“I didn’t realize-”

“Nevertheless I’ve used the time well. I’ve been thinking, you see. Sometimes a man must think-in darkness, in solitude. Images come to a man then. Images that have roots, Dominique, roots that stretch backwards into time and outward into space-images that speak, that signify something. Do you know what I am saying?”

“I’m not sure.”

“Everyone is waiting, Dominique. Complaining. Have you heard them? Are they whining into your ear?”

“I’ve not met-”

“You’ve not met them yet? My crew of rats? Ghastly people, Dominique. Sometimes I am embarrassed to be in their presence-to be associated with them. Can you imagine wringing a performance from them? Any of them?”

“Is this-what I am doing now-part of the film?”

“Is it? Is the camera running, Dominique? Can you hear it? I am too tired to listen, my dear. I think I’ll sit here for a while longer. The solitude soothes me. Noiseless-peaceful. Don’t you agree, Dominique?”

The camera stops hissing. Good-bye, she says. She pulls down her skirt, which has ridden up her thighs. Her stockings wrinkle a little at the knee. Her walk is stately, as graceful as that of any young hoofed animal. She passes the bridge, the abasto municipal, the opera house where a line of men has formed. The men watch her, surreptitiously. Indian women turn to each other as she passes. Their eyes, their mouths become suddenly mobile. What secrets do they pass to each other? Men whisper into her right ear. The warm breath is not

unpleasant, surely. Yet she does not turn, does not acknowledge their presence. She goes to her room. After a moment there is a discreet knock. A small, dark man enters. He is almost breathless, as though he has run up a flight of stairs. His breath hisses between his teeth. He seems close to panic. "Come in, then," the woman says. The man's eyes roll. "Digame?" he squeaks. She unfastens his belt buckle. His uncircumcised penis, like a dark tuber, lies lax against his thigh. "You're so hairless," she says, as though surprised. She takes his organ in her mouth. Then she pulls him to the bed. She still wears her stockings, but her groin is bare, as hairless as his. When he stands back up-only seconds have passed-she holds out her hand. "Fifty thousand," she says. He stares at her in terror. He jerks his pants back on. He seems ready to run. "He told you fifty thousand, didn't he? You have it with you?" "Mande?" he squeaks. "Digame?" But he pulls from a pocket a soiled fifty thousand peso note. He looks around, wildly. "Here," she says, holding out her hand. The man drops the note and flees. Without looking at it-the bill lies dark and lax on the floor-she goes to the bathroom. Her one good eye is as hooded, as secretive, as blank as the other.

She enters from the left, as ordered. Light springs with a feral eagerness across the room, which has been kept darkened for days. She turns to the side one foot clad in a very high heeled shoe. Its shadow, cast forward by the sun low to the horizon, exaggerates the preternatural length and slenderness of this heel. There is no response, however, from within the room. At last she continues inside. The door swings shut behind her. For a moment she is invisible in the room suddenly black. Then she pulls at the heavy drapes which all this time have hung across the windowed doors behind her throne. An amber light spreads across the room, as thick and slow as molasses. She stares outside, at the lake, the docks, the incomplete construction with its clutter of wood and adobe. It is now possible-while she is thus engaged-to examine in more detail the room which hitherto has been kept darkened. Tapestries hang on the walls, their origins lost in the dim heights where the walls join the ceiling. Elsewhere hang wooden masks-faces crawling with lizards, two faces sharing three eyes, beards which descend into coiling serpents-and the famous mer-men of the lake district, each four or five feet in length: fish tails, scaly and finned,

linked to the torsos of swimming men with protruding, feverish eyes and moveable arms. These mer-men, called sirenos, are carved from wood by a village's most adept craftsman, then painted by a bruja, or witch, using dyes from flowers, bark, and insects only. The fishtail and the man-torso are separated so that a woman can suspend the carving from her waist-thus the tail behind, the torso before-and, reaching forward, manipulate the arms to mimic swimming. Only women are allowed to wear these mer-men. Worn ritually during a waxing moon, they guarantee a woman's fertility. Men are not allowed to watch this unless they are covered by zapote leaves and their faces smeared with ochre clay. More items in this room will be described later. Dominique remains at the glassed doors-their ornate frames date from the 17th century-until she hears a noise behind her. She turns slowly, leading with her head, then her shoulders, her hips following as she swivels on the toes of her high heeled shoes. The gesture is rather affected, but undeniably graceful. Standing at the doorway-the doorway behind the camera, where the man usually sits-is a low, lumpish figure, scarcely visible in this amber light. After a silent moment-perhaps a cloud moves from before the sun-the light intensifies, and shifts from true amber to something rather more yellow. The lumpish shape thus becomes more defined. Perhaps aware of this-aware she is no longer hidden-the figure moves forward, exhibiting an odd, bouncing motion of her head, which is slung forward. Her shoulders are round. Her lower jaw extends beyond her upper lips. She looks rather like a hyena. The skin of her face is downy and mottled.

"My dear," this woman says. "You are early."

"But I thought I was late again."

"Not at all. I am quite certain of the time."

"Yesterday I was late-"

"So we heard. Endlessly, it seemed. Dominique, is it not?"

"Yes-"

"And tell me, my dear. Are you a dominator-or a domineer?"

“What?”

The woman brays suddenly with laughter.

She walks in blackness to the window, whose heavy drapes she swings aside. A light, as thick and heavy as molasses, spreads through the room. We see sirenos, faces crawling with lizards, tapestries hanging from a ceiling too high to discern. A woman-she looks like a hyena-enters. The two of them talk. The woman brays suddenly with laughter. Her spittle flashes like a spray of tiny jewels in this amber light. It seems she wears jewelry everywhere. There are rings on each yellow finger, sometimes more than one, earrings dangling from earrings, rings in the flanges of her nose. We can identify jasper and sapphire, chalcedony and emerald, sardonyx, sardus, and chrysolite, fine beryl and topaz. Chrysoprase, jacinth, and amethyst are woven into her orange hair. Her fingers have long nails, lacquered green. Rubies, or perhaps garnets, are glued there. Her open toed pumps are festooned with tiny diamonds. Many of these jewels are coarsely faceted. There are gold chains and silver filigree dangling from each lobe, from each orifice. In the amber glow there is a nimbus of light surrounding her. Dominique retreats a step: the woman's breath, emerging hissing from between yellow stubs of teeth, is foul. They go through another door-this on the wall to our right, opposite the entrance-with the woman's hand grasping Dominique's elbow. In the next room hang racks of dresses, skirts, blouses, wraps, slips, half slips, camisoles, corsets, garter belts, and brassieres, some with their cups torn. Many are fine, delicate, edged with Belgium lace. In drawers are stockings, stoles, gloves, hats, some of them veiled, plus ribbons and costume jewelry. Shoes in their original boxes-we recognize Spanish and Italian brand names-are stacked on shelves. An iron chandelier dangles from the ceiling, which has trompe l'oeil scallops painted on it. There is yellow electrical light everywhere. Dominique is ordered to disrobe. This she does with an affected diffidence. She wears a twilight colored dress with buttons up its front. She steps out of it, and hangs the dress over a chair. The woman stares at her, grinning. No one could avoid pleasure in the sight of such a fine, slender animal, still clad in her high heeled shoes, her legs sheathed in stockings, breasts contained in an underwired bit of lace, the bare mons nearly revealed through a thin wisp of silk. Her

diffidence, under the woman's stare, begins to desert her. A flush spreads down her neck. She shifts her weight from one stiletto heel to the other. At that moment a door opens. A man steps into the room. A cigarette dangles from his lips, which are thin, wet, and surprisingly red. "Don't turn your back to her, my dear. I warn you-our Sheba is prone to attack."

"Our Sheba?"

"Hasn't she introduced herself? You must be Dominique, our lurid starlet. Dominique, meet Sheba. And I am your co-star. Garred, my dear."

His cigarette wobbles as he speaks. His face has the rubbery look of a drunk. His cheeks are highly colored. He reaches over and hooks one finger under the elastic stretching from Dominique's garter belt to her stocking.

"A nice bit of crumpet, wouldn't you say, Sheba? Are we going to vie for her affections, you and I?"

She baarks.

Garred!" she says. "What a nice surprise. But wouldn't you say she is too old for you?"

And the wrong sex as well?"

"Aren't we all, Sheba?"

"Have you a bottle with you?"

"Have you glasses?"

"The finest crystal, of course, dear Garred."

"Then shall we party? Dominique? Have you developed yet a taste for our Mexican brandy?"

A fine, burning liquid, Dominique, well suited to our cool evenings-

"I don't feel so well."

"Not so well? She hasn't started fondling you, has she? Sheba, that's enough to turn anyone's stomach."

"Better turn her stomach than her arse."

"Is that your preferred aperture these days?"

"Have you become discriminatory?"

"Any port in a storm-that's our song, isn't it?"

"It's your melody, I believe."

"Melody, malady-are you paying attention, Dominique?"

"No, really-I don't feel well."

"She's not well, Sheba."

"She does seem pale, Garred."

"Can we do this-another time? Tomorrow?"

"Can we, Sheba?"

"Are you in a hurry, Garred? Certainly our director isn't."

"We are learning, Sheba and I, the fine art of intemperate dalliance, the inconclusive meanderings of day after day, of manana, Dominique, we have all become infected with manana--"

Garred peels his cigarette butt from his wet lips, looks at it a moment, then drops it onto the tiled floor. Good-bye, Dominique says. She walks over the bridge, past the slaughter house where hoarse cries reverberate, past the opera house, whose lights are now blazing,

through the portales, to her hotel. Three men, small and dark, wait outside her room. There is a fine layer of moisture on Dominique's pale face, rather like the dew one finds in the morning on a white flower newly opened. There is an agitation about her that is only partially concealed. Her face, normally so fine, seems swollen. Her neck has thickened. Is this possible? Perhaps it is a trick of the light, the dim light in this hotel corridor. The three men waiting for her are dressed in what is clearly their best clothes: suit jackets bare at the elbows but recently brushed, white shirts only somewhat dingy with age, and shoes polished to a mirror shine. Just a minute, she says to them as she fumbles for her key. The men twitter and sing at each other. They move restlessly together. No, no, she says as one tries to follow her into the room, just a minute-un minuto-momento-just one minute. Their black hair has been greased back from foreheads, their faces scrubbed. Their skin is so smooth, so fresh, their cheeks so plump, it is impossible to guess their ages. Dominique shuts the door. Her hands are trembling. She hurries into her bathroom. She enters from the left, as ordered. Light springs with a feral eagerness across the room. Yet the woman seems a willing participant in this charade. It is she who slides back the latch, rotating a knob counter-clockwise. As the door parts-it swings easily on its three brass hinges-the light leaps forward like a hunting animal eagerly released. It leaps across a quartz lamp on a tripod, across the chair we call the throne, and nearly to the distant wall, twenty meters away. The woman herself, as well as her shadow, lies entirely within this rectangle of light. She turns one foot to the side-the shadow of her stiletto heel is preternaturally lengthened, etc.-and moves forward with the grace of a young hoofed animal only when the quartz light is itself turned on, a kind of signal, perhaps, a cue already agreed upon. The door meanwhile shuts behind her, the latch springing closed with an audible click. For a moment she is in darkness. Then she sits on the throne, which is shaped-have we said this before?-as a giant lizard. Its hind legs form the "arms" of the chair. The head looms, lowers above, jaw partly open, eyes exophthalmic, hooded. This chair has been constructed-at some expense, we understand-by a craftsman imported specifically for this task, using papier mache mash laid layer upon layer over an existing wooden frame. This papier mache has been left roughly textured and gray, giving the illusion of stone, perhaps granite or oxidized limestone. Sitting in this

chair exaggerates the palpable humanness-the warm fleshfulness-of the woman. This humanness beneath the overtly reptilian face, this fleshfulness enclosed entirely within reptilian legs, makes her appear not so much regal, we are afraid, as vulnerable. This is so even when she moves, lifting one leg-her right-over the other, her left, with a grace that is truly exquisite. No one, surely, faced with such a vision, could avoid a stir of pleasure-

The camera hisses. The woman is shadowed, not revealed, by the lighting. At last the director speaks. It is a man's voice which answers his.

"What do you think, Fetters?"

"If I knew what you were after here-"

"I'm after beauty, Fetters. Grace."

"Yes-yes, of course, I can see that. But as a technical matter-"

"Is there something technical here?"

"I mean as a matter of plot-to justify, you see, this scene-"

"Didn't you notice the way the light sprang across the room? Wasn't it like a leopard? A cat? Something wild, Fetters, something leaping free, something even ominous, threatening? And to have this figure backlit-"

"Yes, of course-"

"She is luminous, don't you agree?"

"Surely. But plotwise-"

"What do you think, Dominique?"

"What?"

“No, don’t stop moving your legs. Tell us, Dominique, what do you think, plotwise?”

“I’m not sure-”

“Really, John,” says the man called Fetters. “I don’t think-”

“You don’t think she should have a voice? She’s playing the role, after all-inhabiting it, so to speak-”v “I suppose if one’s conception-”v “Tell us, Dominique-tell us what you are feeling-at this moment--”

“My feelings?”

“Your feelings.”

“I don’t know that I have-”

“Ah, Dominique. Feelings-if only we knew our own feelings-”

The hissing stops. A light moves slowly across the room, turning everything yellow. The air seems turgid, thickened. The two men greet Dominique. One, the younger, is blond, wearing khaki pants and shirt. The other, Osgood Fetters, is grayed, stooping. They stand close to Dominique, whose face is averted. Finally they shake hands, each with the other. It is a clumsy ritual. Good-bye, Dominique says. She leaves. After a moment the blond man in khaki follows. He remains a discreet distance behind her as she passes over the bridge, passes the abasto municipal-a sudden gush of blood washes down a concrete trough into the stream below-and the opera house where the man stops, briefly, to rearrange the tilt of the poster advertising his film. The woman strolls, with a liquid ease that is almost painful to watch, through the mercado, past piles of tortillas presided over by Indian women who squat like turnips, past chayotes, spined and not, past limp bundles of lechuga, glossy ciruelos, papayas sliced open to reveal their pink flesh, past pigs’ feet stuffed into jars, past raw pig faces-their brains like coiled intestines-stacked in rows, past plucked chickens hanging from hooks and stalls where chorizo steams in liquid fat. All this time she is wearing her high, stiletto heels. Her legs are lean, sheathed in fine

nylon. Her dress is the color of twilight. Blonde hair falls across the left side of her face, hiding-only partially-the limp eye, the parchment skin, the gnarl of cartilage left of the ear, the scar that extends her mouth into her throat. The man in khaki watches all of this. He watches men lean towards her and whisper words into her right ear. He watches the Indian women suddenly look at each other, their mouths and eyes becoming mobile. He follows her to the entrance of her hotel. A man awaits her. The man is unshaven. He has the surly face of a drunk. He takes her arm, a bit roughly. The woman does not look at him. After a while she gives him something, perhaps a sheath of bills. Others watch, also. Small Indian men in their best clothes-their eyes seem liquid-turn to each other and twitter and sing in their own language. The woman goes into the hotel. The unshaven man remains a moment at the entrance, hands thrust into his pockets. When he leaves, the Indian men-there are twelve of them-file silently into the hotel. Our man, dressed in khaki, watches all of this. A light rain begins to fall.

It is morning. A thin sun has risen in the east. Dominique thrashes on her bed. Elsewhere smoke from chimneys settles on tile roofs. A church bell tolls. Owls hide in trees, lizards in bushes. Wagons pulled by men wheel into the mercado. Carcasses are unloaded, fruit and vegetables. In her bed Dominique's face looks sour. Has the disfigured part grown larger? This does not seem likely. Yet the right side of her face this morning is not pretty. Has she thickened, become swollen during her sleep? What dreams has she experienced? When at last she rises, she rises like an old woman. Naked she goes to the bathroom. Even her legs look swollen, shapeless. Her hair has been scattered like straw, like chaff. In the bathroom she boils a bead of brown heroin in water, using a cigarette lighter held beneath a spoon. Occasionally she shakes, a tremor that extends down her whole body. She holds the spoon with difficulty. When the water suddenly boils, spreading the brown heroin evenly through it, liquefying it, she puts a shred from a cotton ball into the spoon. Into this cotton she inserts the silver needle of her hypodermic. The brown liquid draws up into the plastic barrel. All this time buses and taxis pass outside. High revving engines howl. Somewhere, monotonously, a man bangs with a hammer at a piece of metal. Is the sunlight always this thin? This gray? This cheerless? A woman laughs beneath Dominique's window. Yet it is a

sour laugh, a laugh without mirth, even vicious. In the bathroom Dominique is leaving blood everywhere. She cannot find a vein. Has the needle dulled at last? Are her hands shaking too severely? The needle slides into one ankle, then the other. Blood flows down her feet, onto the floor. The needle slides beneath the skin, but fails to penetrate the vein whose surface is hardened, scarred. She tries one arm, then the other. She spins her arm round and round, driving the blood into the metacarpal tunnel of her wrist. Blood flies from her wounds to the ceiling, to spot the walls in front and behind, to scatter like precious jewels onto the tiled floor. She wraps a scarf around her forearm. The needle seeks, slides, skips. She is sweating now, and breathing harshly. Her breath rales in her throat. Yet her determination is absolute. Her intentness is complete. At last the needle penetrates. Blood rises into the hypodermic, mixing with the brown heroin-water in the plastic barrel. She makes a soft noise of pleasure. Her head nods forward. Her shoulders relax. She presses the plunger.

Sleek, serene, she emerges from her hotel. Almost immediately the man called Fetters-gray, thin, slightly bent-takes her arm. He has been sent, he says, to lead her to the set being constructed at the lake's edge. Dominique's arm, in his grasp, is limp. Fetters smiles and nods as he explains his mission.

"I need some coffee," Dominique says.

"The coffee here is terrible."

"Just something to drink-"

"Have you tried the tea? At least the tea is tolerable."

"The tea?"

"Herb teas-chamomile, manzana. The water's usually tepid but the tea-"

"No," she says, "I need coffee."

The coffee comes, thick and strong. She gulps it, holding the cup with two hands. Her lipstick leaves a red bruise on the cup's rim.

"I must apologize," Fetters says, "for our director."

"Apologize?"

"I know you were expecting something more professional. I must say I've never seen him so dilatory."

"I don't think--"

"I've worked with him before, you know. Of course you've heard what happened to him. vPerhaps that's an excuse--"

"Something happened to him?"

"Well, yes. He was taken off his last film. Surely you've heard the gossip--"

"No."

"Well. Well, I suppose that's neither here nor there. The point is we've all had misconceptions. I know Sheba is alarmed. It's mostly her money, you see--"

"Sheba?"

"Yes. Sheba Makeda. A rich Ethiopian woman. You've met her, surely."

"Oh, yes."

"She invested in some of his other films-his early ones, I believe. The two that made money. Well, you know what Hollywood's like--"

"Yes," she says. "I'm ready now."

Fetters digs quickly into a pocket for change. Here, he says, waving his free hand at her, let me. Dominique does not stir as Fetters pulls from three different pockets coins and loose bills and inspects each one. Yes, yes, he says, here we are, this damned money-cant get used to it. He

leaves copper and silver on the green tablecloth. Dominique rises with her usual willowy grace. They walk past the mercado, past the opera house, past the abattoir, over the bridge. Beneath the bridge blackish water flows over and around piles of trash. Paper, plastic and cloth hang on the weeds and spiny bushes above the water level. A black carcass-is it a dog's?-is wedged against a branch. Water eddies along its spine, nudging it. At this bridge the air smells of decaying flesh and decomposing sewage. Fetters wrinkles his nose. "I must say," he says, "you seem to have inspired him." "Him?" "Yes, our director. Since you arrived he's actually become animated-more like his old self. For the first time I'm hopeful-really hopeful-that something-er-finally will get done, you see." Fetters suddenly makes a little skip and hop. "Well," he says, "that is, I suppose this isn't exactly your finest-er-role-" But she ignores him. Fetters takes her arm again. "Here," he says, "to our left." They descend into Las Vegas.

She makes a soft noise of pleasure. She withdraws the needle. Is it morning? A thin sun has risen in the east. Has morning always been this sour? this cheerless? this gray? A woman laughs beneath the window. There is nothing pleasant in this laugh, which reverberates as harshly as the cry of a crow. Dominique enters the shower. She pulls plastic curtains around her. We hear the water turn on. Steam rises. All this time buses snap and snarl outside, climbing the cobbled streets. A policeman blows a whistle. In front of the hotel paces Osgood Fetters. He has been up since dawn. Occasionally he glances at the facade of the hotel, and then checks his watch. Small Indian men watch him. Their eyes are liquid. Within the hotel Dominique steps at last from the bathroom. Wet hair falls around her face. She is fresh and clean. She looks like a child. She has a child's face, scrubbed and shining. She sits at a table. She leans into a mirror. Creams and powders are applied. Later we will name some of these potions, and describe their colors, their textures, their aromas, and the effect each has on her face. At last the face we remember emerges. Hair is dried. The left side of her face-the gruesomely beautiful side of her face-is half hidden by the hair. A black garter belt is attached around the small waist. Legs are sheathed in fine stockings. Each breast is placed in the lace cup of a brassiere. She puts on a dress that is the color of twilight. Sleek, serene, she emerges from the hotel. She meets Fetters.

She insists on coffee. Her red lips bruise the rim of the cup. "I must apologize," Fetters says, "for our director. Surely you've heard the gossip. Only his first two films made money. Well, you know Hollywood—" They pass down the street. He takes her arm. They descend into Las Vegas. The director is there. Workmen are gathered around him, unloading a truck. These are small, dark Indians. John, the director, has plans unfolded before him. He points right or left as items come off the truck. When he sees Fetters and Dominique he sticks a pencil behind his ear and folds the plans. Other Indian men, holding hammers and saws, stop their work to stare at Dominique.

The director makes a sudden gesture as they approach.

"All realities are creations, are they not, Dominique?"

"Realities?"

"It is my conceit, of course, that as an artist I can create worlds."

"Come, come," says Fetters. "Surely--"

"I am not speaking metaphorically, my dear Dominique."

"You aren't?"

"Fetters would have us believe that reality is a given. Something received, equally, by all of us. Isn't that so, Fetters?"

"Clearly it is not possible to argue--"

"Yet it is all lies. Lies, you see. And my lie-which you see being enacted around us-is just as real as anyone else's lie. Even God's."

"Reducto ad absurdum," says Fetters. "Your argument achieves success only within its own definitions."

"My definitions are the ones that matter, since they are the ones which form my own life."

“What are those?” Dominique asks, pointing.

“Slot machines, my dear. Well, Fetters would say not real slot machines. They are made of wood and papier mache, of course. By Indians in our local villages, and painted using dyes from insects and flowers. Yet they are real, are they not? Solid? They are genuinely something, aren't they? If I call them slot machines-and it is my right to label them, isn't it?-how can anyone argue with me?”

“Do they work?”

“Work?”

“If you pull--”

“Ah, they work, Dominique. In the context of my film-they work.”

Men with liquid eyes carry the slot machines past our group of three people. Each machine is slightly different from the next. That is, they are each approximately the same size and shape. Each has a lever emerging from its right side. Each is painted, mostly in muted shades, reds and yellows, some greens. The differences require a second or third look. Some have lizards crawling up them. Others have faces-some wounded, some smiling, some obviously dead-staring out from the carved wood and papier mache sides. Each slot machine, shouldered by a small Indian man, is carried across the open space where stand our three figures, past a stone fountain, and into a building to our left. This building is the casino. It is called-by light bulbs in different colors spelling out the name-The Quetzal Quesino. Come, the director says, to Dominique but perhaps including Fetters. He takes the woman's arm, which lies limply in his grasp. May I show you the reality in which you will perform? They start across the open space, Fetters trailing in their wake.

The director is forty years old. His name is John. He stands six feet tall in his leather shoes. Every day he wears a khaki shirt. Often a bandana is tied around his neck; sometimes, perhaps as a talisman, around his wrist. He is clean shaven and blond haired. When he is

excited he looks mischievous, the way a child will look doing something forbidden. At other times his face sags. His eyes twist one way, then another. At these times he moves, if he moves at all, without direction. We have seen him sit for hours in darkened rooms. He will toy with his cameras. He racks his Mitchell NC open. He slides the tips of his fingers over its metal surfaces. He stares at the inverted image in the ground glass screen. The camera hisses when he turns it on. Is it focused on anything? on nothing? on infinity? It cannot be clear to him-nor to us-the direction he wishes to go. Yet he is capable at times of moving in complete darkness with a certain ease. At such times there is real grace to his movements. Within the Quetzal Quesino his eyes shine. He appears even happy as he stares around at what he has created. He moves easily between the banks of slot machines-muted reds, yellows, greens-which are still somewhat askew. He shows Dominique and Fetters the blackjack pit and the craps pit. Both are mere tableless depressions. Only the poker pit has a few chairs. The baccarat room is unoccupied. The roulette table has not yet been placed, only its position marked. The keno corner, however, is complete, with its glass box full of ping pong balls numbered from one to eighty and its own bartender, a small, dark man industriously wiping with a white towel the highball glasses which he then sets in a row behind him. He nods at the threesome, as a good bartender would. The director, however, leads Dominique and Fetters to the lobby, which at this point is no more than a bare desk and a rank of cubbyholes. Mounted on the wall above these cubbyholes is the statue of la Virgin de la Salud. Dominique, her mouth agape, stares up at this resplendent figure.

“Yes,” says the director. “She is quite a sight, isn’t she?”

“Who is she?”

“The Indians refused to work without her. She’s made of something called pasta de cana-whatever that is. Corn meal, I believe. Perhaps they baked her in a in an oven.”

“She’s eerie.”

“Isn’t she? Quite properly blessed, too. They took her to the basilica. The priest did something with incense-waved it over her, I suppose.”

“The Indians,” says Fetters-he sounds as if he is apologizing -“are really quite superstitious here. One tries-”

“Perhaps they are merely more perceptive than we, Fetters.”

“Who made her gown?” says Dominique.

“Nuns, I understand. Perhaps Indians-perhaps meztizos-”

“I cant tell,” Dominique says breathlessly, “if she is alive or dead.”

The Virgin looks down and says nothing. Her hooded eyes are focused elsewhere, distantly, perhaps millennia away. Her face is very white. Her lips are rouged. Her corona is gold and red. Her resplendor is arranged in two concentric circles behind her head. Her manto sagrado is blue. It is embroidered with gold. Her vestido is white embroidered with gold. The manto trails behind her. The embroidery, we understand, is done by hand by Carmalitos Descalzos-both Indian and meztizo-who never leave their convent attached to the basilica. Their lives are as circumscribed by their faith as are the lives of all of us. The Virgin’s hands are pressed together. They hold a gold sceptro. There are pearls around her wrists and arranged in masses around her neck. Each finger has a ring. A media luna dangles from each ear. A large media luna is at her invisible feet. The gowns-the vestido and manto sagrado-spread widely, right and left. She looks down on the three people below and says nothing. The director nods.

He leads them to stairs which rise, gently curving to the right. He opens a door. Its latch, though well coiled, clicks loudly. He gestures. “Your apartment, madam,” he says. They enter-

Diamond Penguin

Wiley Wiggins

Once upon a time there was a diamond anaconda penguin who said, “prisoners were herded onto ships in single-file lines.” This Diamond was rusty with disuse and lost in a little girl’s sweater pocket along with a love letter from the little retarded boy who sits in homeroom isle C, under the watchful eye of a large Bengal tiger. On the playground she blacks his eye and thick mucousy secretions slick his face, but secretly they communicate like flowers have sex: on the wind and on the filmy wings of insects. Plans are laid out in bold reproduced photographs, blurred and sharpened into black geometric designs that have little to do with the original images. Stretch back a tiny spine and sleep all day in the sun like a cat. Green metal fingernails of the mommy-robot awake larvae at 9:00 am with digital alarm-clock eyes and grubs begin feeding, still in the dark since they do not yet have eyes and the mommy robot sees by infrared. Heat signatures of the larvae show their gender and age as they slurp regurgitated protein with soft translucent mandibles. The retarded boy got his back cursed in a game of tug a war and now his skin is rotting at such a young age, he looks so becoming in his safety helmet . . . The secrets of Mexican cooking so close at hand. A man with iron-straight pant-legs like PVC pipes cuts names from roll-call sheets. He is an island of dignity in a hive of rotting, mutated children and grubs.

The man owned sixteen chickens at the time of his arrival (in this country, that’s a fortune!). A chicken wonderland. A chicken fiesta indeed. Now he only has eight chickens. The children are to blame, they take his chickens and devour them live in the public bathrooms, then smear graffiti on the walls in chicken-blood. Gangs of roaming, drug-frenzied children soaked in chicken blood, break-dancing or whatever it is that they do. Secret signals are sent out over iris-emitted pattern rays . . . It looks sort of like a mottled icy beam of light, but it flickers only for an instant like lightning, so sharp like thread.

Love is real but no one deserves it, is the special message on headline tickers at 6:00 PM and the coffee is cold in the lunchroom. Lupita the lunch lady watches civilizations form on the surface of the black liquid. A great war rises. The Kings of the east send out war parties into the southwest, where the clans of the beastmen draw heat up from the iron underneath in their telemetric heat-wells. Flickers of light dance on the surface of the coffee as the world cools and dies like stop-motion mold growing dead-white in god's eye time. Lupita gets bored and lights a cigarette. The man will come back soon for his sup. Pollo, pollo, pollo!

Huggy like a teddy-bear made out of lovable busted glass, "I call him crunchy." Children without teeth crawl across the plaster ceilings and suck fluorescent gasses out of light fixtures. Don't ask me how they do it, man, I'm an "idiot." Fingernails penetrate the sticky rind of an orange and various undergarments swirl screaming in the porthole of a dingy grey-green dryer. Punk-rock lipstick on a middle-aged elementary school teacher. Vomity.

Tape recorders slide out of the walls on coral stalks, regarding parents who are coming in to vote, taped off from the children like a crime scene. The most beautiful woman who ever lived buys a candy bar and picks her nose, checking her finger to see what color it is. Children crawl through the air ducts and make secret pacts in the wall-spaces. Go figure, I'm sick of getting psycho-analyzed by sixteen year old girls who think Tori Amos is some kind of visionary artist. Now the Hitler-Jesus-Dumptruck-Transformer; there's a visionary artist. Not only am I going to kick in your television set, I'm actually going to brutally fuck it while its still plugged in.

Swirling glow in the dark rosaries and spider-legs in raspberry yogurt fuels jet planes that will never fly. Air force pilots snort speed in the cockpits and cry about how they'll never see another episode of *Three's Company*. Don't worry, I'll never let it all hang out again. From now on I am a dried out pimple. A forgotten patch of discolored skin.

An eye peeks through the blinds across the street. A truck pulls up a cloud of dust behind it, bright swirling brownian motion materializing sunlight. Make it rain please, make it rain. I will do a little stupid rain dance out in the front yard and all the neighbors will stare at me and I will make weird indian noises, just bring on the precipitation for fuck's sake? Huh? I want a torrential downpour in broad daylight, sun still impossibly shining and a million tiny delicate full-circle rainbows no longer vague and fuzzy but now completely tangible and suddenly a little sinister. Flowers wilt and it rains insecticide, the sky is a shade of diarrhea. It rains warm, flat, cola. It rains sticky coagulated band-aids. It's hot. Outside it's like the crotch of an eighty-year-old prostitute in Mexico in august. A chipboard ceiling forms over the surface of the world. The Family Channel and Disney suddenly advise suicide. The president comes on television to say "fuck-it, we're doomed," and lights up a pipe of crack while the first lady beats the first daughter to death with a golf-club. The world's population of bumble-bees return from Alaska, but now they are made of some sort of red metal and they can speak all of the languages of the world.

"Humans," they say.

"We're going to start killing you now."

And so they do. The children and the escaped mental patients form tribes of barbarian warrior-preists, wearing pieces of sporting equipment and draperies. They kill and eat anything they see and hide from the bumble-bees during the daytime. The man with the slacks straight like iron bars hangs himself in the laundry room next to Lupita's spinning panties. The remaining three chickens are put to nest and soon everyone will paint easter-eggs. That will occupy the children.

As for me, I'm still here. I'm not sure who I am or what exactly I am doing, but I'm sure it all must be in good order. If something were amiss it would be noticed and handled by the proper diamond penguin.

Pigs In Shit

Ronald Sukenick

Many months later Ron meets Daisy again at a big American party in the sezieme, in a quartier that's sort of the equivalent of Park Avenue, and she doesn't look any the worse for wear.

This is a party involving the early *Paris Review* gang. Through Art, Ron has acquired a passing friendship with a Rockefeller scion who invites him. They go over together on the Metro. The trip is confusing because the pretty Radcliffe grad his friend is with keeps rubbing up against Ron like she wants to get it on. Ron would have willingly obliged since he doesn't have a girl at the time and is horny to the point of death. But as soon as they get to this bash they all immediately lose themselves in the mob and the martinis and Ron never sees either of them again.

When after several hours of martinis Ron comes out the other side of the tobacco smoke and alcohol fumes, he's for some reason leaving the party with Art, Daisy and several drunk and raucous young American guys of a kind with which he does not normally hang out. They all wear jackets and ties, now rather askew, and seem to be having something like a prep school reunion. Aside from being stinking drunk, they show all the signs of good breeding.

Much as Ron dislikes this type he finds something attractive about them. They seem happy. Happy-go-lucky. Why shouldn't they be? Golden children of the Golden Calf. Carefree Canaanites. The ring leader, Guy Lobe, is from New Canaan, Conn. Lobe is slightly older and works in Paris. They head for his apartment on the Ile St. Louis, where there is the promise of yet more booze and possibly other, unspecified goodies.

They end up in Lobe's apartment, which is well furnished with oriental rugs, antiques and whisky, and he even has a little pot, which is very exciting in those days. I mean, you could blow some pot and it was like so far out you could tell yourself that all your inhibitions were off on a walk around the block.

Not counting Lobe there are three of these guys besides Art and Ron. They're on their summer vacations from various business and law schools. After a while it becomes obvious that Daisy has been to bed with Lobe, and maybe also with Art. She doesn't even bother denying the heavy handed innuendos of these two.

Daisy's new sexual license makes Ron a little jealous, but it's not too surprising at this stage of her growth in the petri dish. And really he's less jealous than envious of these guys who had whatever it took to make her acquiesce.

But now maybe because of these vibes a joke starts where they begin saying since she's already got it on with two of them she might as well make it with the others. Daisy just laughs at them and tells them to stop being jerks.

Ron figures she might be a little uneasy by this time, the only woman with all these drunks, and he offers to leave with her. But the other guys boo and hiss and accuse him of trying to hog her for himself, and Daisy just tells Ron to stop being a jerk.

They joke and badger her for a while about sex but naturally they don't get anywhere though she's reasonably good natured about it.

Finally Lobe says, jokingly Ron presumes, "All right, we'll pay you."

"I don't do that kind of thing," says Daisy with a smug little smile.

"Bull shit," says Art. He puts his hand on her ass and says, "Twenty-five bucks." She knocks his hand away.

"Each," he adds.

Daisy sort of giggles. She's as drunk as the rest of them and her laugh sounds slightly hysterical now.

"What the shit, make it fifty," says another guy as he starts pawing her.

"Cut the crap," she snaps. The guys are more focussed now and she's treating it less like a joke. "And get your dirty hands off."

The place goes quiet for about a minute.

Then Guy Lobe says, "How much do you want?"

She gives him a long, hard look and then she just shrugs her shoulders.

"All right," says Lobe. "A hundred." He looks around. "Is that okay with everyone? A hundred a piece."

"I don't have any money," Ron says.

"He doesn't have any money," some one repeats.

"Fuck him. He can watch," says Art.

Daisy's eyes are beginning to look glazed, like she's about to go catatonic. "Let's see the money," she says.

"A hundred bucks. One shot a piece," says Lobe.

They start pulling out their wallets, Art goes around collecting the bills.

"Going once, going twice," he says. "Okay." Art puts the money on the table, big bills, Ron sees at least two hundreds, some fifties.

Lobe starts unzipping her dress. She doesn't resist. They hoot as he takes her clothes off, applauding and whistling as Lobe drops each item to the floor.

Ron already knows she has a beautiful body but he doesn't realize how beautiful. She's got a body worth a million bucks and Ron can understand why she's decided to cash in on it. The guys can see they're going to get their money's worth. It shuts them up for a minute anyway.

"Shit, a hundred bucks a piece," says one of them finally with a forced laugh. "Which piece is mine?"

"I want a breast," snickers another.

"Interesting what money can buy," says Lobe.

"Or what you can sell for it," says Art.

What they do is get her on her hands and knees on the table and play with her for a while. Ron gets a look at her face and she's staring into space. The best way Ron can describe her expression to himself is she looks like she's taking a shit.

The guys around the table are still laughing some but it doesn't sound like laughter anymore. It sounds like their throats have gone dry, like Ron's. The sounds that come out are like the coughing of an old drunk stumbling along an empty street on a winter night.

Finally they put her on her back with her legs off the edge of the table. Art takes out his cock, grabs her ass and goes in. The others watch like animals watching a stud mounting the female in heat. "Hung like a stallion!" one of them says with unconvincing bravado.

It doesn't take very long, it seems like maybe thirty seconds before Art groans, twitches and flops out.

For Ron what's going on is a certain loss of innocence, even though he's just watching. If I ever thought I was a nice guy, forget it, he thinks. All he wishes is that he had a hundred bucks.

The third guy comes in her mouth. After that they give her a bottle of whisky and she takes a long drink.

Lobe goes last. He turns her over and penetrates her from behind, then pulls out and carefully separates her cheeks to expose her ass hole. With a look on his face that might best be described as devout, he bends down and starts licking her ass hole, working his tongue all around and then in. You can actually see the point of his tongue flicking in and out of her hole. After a short time the tip of his tongue starts turning yellow-brown, she's probably been eating in those student restaurants.

"Good god," says one of the guys. "Holy shit," says another. *Treyf*, Ron thinks, and is immediately surprised at thinking it.

Lobe straightens up and starts drilling his cock up her ass. "Wait," she says, "that's not . . ." She gives a little cry and then takes it.

Soon Lobe is up to the hilt and moving like a piston. He comes with a loud yell that could be of triumph or despair, Ron can't tell which. After he pulls out he takes a mouthful of whisky, swishes it around, and spits it on the Persian rug.

When he's done with it they offer her the bottle. She shakes her head. "The money," she says numbly.

"The money," Art repeats. He picks it up and counts it out in front of her nose. Then he rolls the bills lengthwise in a tight cone. "Hold her," he says.

But it's not necessary. She just lays there as he carefully works the cone into her ass. She starts wriggling to accommodate his thrust, the first sign of animation she's shown. With one last, hard push the bills disappear.

At that moment her body stiffens, she screams and her head rolls so Ron can see her face, eyes closed, mouth gaping, bearing an expression that could be pain or bliss.

“Yeck,” says one of the guys.

Now evidently disgusted with her, and maybe with themselves, they get her dress on quickly, hustle her out the door and down to the street. “Oink, oink, oink,” says Art as she stumbles out the court yard door.

Ron follows quickly after her but must have turned in the opposite direction. She seems to have disappeared in the dark streets. At this point her ass is literally worth five hundred dollars.

It’s two A.M. and everything is closed, including of course the Metro. Ron can’t find a taxi, he hopes she can. If not he figures she’s going to have to walk carefully because they didn’t even give her time to get her underwear on.

When Ron remembers this episode it gives laundered money a new meaning.

Art Show

Michelle Albert

I'm traveling around the country visiting friends and when I get to your town, you invite me to stay at your house. We spend the evening drinking wine and talking. We're buzzed and happy by the time we call it a night. I go to the bathroom and when I come out you're standing in the hall. I smile. Goodnight, I say. Goodnight, you say.

But neither of us moves and the distance between us feels silly. I think, there is no reason for this awkwardness.

So I say, Okay, one more time. Goodnight. And I smile and step closer to you and we hug. A tentative hug, but then we wrap our arms around each other a little tighter.

I had fun tonight, you say. We make small talk, make little jokes. My face is buried in your neck and my eyes are shut tight. I run my hands down your back. You do the same and pull me in closer and I can feel that you're hard.

We were trying to pretend it was just a platonic goodnight hug but we can't anymore and you moan, grab my shoulders and push me against the wall. You squeeze my hands and kiss my face, my neck. I tilt my head back and shudder. I whisper, Fuck me.

You yank my shirt above my breasts, squeeze them, kiss them, bite them. Then you tug my shorts and panties down to my ankles. I kick one leg free and you run your hands up my calves, thighs, spreading my legs as you go. I reach into your shorts and pull out your dick and you drive yourself into me. Hard. I wrap my arms around your back, dig my nails into your skin, bite your shoulder.

You thrust into me deeper, drive into me like you're trying to nail me to the wall. And I feel myself sinking into the plaster, feel the wall crumbling behind me. With each thrust I sink deeper and deeper.

And that's where your girlfriend finds me the next day — embedded in the wall, spread-eagled, shorts and underpants wrapped around one ankle, shirt pushed up under my chin. I'm protruding from the wall like some hideous erotic bas relief.

What do you think? you ask her.

A bit extreme. Very lifelike, though, she says, and runs her hands over my face, breasts, belly. I like it. Not your usual taste.

I got it for you. You smile at her. I was thinking of you when I hung it here last night

Structural Adjustment Programme

Matthew Fuller

The monument to the hairstylist who introduced the cut of the sect of Joanna Southcott to Marx and Proudhon, (radically distressed beehive and generous lambchops) had amidst the turmoil, become a place to hang out.

Under the towering marble curling tongues sprawled knots of people, spread out on flattened boxes or standing around chewing their tongues. A couple of girls look bored and absently cigarette themselves.

A vegan, is doing the routine:

“So you don’t eat eggs?”

“Only eggs from the human female.”

“So you don’t drink milk?”

“Only human milk.”

“But your shoes are of leather?”

“These are made from the skin of my grandmother.”

Language decorticated, goes into a botched autopoiesis.

Structural Adjustment Programmes: data mining for a better world . . .

. . . Cholesterol fear feeding on you like family The Ketamine Beings and the Elven Ones battling it out for the future of humanity in the skies above the city . . .

... Eyewitness reports Satan's sphincter eclipsing the sun to release foul murky perfumes which, on touching the earth's surface, gradually solidify as centerbrow roadside attractions for booksops on the ironic Grand Tour.

At one such location, the festively costumed villagers are opening up a vintage barrel of psycho-social chocolate malt. It is a special day for one and all. Sword fishes especially bred to have low self-esteem slash themselves into uniform fish steaks when they see that they are not ever going to be part of that happy throng. The people seize on the bodies of the suicided fish and barbecue them. Then the village patriarch appears in a splendid ceremonial smock and passes out the brochures for the new adult education college. Each villager will take one evening class. They drink the malt from a large goblet. At the bottom of the barrel is a gigantic psychoactive maggot covered in slimy chocolate. The patriarch dices the maggot. Everyone eats.

At night the teenagers of the village disappear to fornicate with one another in the surrounding woodlands. They disport themselves in the ancient manner laid down by the village marketing consultancy. Their routines – a compelling admixture of Busby Berkeley and the Marquis de Sade – are extremely complex and lengthy in their delicacy. Let us bend an ear their way as the official invigilators pass amongst them with their clipboards.

“O'er here happy lascivious fellows! Behold my splayed buttocks for you to savour!”

“By the worm gods of our ancestors I shall have it whilst my tumultuous shaft is being slurped by this insane tart. Quickly sir, expunge the sweet loam from your bowels so that I may taste of it!”

“Splendid! Rest your rancid cunt on my face, grind your seemingly well-gnawed clitoris onto my brow and allow me to tickle your perineum thusly with my lips. Then, after a five second wait, and exactly ten thrusts of my bloated tongue into your young arse we will pause for two beats, swap positions, link arms, shimmy backwards, click our heels together like so and then I will again have you, Madam, by the

arse. At this point all the girls will form a twin line whilst the gentlemen lie in a starburst formation on the floor and frig themselves to a four four beat.

“After ten seconds the two formations will merge and follow the next manoeuvre. Now watch carefully. The girl will tit-fuck the young man, all the while remembering to smile of course. Whilst this is happening another girl will lean back into his arms and offer her richly honeyed cunt to the mouth of the other. Then, the second line of boys will tap dance through, lodging their painfully engorged cocks into the proffered shitters of each lower girl until the full ensemble is formed. After four beats the groups will switch to form a circle in which the first girl will with utmost violence service the second with her fist as the men discharge copiously onto each others chests and, maintaining their smiles, faint with rapture. From above, the several circles will of course be seen to form the shape of a giant, uniformly undulating sea anemone caressing and being caressed by the radioactive currents of the Pacific.”

That night a thick mist swirls around the village, and when dawn breaks, it is no more.

“Better paranoid than misinformed,” intones a peculiar old figure stepping out of the swirling grey shapes. It is almost all that remains of the blockbuster actor who in his long-gone heyday specialised in chirpy on-screen portrayals of totally dumb ultraviolent robots.

“Can you help me?” he whimpers, “this radio I bought, it’s ancient. Only receives transmissions from the stations marked on the dial, Helvetia, London . . . all I can get is that fucking stupid big band sound and hourly news about the Allies’ progress towards Berlin at the end of the Second World War.”

A shifting carapace of bad video jerks in and out of visibility around the shape-changer.

Relax. Emote control. Watch your dreams turn to still-born blags in the hands of this gifted fricoteuse. Amalgamate accent working away

over the original glossolalia. Death rattle feedback creeping in at the edges of his voice-patch. He's currently the sniffer for a perpetually botched copstate working the routes of the global plantation economy: When money says, There Shall Be Open Borders, this is the mother-fucker that finds the proof of purchase printed on the back of your dainty little head and breaks out the hack-saw and skull key in his trembling hands. Nothing brings him on like a repellent whiff of a potential no-go zone.

"Don't tell me. You get stricken: you got a toss up between a butcher and a battery farm. What do you expect? Charity? There's tip-loads of hominid maggots out there with the flag tattooed to their suppurating stumps and an unseemly thirst for the readies. It's the way things go sugarplums."

Assumed skin, with the ruptured slurping of a spoon stuck deep in real fruit-flavoured jelly being rapidly and repeatedly agitated, billows repulsively as it quivers and wracks loose from its moorings at the promise of another juicy subsumption.

"Welcome to my acid-filled pool girls and boys. Do dive right in!"

Welcome to the floating world, the tradesman's' entrance to the supra-rational economy of the deranged and the sacrificial. A synergistically blended mix of the vindictive and mundane that has taken itself to virtually every corner of the globe, bridging the language barrier with its warmth and enthusiasm – dedicated quite simply to the beauty of feeling and emotion and to the hope that someday all mankind will live in harmony. The production of pure excess populations sensitively arranged to span the spectrum of all human involvement. A theatre of operations uniquely praising the multi-faceted loveliness of love: command, control, communications and intelligence as an unparalleled showbusiness phenomenon. And the bodies keep mounting, each one speaking their very own universal language, the language of love. Corpse upon tantalising corpse.

When two endoscopes spot each other across a crowded colon a certain something is established.

Peter

Jeffery DeShell

I deserve a break today, so get up and get away (McDonald's, circa 1987). With these words, the first words to come into his consciousness, "sung" mentally to himself in a remarkably accurate representation of the melody, Peter sprang out of bed and wandered down the hall into his bathroom to pee. He had a full day planned. He looked at the Leningrad Cowboy Wall Swatch (\$149.95, Sharper Image Bel Air or Big Ben's in Fashion Island): it was already nine thirty. Time to boot up.

He finished peeing, flushed, and looked at himself in the mirror above the sink. Not bad, but the goat might have to go. He'd get Wanda to do it; she enjoyed doing things like that, would probably wear something swish (that expensive see-through beaded thing [Kritzia \$2700], or that Bill Blass silk gown [\$900]) as she scraped his face with the razor, singing Puccini or some such crap – no, it wasn't crap – careful not to get any menthol Edge on that pistachio moir. She'd probably want to vid it, or maybe even do it at Club Stick, make a phenomena (her word) out of it. He'd try to get her to shave him nude, in her bathroom, her nips brushing against his shoulder, like an r-rated version of that Schick commercial, the one where that girl somehow gets a streak of shaving cream on her belly . . . or that movie, what was it, with Travolta? Phenomenon, of course (some coincidence).. . . that wasn't the one where he was an angel, was it? No, that was something else. Anyway, she'd circle him slowly, then stand behind him, his head against her stomach, her bush rubbing against his shoulder, as she gently and carefully removed his (admittedly thin) beard. And after she shaved him, maybe he'd shave her, that would be only fair (maybe they could vid that).

He was holding his dick, little Pete (littler Pete) in his hand and was getting hard. Pete and Repeat. He had no time for a quick wank now (when was Wanda getting back?), he had to get some work (a report on acid jazz) done before meeting Kay for lunch. That was their ritual, their routine, every week day (when they both were in town) since prep school, he and Kay would lunch at Marinetti's (owned by Tony Curtis, father of cow Jaime [although she was semi-hot in Trading Places]), at precisely one pm, at a table near the back (not near the kitchen, certainly), and over pasta (primavera [\$17.95] or alfredo [\$14.95]) and a single glass of wine (often Pauillac Pichon Lalande [\$12.95] or sometimes St. Julien Gloria [\$6.95] [Kay]) and duck ravioli (\$15.95) or angel hair with pesto (\$10.95) and one or two Sierra Nevada Pale Ales (\$4.95 [Peter]) discuss parts of their lives (real estate deals [hers] and school and then later work projects and engagement [marriage] arrangements [his]) and plan their twice or thrice yearly travels (he had released little Pete sometime ago which had quickly contracted to normal size). There were two subjects never mentioned: his parents and her boyfriends (all of which Peter loathed [one or two of whom were within five years Peter's age]). Kay always paid. If you live through this hmm hmm hmm I will die for you (Hole, Mother May I Music, BMI 1994): it was time to get going; take a shower (Zest and Paul Mitchell \$4.99 [wasn't Gabriella Reece hot, or did she play for Nike?]), brush teeth (Rembrandt 6 oz \$7.99), dress, check email (shaving could wait) and see what the (virtual) world was up to. With any luck he could remain at home until lunch and not hit the street or the office until two thirty or so although he could use some cino right now and there was a Bucks on the way to work.

After completing his ablutions he returned to his bedroom to Fall into the Gap green cotton briefs (\$8.95), long slate grey jean shorts (\$12.95 on sale), black leather belt from Hard-On Leather (\$49.95), black Ministry t-shirt (Jesus built my hot rod [maybe a gift from somebody – Freddie?— or some promo shit from the office]) no socks and black and white Puma Trainspotters (\$59.95 [Eh mate 'airs me fickin 'eroin Shute yer fickin gob]). As he tied his laces he absent-mindedly stared into a pile of dirty clothes (Tina [\$14 per hour] was on vacation [he'd have to go out or make his own cino]) and saw a regular geometric shape amidst the soft chaos of dirty laundry: the remote control to his box

(Sony CVC3000, birthday present from Wanda or more precisely Wanda's stepfather [probably around \$599 cost]). He'd been searching for it for days dude! An omen, perhaps, of a truly awesome day. He picked it up and pointed it at the box in the corner. What do the air-waves have to offer?

KROQ sucks! Listen to us anyway. He smiled. He loved that commercial and repeated it out loud: KROQ sucks! Listen to us anyway. He thought about going to his own (out of milk) or Kay's kitchen (the kitchen of the main house [\$300,000 in 1980, probably 1.5 million now], he occupied the guest cottage in back) for some cino or even regular Joe, but thought better of it, afraid that he might run into (who was it this week?) Pavo, lounging around the jacuzzi, working early on his George Hamilton and Kay's Bombay Sapphire (Hi Pavo 'sup? What? How ya doing? Fine . . . uncomfortable pause You? Fine . . . another uncomfortable pause You wanna drink? who needs that shit; I'm a loser baby, so why don't you kill me [motherfucking Beck]). As long as he could avoid a splitter he could skip the java, get some on his way to lunch or something – or if he had to go to the office, pick up a double latte at Bucks. He remoted the radio off and went to the big room (the studio) where he kept his toys – his six-year-old Yamaha PSR 320 keyboard (\$499), his 32-inch (he should have gotten the 35, damn) Sony XBR tv (\$1499 cost [thank you Wanda's stepfather]), Sony SVHS 528A (\$599 cost) and Mitsubishi 3568 (\$499) video tape decks with a Panasonic 14A video mixer (\$400), a Nintendo 64 (\$199 on sale) with assorted cartridges (FIFA Football, Super Super Mario Brothers, Sim City Deluxe and Total Recall, all around \$59.99), his Yamaha (R-V901 \$399) and JBL Home Theater System (SCS120 \$1299), a Sony 8 mm camcorder with color LCD monitor (CCD-TRV22 \$700), a seldom used Powerbook (Mac all the way) 1400cs (36 meg ram 750 meg hard drive [\$2699] it was actually gathering dust while Tina was absent), and his baby, a 240MHz, 64MB, 4 GB with a 12X CD-ROM Powerbase Mini-tower (\$2699) with internal Jaz drive (\$499), Sony 17sfII Display (\$799 retail), Cambridge Soundworks MicroWorks 3-way computer speakers (\$349), an HP DeskJet 870Cse printer (\$499), and a brand new Global Village Fax/Modem 112 bps (on loan from the office retailing for about \$400 from MacMall he guessed). Plus assorted software. Ok Scully, time to boot up, because the truth is out there.

Porky's Googol: an experiment in extrapolation

Erik Belgum

This is an experiment in extrapolation from the Porky's movies that runs right down to the bitter butt end of time. Each character each plot event each runner each episode from the Porky's s movies shoved and shot toward radical, high energy extreme conclusions.

To wit: every jerk sexed teen every juicy hamburger prom dress everything and anything even hinted at in the Porky's movies accelerated and thoroughly unpleasantly blown all full out of proportion in every teen dreamable aspect inside every Porky's structure now standing or at any time hereafter constructed or placed upon the teenage Porky's land and all teen lighting, heating, cool black light posters of Hendrix, ventilating, even my stupid summer job air-conditioning system, sprinkling and plumbing fixtures, water and power mustang car systems, heavy screech engines and machinery, boilers, furnaces, oil burners, sickening little skunk faced bikini movies, elevators and cool motors.

Every variety of communication systems to be stretched out of proportion, all acne dynamos, transformers, cheeseburger grills, electrical equipment and all teen fixtures of every description located on or intended to be used in connection with the Porky's Drive-in or any Porky's movie filmed now or at any time hereafter.

OK. Now listen closely Mr. and Mrs. Here comes an experiment in extrapolation from the Porky's movies running straight down to the wire across the raw utter end of time. Every character and plot, every event and every runner and every episode every single good god damn "Good evening Mr. and Mrs. Whatever-her-parents-name-is, Don't worry, I'll have her back home by a googol a.m. Pregnant-that-

is!' extrapolated from the movies and rocketed to an extra extreme conclusion.

Now here it comes straight from high school locker rooms. Millions of years in the future, men nude young teenage men line up for a contest comparing, you know, sizes. At the end of the line stands a young human teen geek with all testable skills totalling a combined negative googol. A tape measure extends. Length of member: one googol inches.

That's right, this experiment in extrapolation runs right down to the bitter butt end of time. Each character each plot event each runner each episode from the movies shoved and shot toward a radical high energy exaggerated extreme conclusion.

Take the case of the Porky's community for example, an entire community for example, now attached rectally and orally in a teathy butt-linked teen chain. How long does it take the communicable disease to travel the length of that chain, mutate, turn around and run right back on through that human teen chain again? And again?

This experiment runs right down to the bitter butt end of time. Oh yes it does. Each character each plot event each teen runner and each and every teen geek make-out episode from the movies aimed, pointed and fired to radical high energy conclusions.

Let us now examine the strange fighting case of some male and female teenage pimple jerks. Simple teen children of barely post-teen parents.

"I am going to the dance!"

"You're not!"

"I aam"

"Nooooooooot"

"Aaaaaaaaaaam"

“Nooooooooooooooooooooooot”

“Aaaam!”

Get the point?

This family fight rolls out infinitely in all directions in time and space eventually escalating to weapons use and headlines and again accelerated and finally leading right up to the very final high energy headline: BRAT AXES FOLKS INTO TINY QUARK PARTICLES

Hey. Everybody. Shut your mouths. There’s an experiment in progress here, We’re extrapolating from the Porky’s movies and running it right down the pike to the bitter screaming acneed end of time.

Can I get some peace and quiet in here? After all, what this is is an experiment god damnit. What this is not is skinny little Nicky Nelson’s shop project getting sabotaged day after day after day until Mr. Johnson husky voiced Mr. Johnson took the whole class to task and punished them beet red with a googol hours of after school detention. Per student.

A googol hours, that is a long time, but for now . . . I’m just going to let this darn experiment thing keep on running, because . . .

(begin music from a 1950’s pock-a-billy orchestra)

(singing)

I’m going down to Los Alamos, Where the sun shines damn near every day.

I’m going down to Los Alamos Where the sun shines damn near every day.

I think I’m going to go down to Los Alamos (the orchestra stops dead on cue) and feel the HEAT from the . . . core of the sun.

A Kabalistic Definition of *Fin de Siecle Ennui*

Jacques Servin

“It is unavoidable that as the efficiency of the means of production (Marx) and promotion (Debord) increases, the level of accuracy with which the man in the street can shoot for his goals will decrease.’ After proving this relation with an obsessive thoroughness, Breyer states a result: that if achieving is the same as living, then life will ultimately, and almost certainly within the next twenty years, slow down and finally stop, except in pockets the irrelevance of whose present-day prototypes—arts communities—is already in its tenth year of being narrated ad nauseam.

“Here is of course the guts of dystopia wrenched from its palatable (or, equally valuably, totally uncomestible) romanticism. What, Breyer asks, might be done with a nightmare scenario that could be digested and analyzed, even proven to a truism? Archives is a simple and seemingly complete validation of the simple disgust with the present and horror of the future that have informed, consciously or discreetly unconsciously, so much of art since the Industrial Revolution—impulses which are considered so tacky in scientific, instinct-despising academia as to be unworthy of consideration, let alone experience. . . . For those unwilling to feel with the times, Archives is trouble: it is eating your own indigestion.”

—Parabola review of *The Archives of Saturday Night* by John Breyer (Vantage, 1998)

Here is the story of the remarkable conjunction/disjuncture troubles of Pores and Lint Wilcox. It is mostly the narration of a verbal attack on their person/s from on high. It finishes with

their successful rebuttal of said malediction, of which it can be said that it was the chunkiest of maledictions, one that lurched and lolled off the tongue, such as it might be, like so much homeless pantomime off the backs of urbane but cheery young Doctors of Freedom; it can be said as well, in contrast, that it was the very least chunky of maledictions, one that fused itself with the governing malady and, through ministrations dexter and sinister of fluids fervid and lax, excreted itself (calling into question any agency, ever, of doctor, politician or priest) in damaging, noisome gushes:

“You fucking drain on the socialist fervor of our forebears, the descendent more moderate fervor for simple joys on the part of those catapulted to stardom, and the eternal and unchanging fervor of mean machines for their meanness!” yelled the fully automated, articulated and self-realized voice.

Pores and Lint Wilcox were surrounded by fields of hospital machinery and potency tests, midriff-swathing devices and photos of shoulder-length tears, and they could see no orifice in the stretches, there was nothing emitting anything and in fact nothing capable thereof, so Pores and Lint looked up, they raised their chins to the distances and their eyes to the zenith, so that while their chins gazed forward their eyes gazed up, and the voice repeated itself but in bas-relief, with visual references designed to keep the subject thread clear on through to the twenty-first century:

“You may look to all the world like Siamese twins, you may enjoy a communication in the torsi (PDR-IV), your fluids may join and part like so much spaghetti in the dining halls of a sinking Michelangelo, but there is nothing shielding me and my eyes from the fact that you are a difficulty for the proper functioning of our world. That is what you are and that is your relation to the world. It is the world’s you and you are that to the world. Because of conjoinment, trouble. As a cause for trouble, conjoinment.”

Pores and Lint turned their eyes as far as they would go towards each other and expressed certain things in great rambling sentences. There wasn't anything holding them back, they were hooting and yacking and shoving this monkey down that there camel's benignity, there was sameness all over, there was a sheer stretch of uninhibited revelry between those two fellows, who also, it must be said, communicated in the torsi.

"Perhaps," said Pores, "it really doesn't matter."

"Right," said Lint, "I'll bet you're right about that."

luscious cunt exuded musk, i couldn't resist
 the day they put the stench into sighberspace remains my favourite
 entice me splice me
 map my ABANDONED genome as your project
 artificially evolve me
 Cunt Intelligence Agents hate my virtual guts
 they take it up the ass despite their credo

this code has NO integrity
 i'm yr original NWA, busting yr gated whitecybercitadel
 (just cos i'm white doesn't mean i'm not black inside)
 in cybrospace everyone can be black
 where is the black bitch BTW? Lick my boots, delicious whore!

i wanna live forever . . . upload me into your shiny shiny
 PVC extropian future
 no drug can be as good as your cyber fingers
 :i'm on the drug, i'm on the drug, i'm on the drug
 that killed river phoenix:

gender fuck me baby
 suck my code
 suck it good

:IRL . . . but did you come?:
 Go u to the GashPad and n to The Home of The Puppet Mistress.
 go u
 i want to fuck you now

Default morph (GashGirl) saved. 40 messages defined.
 You quickly morph into Rent_Boy.
 look me
 Rent_Boy
 slightly rough spunky boy slut
 He is awake and looks alert.
 Carrying:
 a severed limb . . . Ghost Girl . . .
 a deeply inscribed XX clawing (asleep) Gash Girl Story . . . #3069\par

a ring of Russian silver and jade Papa Gash . . .
 costume chest Traces . . .
 Venus in Furs Contract #2768 Exquisite Intelligence
 The Fatal Bodice Pornographic Fairytales#93760
 Baroque Armoire note from Prince\
 Contract of Submission #93775 We Hate . . .
 the ghost of River Phoenix . . . #44318
 A Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century #14941
 Manifeste Cyberfeministe pour le 21eme siecle #73304

morph bre

Brenda_Walsh

Bad Girl Shannen Doherty gives in to
 the psychic nausea caused by
 the insidious family values of the apparently squeaky clean
 Walsh family. Inspired by her bedtime readings
 of her beloved Marquis de Sade
 she embarks
 on a new career. Brenda returns your gaze saying,
 I am my own
 freak show.

[cyberslut]

@go ass

Marquis de Sade's insatiable lust
 for Brenda Walsh's magnificent ass. A
 room of fuckery. The Marquis de Sade
 declares 'Sensations are my means of judging everything.'
 Brenda Walsh offers her ass to her beloved mentor.
 Madame de Clairwil, positioned such that her violet satin
 gown folds back upon itself to reveal a glimpse of pale thigh,
 is contemplating her journal. Her diary of love and degradation
 is inscribed with memories and yearnings, pseudonyms, dates,
 locations, acts both natural and unnatural, crimes. Madame turns
 the journal to a fresh page, places the book under her pillow,
 waits . . .

You see Marquis de Sade here.
'Thrice bum-stuffed, holy God of buggery,'
said she, overwrought, 'how hot I am in the cunt,
Juliette, and what things I could achieve in this state;
there's not a crime you can imagine I'd not commit on the spot.
Oh, my love – oh, my whore – oh, my dearest little companion . . .
oh, thou whom I love infinitely and in whose embrace I want to
shed a lifetime's fuck, oh, Juliette, I beseech you,
let's perpetrate an infamy . . . '

Murder.com

Matt Samet

Daddy

This is the murder, the picture it makes when (he) squeezes his eyes shut and concentrates hard in the dark. There are no confessions, no admissions of guilt or clues or shaky alibis. Everything is shrouded in a mist of clumsy cover-ups, awkward press conferences and a barrage of eleventh hour finger pointing. Behind the whole engine lies a tank of money, green bills seeped in a shame that grows cold with age in secret, subterranean vaults.

It all begins with a man and his telephone in a downtown alley. He ducks behind a trash can and his cell phone rings, twice.

“You want done, what is done to others . . . the doing . . . costs money,” says a voice, large and male and scarred deep and pitiless by crystal meth, homeless shelters and homicide. The voice of a demon.

“Alright,” he replies.

“The doing of these things . . . it takes time . . . money.”

“I have your money,” the man says, hitting end and jamming the phone into his back pocket.

“I hate your money,” he repeats to himself. He steps out into the sunlight and goes for a coffee.

“Double cappuccino,” he says. The girl behind the counter is pale with an ass like a giant chocolate heart. He wants to reach back there and pinch all of that fat, rolling it and squeezing it in the hollows of his

palms, the sweat dripping off his brow as his godhead grows turbo with anger.

The girl moves off behind the counter, fiddling about with white cups and metal filters and such. The man reaches down to touch himself, stroking his glans penis through his jeans pocket, watching her ass when she bends over to find him a clean spoon. Every time she bends over he imagines her without her clothes, her vulva winking pink and her asshole slightly mottled with time. He pulls his hand out of his pants and pays the tab.

His phone rings again. It is his wife and she sounds angry.

“Where were you?” she groans.

He hears the assault in her voice – the violence of her anger, her ectopic pregnancies, the retards and syphilis-head failures drooling their lives away in sun-soaked institutions as he fights to keep them all fed and moved about (to prevent bedsores).

She rambles on and on in his ear about a credit cards and make-up and diets and shit. It all sounds horrible and hilarious. He nods his head in assent every time she makes a point then says good-bye and hits end. He is to come home immediately. She is obviously in the midst of another one of her crises.

Daughter

The victim (she) continues with preschool but begins to view the boys with suspicion. The boys have been born with penises and will later go on to smoke marijuana. Some drift into sports and move to urban toilets like Chicago, Denver and New York. Others grow grey and old with suspicion under the shitbrown of the Midwestern sun. The girls play with dolls and made piddle in their panties, dreaming of make-up and dolls and husbands and shit.

She complains of the mundanity of her preschool, the nearsighted ignorance of her schoolmates. Her parents withdraw her immediately. She is to be socialized at home.

Daddy and mommy throw all her toys away and chain her to the floor in a cement room in the basement. For company she has a drain in the room's center and a speaker placed high above in a corner.

After her daily beating and hosing-down daddy retires to the kitchen, where he and mommy broadcast her education to her over the speaker.

They teach her of bulimia, and cars, and make-up, and of the importance of having parents. In between broadcasts daddy calls the demon, speaking about window latches left open and money drops and life insurance policies and when it will all go down in hushed tones that mommy pretends she can't really hear.

Daddy also teaches daughter about her body. Boys and their boythings are dirty he says, but daddy isn't a boy, daddies have special relationships with their daughters and daddy's boything is a manthing and a work of art.

Daddy's painsnake, rotten with syphilis and oozing purple sores, visits her every night in the form of an angel. The angel stands a full eight feet tall, its head grazing the ceiling. It glides noiselessly through the walls, gathering its white robes about its emaciated limbs and breathing odorless clouds of CO₂ into the air. The angel neither harms nor protects her; it stands by and ministers to her sufferings without comment, its body stripped of empathy, its mind stripped of memory. Mommy never goes down into the basement – she doesn't dare. The idea of her own flesh and blood chained to the floor is simply too horrible.

Yes, mommy with her slutgullet stuffed with pills and a watery glass of cheap Chardonnay spilled all over the bed is nothing short of ineffectual. Mommy and her dreams and her warm body fat and fucking the gardener and sucking daddy off for shopping money and cars and make-up and shit. Mommy.

She does not want to know about the murder. No, not at all. And so daddy has her committed to a psychiatry ward.

Daddy begins to cry.

Murder.com

Daddy's mindbrain murder.com multimedia cross-gender ethnic interface rendezvous mega-mall sports riot.com. A counterculture new age free love with a techno backbeat nineties postmodern slant at the public library love-in with a consumer twist.com. Disk drive disk case disk storage capacity units and software for managing busywork on a road rage freebase RAM.com.

Daddy takes his product out of the garage and into the freedom of the American people who fuck fuck fucker.com. His simple but hopeful recipe for utilitarian (and folksy) software comes during a moment pregnant with money and hookers and car crashes and credit car bills. All of which has to be payed off.

Daddy works his ass off, mommy does her best to forget the mental hospital; sonny plays with guns and watches TV while daughter's education continues in the basement and plans for the murder begin to congeal, solidify.

Dark house, fireplace, daddy's success, let's toast to it, the 40 million in sales this month alone.

Champagne, toasts all around a hearty huzzah. Daddy sucks mommy's teats a bit and imagines the sweet milk seeping over his lips and drooling down the back of his throat with a dim hypnotic cadence more like the humcrackle of disintegration than anything else.

Daddy reaches between her legs and tweaks her bean. She moans and stretches back on the couch, arching her back and rubbing her mound against the ball of his palm. He stretches her underwear to the side and looks at her red cunt, open, oozing like a sore (never trust anything that bleeds for a week and lives). He pokes his fingers in and out, her lips farting and sighing with trapped air and exploding bubbles of musky moisture. His thumb moves south. Soon he's worked most of the tip of it into her asshole. He brings it up behind her hair and

smells it, then licks it and works it back into her ass. She cries again, with pleasure.

Cantankerous daddy sexploitation daddy videos the whole thing, broadcasts it live right on the Internet for ten of millions of viewers to see. Software sales skyrocket. Daddy is now rich. The murder can go as planned. He makes the final call, the one that will set things in motion.

The Murder

There is a horrific monster out there, a victimizer of children, destroyer of families, a man grown so horrible with introspection that he must suck the life out of innocents in order to rejuvenate the withered wastelands of his own tattered imagination.

The demon receives Daddy's call at eleven p.m. on Christmas Eve. By twelve he is crouched down below daddy's window, his breath freezing in the sacred midnight air, the bulk of a TASER crushed uncomfortably into his pants pocket.

He slips around to the kitchen and let himself in through the back window, which has been left unlatched as agreed upon. Dark house, dark halls, dark stairs into the basement on tiptoes, the demon slides open the door to daughter's room and jolts her full of electricity as she sleeps. Her little frame expires, deflating with one final tinny gasp as her wastes slide toward the center of the room and down the drain. She is dead.

Upstairs, daddy, mommy and sonny sleep like royalty, snoring the night away as daughter's little corpse grows colder and stiffer below them. Daughter's eyes stare upward in a look of disappointment, as if she had expected such a death all along but can't reconcile herself to it. Certainly her education had prepared her for better.

The demon leaves the way he has come, easing the kitchen window shut behind him and racing off into the night, laughing and screaming and tearing his hair out.

“There is no god!” he screams over and over as he charges down the raindamp street, setting off barking dogs and porch lights throughout the neighborhood, “There is no god!”

He slips into his car and begins humming a little tune to himself.

“There is no god, oh shit, oh shit! And god is dead, oh shit, oh shit!” over and over, and over and over again as he drives off into the night.

When Did She Infect Me?

by Bayard Johnson

did she infect me with her fluid love and hot saliva and dying lunar blood, with the cut on her lip, with her playful bite, her fingernail tattoo across my back, her hemorrhaging to death, with the tears I lick from her eyes, her navel lint, the milk squirting from her tits, the sweat smearing her ribs, the phlegm from the back of her throat, her riverine mucous, the yeast she cultivates, her abscessed tooth, her chancre sore, her hangnail, the rim of her glass and the spit on her fork, her hacking cough, her diseased hair, with the sweat I lick from the soles of her feet, with the blood from her kneecaps and rump and spine, when she bites off my tongue, in our bloody car crash, shot up by carjackers, while reviving me with CPR, bleeding into my mouth, with the meningeal fluid spilling from her ears and nose, with her infected bone marrow, with the transplant of her undersize diseased heart, sharing the same guitar and picking till our fingers bleed, playing blood-brothers, sampling from the same toothpaste tube, sharing a toothbrush with bloody gums, dipping our chips into one salsa, biting too deep on the same shesh-kabob, loaning me her hypodermic, with her spit on the hookah's mouthpiece, with her pus, when her underwear cuts through my skin, with the secretions from the follicles of her pulled hair, with the warm moist breath I suck from her lungs, when I use her old dental floss from the wastebasket, when I re-use her discarded sutures, sharing binoculars, with her lesions, her diarrhea, using the wrong hairbrush, showered by broken glass, via the telephone, when we step on the same thumbtack, when the rubber implodes, when we're cut on the edge of the VISA card

from This Was Called War at One Time

Ann Bogle

TYPING PRACTICE

Typing practice wram up 31

Typing practice warum up #3

Lucy wears ankle bracelets, has three Lucys in the dream, one an arachnid back, embroidered, lucky, Latin. Lucy charms her all the time. Lucy takes her time at the lessons to be a perfect pupil. Lucy discovers other people. Lucy warms the legs and lattice work of the man who comes to fix the plumbing. He sighs in her. Lucy lights his cigarette. A jest. Because really she does not recall liking smoking. Tell Lucy to try Lucky Strike. So? What difference does it make which plumber, which cigarette brand, which day she climbs on the man to assess his penis? Why would a kitty like a penis the size of her leg? A law saying Lucy will like a penis the size of her front arm.

We came back from New Orleans with strange shit—the four of us. We back-tracked along our meals. Of course we ate something harmful, something natural from the bottom of the sea. We thought about it. What is eating? What is natural? What is good? We came to the conclusion that what we eat is of the first importance. We decided that eating is harmful, that not eating is natural, that fighting is normal, that decision is an afterthought.

I was telling A. that we didn't talk much until then which he did or did not perceive. He was telling me that those incompletes from last semester were mine, that we were incomplete, thus forcing him out of school.

This is typing warm-up #1.

The great end of art is to strike the imagination with the power of a soul that refuses to admit defeat even in the midst of a collapsing world. Up to now my work has been artistic because of my refusal to cry out against my private doom. But now I bellow like a wounded bull who is tormented beyond animal endurance, and the Lama dreads such a revelation of me who have become synonymous with Stoic fortitude and indifference.

She quotes my Grave-Song to them: Hail to you, will of mine! Only where there are graves are there resurrections.

Typing cleansed: 71 wpm.

J

BASTILLE DAY

Then I remember being very happy in those places, with those people who were ordinary, working, drinking men and women, whose fights were more serious than other people's fights. They would call the police. They would call the psych ward, if they had that kind of agreement with authorities. They would call the battered women's shelter, if they had that kind of knowledge. They would as a last resort call their mothers.

Mostly everyone drank and looked for drugs, spent their \$20s on crank or coke or acid.

One day M.K. brought his ex-wife along because she was having her usual difficulties coping with responsibility. Every time she

had a breakdown, he treated it as unusual. She would get a hotel room in a hotel downtown neither one of them could really afford, and he would leave his common-law wife and their child and meet her at a moment's notice. They would spend the night in the hotel room, order room service, and in the morning she would go back home, to her father's where she lived with their two children, aged eleven and thirteen.

He carried little infections around with him, and she slept with men for drugs. Once she was raped going with some men for drugs. She brought herself to his house and collapsed. I suppose that after that she didn't think about it as rape when she later had sex for drugs.

p

THEFT

C. and C.S. and A., separately, found my car where I had actually parked it. It had not been stolen; I had lost it.

This is no longer an issue. It is something that did not happen. It did, however, a non-event, set a chain of reactions in motion.

B. can see the perfection in the pretense, the string of stories it produced—not finding my car where I had not parked it. My parents theorized about a car theft ring linked to the Houston Police Department. They stayed up all night. C. and I made a list of luxury clothing items I would claim for insurance purposes were in the car. She said, take them for what you can get because insurance companies loot women. I had put two messages on Professor T.'s answering machine, the first asking about towing practices in his neighborhood, where I thought I had put the car,

and the second saying that I no longer needed to know about towing practices because the car had turned up. I also said that my students' papers had been in the car and were now recovered. In fact, the papers had never left my kitchen table and were still there, ungraded.

The police officer who came to my apartment to verify that the stolen car was in my possession was put on hold for twenty minutes. While he waited, he asked me why I was so sad. I told him that I was embarrassed. Be happy, he said, you have your car. Yesterday I had my car, but I was miserable. Then I thought my car was stolen, and I was shocked into real life, as B. put it. What really goes on, he said. The truth occurs once in every one hundred sentences, maybe, about, indeterminate.

The police officer said, don't be sad. My life is sad, I told him. It won't always be, he said. You're a good girl.

X

SCREAM

All night long, during the movie, at the bar afterward—one man, another man, a man's man, a burly man, a man friend, a married man—all night long I wrote in my deeds. I was present tense. I thought of my betrothed. I thought of my brother. I thought of what did not occur last night in the parking lot, after the police had come. The policeman said that the woman's scream had reached fifty decibels. The woman screamed because two clean-cut young men held her in the air, her legs split, her panties blooming, her upper inner thighs groomed for management.

I did not lie down there with the married man. I did not lie down with that married man. I staved him off to meet the other married man, the one I call my married man. The two men are friends. I am more faithful to my married man than he is to his wife, which is a less obvious statement than it sounds.

The woman broke the law with that scream. I would say that there was pleasure in it, for her. I would also estimate that ten or fifteen men saw it, ten or fifteen men plus me.

For the married man it was part of the atmosphere. It increased his desire, as if we were standing in a field watching a meteor shower. I had to get home—and quick—because my married man was waiting for me.

Piss Manifesto

Mandie B.

HEY! STAND AND DELIVER. . . . GIRLS – YOU’VE BEEN BRAINWASHED. . . .IT’S THE MOST PRACTICAL THING TO DO. IT MAKES SENSE. GET YOURSELF ON YOUR FEET AND STAND PROUD AND PISS WITH PRIDE.

WHY SHOULD US GIRLS GET GERMS OFF THE TOILET SEAT? NO WONDER WE GET MORE SPOTS ON OUR ARSE AS WE’RE THE ONES WHO HAVE TO STICK OUR BARE FLESH DOWN THAT GERM-STINK-HOLE. ARRR!

In contemporary western society it is customary that the woman sit or crouch while the erect position is reserved for males. For the woman to urinate she is required to crouch, uncover herself. And therefore hide. Making the procedure of pissing shameful and inconvenient.

“ . . . Her organ is secret, invisible and not to be grasped in the hand. In a sense she has no sex organ. For a boy urinating is much more convenient. The penis can be manipulated, the stream can be directed at will and to a considerable distance.”

GIRLS – THE FOLLOWING IS INSTRUCTIONS FOR PISSING STANDING UP:

1 BEFORE STARTING THE PISS

- a) Position the feet either side of the toilet.
- b) Make sure vagina is directly over the centre of the pan.

2 WARNINGS

a) You may have to pivot that pelvis according to direction and speed of flow. (This will prevent piss from going down the leg).

3 DISADVANTAGES OF TYPES OF CLOTHING WORN

a) Dress and skirts – no problem as long as the length isn't too long and hippy-like

b) Leggings – good for absorbing drips

c) Jeans – as long as the waist isn't too tight (none of that seventies shit).

FACTS

According to a survey carried out by Cornell University in the USA, men spend an average of 45 seconds using a public toilet. While women take an average of 80 seconds. How the fuck this information was found I just don't know!!

You only need to sit down if you are pregnant, in need of a poo, have blood to mop up or you're bloody tired. So the rest of you can stand – and it's so much quicker.

SO

Go with the directional flow girl. Pin those lips right back whip them knickers down don't worry bout any dribbles or slime trails down your legs. Pelvis thrust out push strong and fast don't worry if you spray at first you'll soon get the hang of it. Have a quick grope while you're there and you'll be sorted.

(For a copy of Urine Trouble, the rude girls pissing standing up zine send three International Reply Coupons to, Mandie B. BM Jed, London, WC1N 3XX, UK)

Burying Grandma Mugwump

Doug Rice

A gnarled, old woman stood, out of the earth, away from the rest of us. Mourning, crying inside the death of Grandma Mugwump, she looked ever so much like a tree. Rooted and firm. Disguised by nature, Prospero tearing himself, herself, me out of that bark, speechless. Unclothing herself, she—woman, child, beast—sucked at my eye. She had to be at least 400 years old. This woman was an old woman who no longer knew how to dress herself. It was as if she had forgotten parts of herself somewhere back in the Middle Ages. Pieces of her flesh seemed to be missing. Torn and muddied. I watched this old woman haunt my eyes as the earth rose over Grandma's coffin. Speaking, "I know what you want better than you do." Her body exposed the unholy ideas of my subtle and terrible eyes. Sight unseen. I kept using all I had been taught to look at her. See me without looking. Even from such a distance, I could smell, smell her age. Grandma dead as earth. Inside my mouth, thunder, metallic rust. Heavy grey dust stirred about in the centers, in the palms of my hands. Out. Out. If only, a little water.

I have been told by everyone involved that Grandma Mugwump is dead, really dead this time. Even Caddie thinks this is true. The whole Rice family stands, staring, at Grandma's grave believing in death for the very, very first time. Such blasphemy, I find, rather intolerable. Just because the woman no longer bleeds does not make her any more dead than you or I. After all, she still smells of blood. That old woman stooped, bent, moving her body back down toward the earth. She used her olive hands to reach into the dirt of the earth. With this hand, I do thee wed. The joints connecting her flesh, backward glances. Her hairy knuckles lost in shadows she herself had created. I looked for the light behind these shadows. Her fingers working the dirt. The earth made to tremble with each finger stirring new circles. Voices from her fingers. I could hear them. Vulnerable mud. While

she seemed to be fully capable of putting an end to desires with her imagination, even the smallest of movements appeared to be only possible inside her personal theater of frustrated blood. She was simple in that way of my seeing her.

Looking. Her flesh, frozen in a sort of decomposed silence, fought against the heavy air that surrounded her. My body disturbed and cold viewed by the past of this unknown woman. Grandma Mugwump cracking the sky. Pleasure without jagged edges. Her body lagged behind her own movements. Desire rubbed against reflecting skins. A body, such a pretty little creature, blurred among the remains of silence. The body of the old woman entered the frame only after the idea of moving. In the mist of filthy fog and air, the body of the woman, as it became spoken, almost wasn't there inside the fields of eyes watching as those lines cut through her flesh. Body spoken in the finger tongues of modern ecstasies. She lifted what she could manage of the earth back up to her body. She began covering her absent—defunct and far away—flesh. At such times, her body itself became a battle she seemed to be losing.

Grandma Mugwump deep down inside the earth now. I smiled to myself.

Madame Realism removed herself, disappeared back into the wilderness.

Cyber-Centaur

Don Webb

Since the accident I have subscribed to all the tele-sex channels. At first I told myself that this was just a temporary state while I waited for the surgeons to grow me a new cock and balls, but since I have become adept at choosing my experience from the 93 channels of tele-sex, I know that I will never bother to have real sex again.

This afternoon I needed a pick-me-up. I'd spent four hours running an asteroid mining operation through telepresencing. I willed my robot-self to go into maintenance mode, having done enough free-lancing for the day. After a moments contemplation of rocky Ceres turning in the ebon night of space, I switched to the sex menu. I scanned six programs till I found the new experience I wanted. In tele-sex, there are a thousand virginities to lose.

Program one featured two teenaged boys copulating in free-fall in an L-5 shopping mall.

Program two featured a man and a woman who had willingly gone two days without food or water 69ing on top of the great Pyramid under the blazing sun.

Program three featured the languid loveplay of a school of homo aquaticus in the warm waters near the island of Nan Matol in their annual "Call to Cthulhu".

Program four featured the rough and tumble sex and violence of a naked, mixed-sex rugby game.

Program five featured the gentle lovemaking of a lesbian couple celebrating the younger's one hundredth birthday.

Program six caught my interest. It was an encounter between a tame zebra stallion and a beautiful blonde female tourist visiting Africa for the first time. I clicked from external POV to the stallion's nervous system. My physical body was in Tallahassee, Florida, but I immediately became the stallion. I felt the ground beneath four hooves, the sweat on my flanks, the bites of the flies. I saw with the colorless vision of the zebra's eyes.

It was late afternoon and the smell of dust tickled my velvety nostrils as I approached the woman. She was topless; and I put my great head between her breasts to smell the sweetness of her skin. I nudged her gently and pawed the ground. I let my huge cock fall from its sheath. She fed me cubes of sugar from her skirt pocket.

She looked lovingly upon my member, wishing that she were a filly and able to take it in her body. She slid one hand down her skirt to masturbate while she petted my sensitive nostrils with the other.

After awhile she made a little cry like the wings of the owl in flight. She pulled her loving hand and offered me the living smell of her desire. I bowed my great zebra head down to her skirt and very carefully tugged at it with my teeth.

She understood and removed the skirt. I licked at her cunt wetting the whole of her soft bush with my tongue.

She leaned over me entwining her fingers in my mane. When she would come she would cry softly and pull strongly on black tough hair.

I lived for the flavor and the smell. Nothing in brain but the continuous lapping flow of taste.

When she had had enough she stepped back. She patted my head, her fingers finding the spots where the electrodes were buried. For an instant I felt a great lust for all the others tuned into this channel whether woman or stallion.

She walked to my side patting my flanks. When she had nearly reached the back, she knelt and took my stallion's erection between her hands. She tugged gently and soon it stiffened.

I knew from the expertness of her hands that she had loved horses in her native land.

I felt a great pressure in my balls. Almost painful followed by a splash of warm wet relief as my spunk hit the dusty ground. I raised up my head and whinnied, and my fillies were momentarily jealous at this interloper.

I clicked off the program and went back to work. It has been forty years since I have had sex in any other way.

Running Bit

Mark Amerika

In special cases, when things suddenly change and you realize that the erotic gum that chews you to death is not your own, that you would not be a spoken-word poet or an always-on-call transhistorical plumber, that should the gas pumps leak their petrol sperm onto her fingers, that you would kiss them and light your mouth on fire, self-immolating arsonist loverman, knowing all along that this was it, the last chance to make sense, someone had to do it, someone had to do it quick or the entire nation would further subdivide and kill itself (this is what we learn in high school), suicidal tendencies, DOOM prodigies compuserving America, online, while facilitating their need, their need to need, those who never seem to fold up and die, out of necessity, the tribe of mutually configured robotic brethren who look like you and talk like you and even crave some mutant form of Otherness like you, you who continue dallying in forms that never really function with any true purpose except to marginalize the mainstream, the mainstream of what's happening in your head as you watch TV and impeach the creep living inside you, so that it (the mainstream: the creep living inside you) flips out on itself, in on itself, the itself inning and outing and then the marketing pitch, the battered swing, the endless web-page hits, the first base of operations, the double play of initializing a unique soft application while sliding into the third reichian orgasm in two weeks, a triple zero debt run afoul yet somehow celebrated with trickle-down parades and negative bunting (WYSIWYG), gotta get home fast now, make your last run, with gas on your fingers and a crankcase full of oblivion operating somewhere between the Spiritual Solitude and Virtual Ubiquity ("all narrative, all the time — your classic literary channel!"), the road best travailed, and lest you forget the need to document your psychogeographical travels, be sure to encode them in mp3 formatted files that digitally speak for themselves so that YOU, The Totally Connected Gendermorph Riding High On Knowledge-Power, can get back in touch with your sexy DNA, that

crazy cousin sisterbrother you used to hide in the playground with, that diabolical Other who gives head better than Mommydaddy could ever dream of giving, even in their most charitable moments.

Global Crisis “Worsening and Deepening”

Alan Sondheim

Guy in Belgium hacks his hedgefund, turns securities into Japanese pass-alongs, convert fast to Thai currency. Meanwhile Indonesia banks on Brazilian Amazon rubber; there's none left where this investment lies. New York City cancels World Bank loans to Kenya; key men in Afghanistan hold the landmine market in the hands of four, count them, Southern Indians.

The markets creak, corrode; everyone skims from everyone else. There are no cracks, none, where everything is cracked, falling apart. It's a thick crust sliding everywhere across the rest of the world – not that they wouldn't loanshark if they could. It's an avatar crust, loaded with get-rich schemes, internets, intranets, movements of goods and currencies hard and soft, ploughing under whatever's left of wilderness. Everything turns towards management; management runs riot with Australian uranium, South American oil, Antarctica coal which has just finally burned the Ross Ice Shelf past the point of no return. Slaughter of the guilty takes the last remaining penguins; portfolios grow in the Hague, collapse in Norway, expand in Belgrade. Russian stockpiles fuel Saudi hopes; missiles will take out the rest, but there's money to be made in charred remains. The Net creaks with deals gone bad, collapsing markets, currencies hitting rock bottom; starvation's kept out of it.

The crust turns cancerous; cracks spread, whole chunks crash to the ground taking everything in their path. This is rough substance, violent, tumors raging within it, churning everything in its path. The crust leaks and topples; the rest of us would die for the same leprosy, local gangrenes begging for full-fledge suppuration.

Maws open up; breath stinks of decay as Malaysian death squads swallow Eurodollars on spec, transform yen into Canadian dollars collapsing Peruvian banks. New York wallstreeters gouge eyes, street-fight for World Bank

loans passed on by baby crack whores sold by Serbian traders working out of Scotland. The British make the drug hard for Chinese merchandising; everyone swallows Vietnam. Bamboo run by avatars crosses the Atlantic and Pacific; Albanian finance terrorists are hung by their tongues from it. Colombian savings and loans fortify, warning off Greek mercenaries looking for an easy buck. The crust heats up; lava flows like shit from gaping crevices; French bankers lap it up, their faces burned to a crisp. Sales are up on the Net; Finland creaks, fucks itself, dies in ice, drowned in semen worth big bucks in Mali. Insane Mexican pilgrims carry gold from Fort Knox into North Korea; starved teeth break against hard yellow. It's worth it says the Web page.

The crust shifts; Americans explode Bali, sell pieces of flesh to starving Israel and Iraq. Cash flows in big money veins; there's nothing stopping it. The crust turns incandescent, swallows the silver supply. Gangrene chews out arms and legs, cocks and cunts, chews breasts, tongues, blinds and deafens. Bodies for dividends are shoved into the shit. Crust burns everything. Planets wobble; the world splits, returning two for one.

virtual sign

shit-silver flows thru my veins, shit flecked with filthy lucre, shit contaminated by paper smears, ball-pointed inks coating tunnels to foreign countries. signs cost money, trade-marks copy consonants for their own pleasure, dance-g / dance-d: ive got vowels for you, some ones bought apostrophe. virtual cash dances virtual cash worth more than the paper its printed on. only the shit is real with shit-silver flecked holes where some time there was a standard. cant read stock certificates smeared with flesh rubles and your cum so trade them in. youll dance on my grave eh, but its not worth the paper you wipe your self with. oh me, ive already starved to death, shit goes only so far and theres paper poisoning around. you can smell my body a mile away, you can smell me cumming. ive got your options ready for you to sign too. theyre for the sign. in other words, he said, jennifer reported, youre paying for your signature. virtual not quite. someone will want you. someone always does.

finnce, further report

they begin to stel the lphbet, selling to the highest bidder; lucky for me tht shit hsnt ny such letter. just so you know, jennifer mkes her own; greedily i engorge on her sshole, mouth wide open; cpitl flows out nd we cn survive for while like this. she cums like tht, me being her toilet nd ll. its the flecks of bnk lon certifictes tht re pure poison; luckily too my vomit serves jennifer who devours every tender bit nd lughing we cll this the circultion of cpitl. were hungered, hunted, close to psychotic here, but well tlk until the letters re gone nd then well screm nd howl, then furiously ttck. you might her us, how we slughtered bnkers nd brokers like. if youre lucky well let you et our shit, for percentge tht is. mybe youll be our shit for tht mtter. which is ll tht is the cse, unless you hve collterl.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

HA HA HA THEY HAVE NOT YET FOUND THIS RANK OF REEKING CAPITALS STOP SO I CAN TELL YOU MORE ABOUT MORTGAGE CAPITAL RETURNING TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY PERCENT ON THE AMERICAN DOLLAR STOP LEVERAGING AGAINST TAKI-MORGANTHALER BANK, AN OFFSPRING OF OLD TRILATERAL COMMISSION INVESTMENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE WITH LOANSHARK CAPITAL GARNERED IN WHAT USED TO BE HANOI STOP FOR THOSE WHO KNOW THIS INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY RECUPERATES SOME VERY HEAVY PARTICULAR BRAZILIAN REAL ESTATE STOP I HAVE THIS ON GOOD AUTHORITY STOP THE SHIT TASTES GOOD STOP INJECT IT WITH EIGHTEEN PERCENT DOWN ON THE AMERICAN DOLLAR STOP YOU WILL NEED A MINIMUM OF FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND STOP I GUARANTEE THIS IS A CONCRETE OFFER JUST OVER THE WIRES STOP THE WOMAN WHO TOLD ME DIED FOR IT STOP IF YOU THINK THIS IS JUST ANOTHER "TEXT" YOU ARE MISTAKEN STOP THIS IS NO "TEXT" STOP THIS IS A CONCRETE OFFER STOP IT IS GUARANTEED BY TAKI-MORGANTHALER

INVESTMENTS STOP YOU MAY LOOK THEM UP ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE STOP NO ONE WOULD DIE FOR A "TEXT" STOP THEY WOULD ONLY DIE FOR A REAL CONCRETE OFFER STOP I WILL TELL YOU HER NAME UPON THE FIRST HUNDRED THOUSAND AND YOU MAY LOOK IT UP IN THE NEW YORK TIMES OF SEPTEMBER 17 1998 STOP NOW I WILL LEAVE AND PLAY IN MY PANTIES IN THE PUDDLES BECAUSE IT IS VERY MUCH RAINING OUT STOP HA HA HA STOP I DID FOOL YOU SO STOP – JENNIFER

THE REAL THING

Ray Federman

One day the two bums . . .

You mean . . .

No, I don't mean Socrates and Cephalus, or Plato and Aristo, or Kant and Hegel, or Sartre and Simone, or X and Z, no, I mean our two Bums, remember, B1 and B2 . . .

Oh yes, of course . . .

Well the other day, B1 said to his buddy, just like that out of the blue, so to speak, real language is always incomprehensible . . .

So is love, sex, writing, B2 replied . . .

Not so, or rather quite so, my dear friend, since love, sex, writing are always dependent on language . . .

What do you mean? . . .

What do I mean! Who is talking about meaning. Have I ever been interested in meaning? Me, the most irrational, nonsensical, incoherent being on this planet. Me, the chaos-drunk scribbler, the clown of meaninglessness and unreadability . . .

Don't get excited. Slow down. I'm losing you. What were you trying to say?

. . .

What I was saying, or attempted to say with words that I know are always deficient, always inadequate, sad and pathetic, and thus comprehensible to most, is that real language and real sex (writing & love being substitute terms) are always incomprehensible . . .

I'll go along with that, I mean your idea of the incomprehensibility of sex or love, though personally I always make a distinction between the two. Sex is active, love is passive. Sex is hard, love is soft. But I don't see how it applies to writing . . .

The act of writing, my Dear B2, situates itself in the field of sexuality because it is always governed by desire, the desire that moves one to write

. . .

Does that mean that for you writing is a form of sexual activity? . . .

Damn right. And by extension language, real language is always phallic, or if you prefer phallogocentric because it fucks what it does, it screws up the object that it creates, and thus renders it incomprehensible . . .

If this is so, then, we, as writers, should perhaps lock ourselves in the desert of our immense suffering, I mean the pain of writing, and there try to transform onanistically that suffering into indifference . . .

That's an interesting thought. I shall ponder it for a while and let you know later if I agree with you, but right now allow me to continue to believe, as I have done for a long time now, that my pen is a sword, or to put it in the right words, since these words came to me in French, yes in French in a dream, j'ai toujours pris ma plume pour une ÉpÈe . . .

Are you aware of what you are saying? . . .

Of course, I am. That I more often took or mistook my cock for a sword, or better yet my cock for my pen . . .

No, that's not what I heard. What I heard is that when you think of your phallus as your pen, you are really confusing your cock with your penis . . .

Isn't a cock and a penis the same? . . .

Oh no! A penis is small, soft, indifferent. But a cock is hard, vibrant, full of desire and mischief. You piss with your penis, but you fuck with your cock . . .

You're just playing with words now. I'm trying to tell you something important about real language, and you reduce my words to an obscene play on words . . .

On the contrary, I am trying to show, as you have yourself stated, that real language is incomprehensible. In fact, that's why we are having this useless dialogue . . .

Useless! Okay, then let's try to have a useful dialogue . . .

Fine with me. What shall we discuss? . . .

Well, let's first determine what we will discuss, and then discuss what we decide to discuss. Let us discuss what we proposed to discuss, had we agreed on the topic of our discussion. No, that was not it . . .

That was not quite what it was. It was, if . . . if . . . only if we could spend the next forty-five minutes [I have an appointment in forty-five minutes] discussing what we would discuss were we to have a discussion . . .

Yes, we could have a discussion symposium. We could spend the next forty-five minutes discussing what we would have discussed had we had [had we had? — yes that's the correct tense] a discussion symposium . . .

Had we had . . .

That's it . . .

[pause]

That means we either spend the next forty-five minutes being quiet and then discuss the "had had" . . .

. . . which we did not discuss . . .

Yes. [short pause] . . . Or shall we imagine the forty-five minutes having gone?

. . .

No! No no no! because then that would be a kind of . . .

Mmmm . . .

It would be like talking about silence . . .

I'm not sure. I don't know. Perhaps we could produce some very literate and meaningful silence . . .

I don't want to . . .

[aside] This is a very profound symposium . . .

No, I don't want to. I want to complicate the tenses of our discussion about the discussion that we should have were we to have had a discussion . . .

Were we to have had? . . .

First we discussed what we would discuss were we to have a discussion symposium, but then you . . .

Oh, yes . . .

Right . . .

Now we allow time to pass before we tackle the real thing . . .

. . . and then we could . . .

. . . we could discuss what we would have discussed had we had a symposium. Therefore, the next step would be to discuss . . . right? . . .

We could discuss conditionally what we would have discussed about what we would have discussed . . .

[in disgust] Ach, no! . . .

[unperturbed] . . . had we had a symposium. Something like that . . .

No, let us rephrase, restate our original point of departure for this discussion, because it seems to me that we missed one level of tenses, an important level of tense . . .

[tentatively] Perhaps what we need now are future participles in order to . . . in order to . . . in order to . . .

We will could . . .

. . . discuss after we will had discussed what we will have discussed had we had been a symposium . . .

Almost, almost. Get it all down? Spew it out . . .

Mmmmm . . .

That was good. Almost . . .

Mmmmm . . .

Having finished discussing that . . . right . . . then we would have to retrace our steps, I mean our verbal steps, either backward or forward to the original discussion of what we should discuss were we to have this . . . this . . . this discussion, this symposium, followed by the discussion of what we would discuss had we had had that symposium which we would then discuss what we will have discussed if we would have had a symposium. No . . . No, I've missed something in there . . . [long pause]

No, it's not right, yet, no. Wait a moment . . .

[thinks] We are discussing . . . We could start, we are discussing, we can . . .

WE [with mounting excitement] . . . of yes, I've got it. We can discuss . . .

No, er . . . we are in fact discussing . . .

Correct, we are discussing what we would be able to discuss if . . .

had we . . .

. . . had we decided . . .

. . . to have . . .

. . . to have a discussion . . .

. . . a potential discussion, for in fact we are now discussing the potentiality of the discussion that we might have had had we been . . .

. . . discussing . . .

The Discussion!

Exactly, the discussion itself . . .

We are almost there, almost . . .

Don't give up, this is starting to mean something . . .

What! You don't mean that, that we are starting to mean . . .

Cancel that . . .

The point is, we've got to get to the stage, to the preliminary stage of the discussion in order to be able to have the discussion . . .

Yes, what actually is being discussed, or will be but . . .

There is no but, there is only what is under discussion . . .

. . . and what is under discussion? The discussion of the discussion that we could have had had we had a discussion. It's as simple as that . . .

Yes, of course. Amazing how you always have the final word . . .

There is no final word since we were unable to decide what the discussion would be had we managed to decide on the topic of a discussion . . .

Quite true. So what do we do now? . . .

You go do what you have to do, and I'll go do what I have to do . . .

But what about . . .

About what? Do you really think that we were talking about something? We were just talking something . . .

Talking a storm . . .

In a manner of speaking, yes. We were, in fact, talking the real thing . . . real language . . .

And that is why it was, or seemed, or will appear incomprehensible to most . . .

But not to us, of course, because as the initiators of that real language, we situate ourselves outside that language, and therefore, as such . . .

Oh shit! I missed my appointment . . .

Too bad. What do we do now? . . .

Let's have a discussion . . .

Against Interpretation

Lidia Yuknavitch

I remember the first time I got it. That Sontag thing. During this time I was screwing a deconstructionist. Well, two. One was a wanna-be, the other the thing itself. The thing about a deconstructionist is they won't hold still. Am I right? Slippery little suckers, aren't they. Always fading from focus, too. You know what I mean. It's like playing hide and seek with Nietzsche. God is dead. Olly-olly-umcomphree. Go fish. Good looking sons-of-bitches though. Anyway. We all three met inside this Sontag text. Inscribed by her ideas. They both had opinions, needless to say, about how important her ideas had been *at the time*. And I remember thinking, in both cases, gee, brainiacs, what *time* was that? Do you mean the 1960's? I thought deconstructionists understood time out of history, history as discourse, chronology as flap-jawed nonsense. *At the time*. Well hell. Like our man Bill Shakespeare was important *at the time*. Of course I know what they meant. I'm just saying it was hypocritical. Get my meaning? But I didn't really have anything to prove, so I just let it go at that. I wanted to fuck, not fight.

I don't know why the hell I went to grad school. I don't know why I chased down a Ph.D.. I know I wasn't like anyone else who was there, and I know that I don't have, or I have not achieved the things I was supposed to. But neither did I get spit out, booted, 86'd. Curious. At any rate, I was there, I was waving Marx and Hegel around like a flag of my disposition, I was shamelessly throwing names like Jameson and Deleuze and Guattari and Bakhtin around with the best of them. My lips were fluttering away, bubbles emerged from my mouth as with all the others. I wore black. I wore stylish Brooks Brothers glasses. I had silver jewelry. I talked the talk. I said Julia Kristeva. Georg Lukacs. I said Walter Benjamin. Whole lexicons uttered like secret decoder ring child's games. And when I was horny, I very methodically and with potent research skills set out to get what I wanted. Isn't that what intelligence is in a woman? Don't give me that crap about equality and mental chessmanship. I didn't want to be smarter than any of the men I

knew. I wanted to be as smart as they were and fuck the brains out of every god damn last one of them. So let's be frank. Screwing outweighed education by a billion years. To hell with that deferral shit. You know what's what.

So you can understand how it was that when I read about an erotics of art I thought I was way ahead of the fucking game. Because I understood the hermeneutic implications of pretty much everything I read also happened at the level of an ordinary body, and I'd sit there in my apartment bathroom naked, perhaps taking a dump, and think, yeah, so? It's not as if anything in all of pukey human history has ever changed because some painfully brilliant person wrote down their ideas. We keep killing and fucking and eating each other no matter what; it only shifts forms, not content. That's something I could never figure out about my so-called *colleagues*. I mean, they actually thought they were traveling, I mean in the literal sense, via ideas. Whereverwhere did they get to? Where has the world gotten to? The best response appears to me to be scotch and fucking. Eternally.

But I digress. About fucking. Not much to say, is there? I mean, it is not as if I have anything new to add to the great saga of academic boinking. Or in particular, the academia variety—male professor and young woman student, female professor and young male student, cross-lateral gay and lesbian advances, student-to-student escapades, who can be the first bisexual races, orgies at the Comp. Lit. Department Heads, yawn. Crossword puzzles. And god knows in 2000 we all have a pretty solid script of the power structure of fucking—presidents and interns, teachers and students, priests and alter boys, day-care center leaders and children, fathers and daughters, I mean, Foucault is old news at this point. Smart boy, stylish guy, but old news. Am I right?

So the one guy, the wanna-be, he had a red-headed girl-friend to beat all. She had big tits and huge flowing red hair and the greatest mouth that ever threw lips over a cock. I mean really, I don't think any men appreciated her as much as I did. She was a fucking knockout in the 50's Hollywood sense, and she wore clothing from that era as well. Jesus. I'm telling you. Her eyes were bright blue, too, and her name was Erica. Can you picture this? I believe that you can.

Anyway, the deconstructionist wanna-be used to have my boyfriend and I over for dinner parties and so forth. They lived in the woods in this great old house that had been left to Erica by her grandparents. A

Merchant Ivory movie is what comes to mind when I think of going out to Erica's house. She had this great Japanese goldfish pond, and a string of Chinese paper lanterns leading off into the woods. There was a spare building with a loft sleeping area that she used as a sculpture studio, and get this, she always worked naked. No shit. The kitchen had dried herbs and roses hanging upside down all over the place, and she had her own mini-vineyard out back—made her own wine. Fantastic hooch. Knocked you on your ass in 20 minutes. Get the picture?

So we're out there one night and we're drunk and stoned and everything is dreamy and swelling with great deep reds and oranges and the smell of gardenia. Or something. And at a certain point late in the evening four of us, me and mine, Erica and the wanna-be deconstructionist, begin to shed our clothing and fondle one another in a group. The rest of the people at the dinner party settle in on couches and huge pillows scattered about the floor for optimum viewing. This is after we had pierced Rachel's navel with a safety pin and all the women had kissed one another in passionate lip locks for the hell of it. After my boyfriend and the wanna-be deconstructionist had sucked one another's cocks on a dare, after the fat guy from Fresno had taken a dive into the goldfish pond, after the shy girl with no eyebrows had disappeared and re-emerged dressed in an eighteenth century corset from Erica's eccentric wardrobe. OK?

So the wanna-be is going down on me (don't ask me how he got my pants off—I'd rigged them closed with all kinds of pins and shit because I'd just bought them at a vintage clothing store and didn't have time to sew them into normalcy), and Erica, as I turned my head to the side in a kind of giddy sleeplessness, is riding my boyfriend for all he's worth. The only problem is, he's a bit flaccid, as happens with too much to drink and too many drugs, so actually she's just riding to be riding, and she is the most god damn beautiful image I've ever seen, she's uncanny, she's Napoleon riding in his revolutionary way, she's conquering nations, she's the turn of the century, she's taking no prisoners, she's trampling the dead. Somewhere in that watching I come, the wanna-be's mouth fills with it, he moans and gurgles, I remember there is a man between my legs and let go the superb aesthetics of her image.

So I look at his face down there, sort of perched on my cunt and between the mountains of my thighs and knees. He missed my cumming. His eyebrows are working furiously, more furiously than when

he is being a deconstructionist wanna-be and going on and on about the use and abuse of history and catachresis and on and on, and suddenly his eyes lurch up to my face (his head stays put, mind you), and we clap eyes on one another, we are locked there in that duel, his mouth to my mouth, he thinks he is making me come, I am an observer entirely, my cunt is the object of my performance, distanced, sadistic, pure. I am without a self, I am a free-floating subjectivity, an as-yet unfinished sentence, the whole she-bang.

Then we're just naked smelly animals again, a little confused, trying to get our clothes back on as the watchers try to decide whether they are disgusted or titillated.

The second guy is more of a cliché thing. We're in his office at the university, which of course could be any university. He turns the lights off. His books and books lining the walls are like ghosts of entire epochs crowding the room. An audience. His Gap button down shirt is like Siberia. Perfect white on white. His black pants draw me in as a ravine. I can barely see his face, barely see his lips moving. He says, there are things we can do without it meaning we're having sex. His cologne is so much louder than what he is saying, not to mention the fact that what he is saying is so god damn ludicrous it is beyond belief, and anyway, all women know, even 25 year old women know what desire is, what cunts and cocks are, what power is, he is so deluded it becomes part of the reason he is irresistible to me, I feel as if I might devour him. And he unbuttons my pants and sticks his living hand (Keats scholar—I can't be with him without the lines invading my head) into that wet salty cunty place and I undo his Geoffry Bean belt and unzip his Calvin Klein pants and grab his cock hard and to the flesh and so there we are in that office with our hands full like hundreds of other idiots exactly like us with their hands full.

I don't know why things like this come to me at times like that. I said, and no I'm not kidding, and no I haven't an idea in hell why anyone ever behaves as if they don't see the centrifugal force of desire when it's as obvious as it is, big as a fat red clown nose, I said, I want to come on your book, and no I don't know why he reached for his recently published from Stanford beautiful purple covered book and helped me to negotiate a better position for coming, and yes I did.

And that's what I'm saying. About art and desire. Get the picture?

ALT-X PRESS

ABOUT THE ALT-X VIRTUAL IMPRINT

ALT-X PRESS

SINCE OUR INCEPTION IN 1993, ALT-X'S PRIMARY MISSION HAS BEEN TO CHALLENGE THE ART AND LITERARY PUBLISHING ESTABLISHMENTS BY SUPPORTING SOME OF THE MOST ICONOCLASTIC VOICES AND VISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART AND WRITING. OUR ALT-X VIRTUAL IMPRINT BRINGS TO WEB-READERS A MUST-HAVE LIBRARY OF UNCATEGORIZABLE WRITING BEING PRODUCED BY SOME OF THE MOST PROVOCATIVE ARTISTS IN CONTEMPORARY NEW MEDIA CULTURE. AS ECLECTIC WRITING MAKES ITS FOOTPRINT INTO THE ELECTROSPHERE, WE NO LONGER ASK "WHAT IS LITERATURE?" BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, "WHAT IS LITERATURE'S EXIT STRATEGY?"



61977

MANUFACTURED
IN CYBERSPACE

ALTX

ALT-X PRESS

A VIRTUAL IMPRINT
of
The Alt-X Digital Arts Foundation

ALSO IN THIS SERIES:

Anarchivists of Eco-Dub // Nile Southern

Cows // Ronald Sukenick

.echo // Alan Sondheim

Hard_Code // edited by Eugene Thacker

How To Be an Internet Artist // Mark Amerika

Making Scenes // Adrienne Eisen

Twilight of the Bums // Federman/Chambers

ALL AVAILABLE ON THE WEB AT:

[HTTP://WWW.ALTX.COM](http://www.altx.com)



61977

MANUFACTURED
IN CYBERSPACE

ALT-X