

P - F O R M

UH, OH

A C C I D E N T S

the accidental incident



Design and Illustration by David Crucke

performance chicago

SPONSORED BY:

THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ART GALLERY, DANCE CENTER OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE,
RENAISSANCE SOCIETY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LOCATION:

DANCE CENTER OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE, 4730 N. SHERIDAN ROAD

PARKING AVAILABLE FOR \$2.00 ON THE CORNER OF LAKESIDE AND SHERIDAN

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 AND SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

sharon evans "THE HYPOCHONDRIAC"

paula killen "ROAD KILL"

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24 AND SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

joanna frueh "MOUTH PIECE"

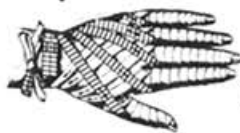
heidi lang "BREAKING IT"

TIME: 8:00 P.M. FOR ALL PERFORMANCES

PRICE: \$7.00 PER PERFORMANCE

\$5.00 PER PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENT WITH I.D. TICKETS AVAILABLE IN
ADVANCE AT THE DANCE CENTER OR THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ART GALLERY

FOR TICKET INFORMATION CALL: 271-7928



This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.
Indirect support has also been received from the Institute for Museum Services, a federal agency offering general operating support to the nation's museums.

FEBRUARY

MUSIC

POETRY

PERFORMANCE

GUEST

OTIS

MIXED

Mondays-Music

2/6 Hal Russell + NRG Ensemble + Mars Williams

2/13 Cacophony

2/20 Bill Barnes and a Thousand Excuses

2/27 Trondent Shaman

Tuesdays-Sex and Drugs and Rock and Roll.

2/7 Robert Dalton-Brigid Murphy-Larry Steger (Performance) Jason (Poetry)

2/14 Brendan de Vallance-Andy Soma (Performance) Max Gray (Music) Lorri Jackson (Poetry)

2/21 Immanuel and their American Friend(Music) Dani K- Steve Lefreniere (Performance)

2/28 Timo Anttila-Dan Dinello-Greg Schneider-Zirbel-Plaster Caster (Video)

Mathew Owen-David Sedaris (Performance)

Wednesdays-The Italian American Theater Presents

Silent Othello Directed by Frank Melcori

Featuring Lionel Bottari-Laura Dame-Gino De Grazia-Douglas Grew-Kaja Overstreet. Live Music by Michael Zerang, Don Meckley, Kent Kessler.

Limited run February 1, 8, 15, 22, 8:30 pm prompt.

Thursdays-Performance Poetry

2/2 Marc Smith

2/9 American Outline presents Terry Jacobus-Ron Wray

2/16 American Outline presents Shelia Donoghue-Jean C. Howard

2/23 American Outline presents Henry Kanabus-Art Lange

Fridays-Guest DJs

2/3 Joe Allen (Strictly African)

2/10 Eric Swingville

2/17 Daniel Scanlan

2/24 Don Meckley

Saturdays-Guest DJ's

2/4 Chris De Chiara

2/11 Bruno Johnson

2/18 Joe Bryl

2/25 Cara Jepsen

Sundays-The Knee Jerk Deviance is the Rootless Cosmopolitans' first cabaret revue at Lower Links. The Ro-Co's are: Warren Lemming (literature and guitar), Scott Carlton (sax, flute), Bob Jacobson (trumpet) Al Wittek (guitar, piano). At various points the Rootless will be joined by members of the Chicago performance and cabaret community. They can be heard on Disturbing Records and Tapes. Limited engagement February 5, 12, 19, 26, 8 pm.

Events Programmed by Warren Lemming, L. Jones, Bob Foley, Joe Bryl and Michael Zerang.



CLUB
LOWER LINKS
954 W NEWPORT 2485238

N.A.M.E. Gallery Presents PERFORM-O-RAMA featuring

INKA ALASADE FRANK ABBINANTI
NANCY FOREST BROWN
SHARON EVANS ROBERT DAULTON
KYLE GANN STEVE JONES DANI K.
MICHAEL MEYER
IRIS MOORE/BETH TANNER
BRIGID MURPHY LAWRENCE STEGER
CHARMIAN TASHJIAN
BRENDAN DEVALANCE
AND OTHERS

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday,
April 13, 14, 15, at 8 PM

Sunday Matinee April 16 at 3 PM
to be held at

Chicago Filmmakers

1229 W. Belmont

Admission \$8/\$6 Student, Seniors

4 night pass \$25

For information and reservations,
call 226-0671

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT N.A.M.E. A CHICAGO
NOT-FOR-PROFIT ART ALTERNATIVE

UH, OH P-FORM Release Party

Performance Art By: BETH TANNER & IRIS MOORE JOHN LIEBRAND	TIM BUCKLEY JIM BLACHLY MATTHEW OWENS AND MANY MORE	DOUGLAS HOPPE ANDY SOMMA CHRIS SULLIVAN
---	--	---

RANDOLPH ST. GALLERY

756 N. MILWAUKEE

8:00PM

SAT. FEB. 25, 1989

\$5.00

FREE PARKING

BUY A SUBSCRIPTION AT THE DOOR AND GET IN FREE

P-FORM
Published by
RANDOLPH STREET
GALLERY
756 N. Milwaukee
Chicago, IL 60622
312-666-7737

IRENE TSATSOS
Managing Editor

DANI K.
DANNY RAY LEOPARD
NANCY MARTELL
MICHELE RABKIN
PETER TAUB
Editors

LESLIE BODENSTEIN
Design

BRENDAN de VALLANCE
Production Manager

SUSAN SLADEN
Typesetter

SUSAN ANDERSON
Photography Editor

P-FORM is a bi-monthly
publication dedicated to the
development and understanding of
performance art. We are committed
to building critical dialogue in
Chicago, and welcome your
response and participation.

P-FORM is published by Randolph
Street Gallery. RSG is supported in
part by its members and by grants
from the following funding
agencies: The Chicago Office of
Fine Arts, The Illinois Arts Council
(a state agency), The National
Endowment for the Arts; and by
private foundations and
corporations including the Chicago
Community Trust, The Joyce
Foundation, The John D. and
Catherine T. MacArthur
Foundation, and the Robert R.
McCormick Charitable Trust.

Cover

Art

By

Kay

Rosen

Accidents

P-FORM

Issue 12

Feb./March 1989

\$2.00

FEATURE REVIEWS

7 THIS IS NOT A REVIEW Kevin Henry

8 SPEAKING IN TONGUES: THE DETERRITORIALIZATION
OF THE BORDER-BRUJO Inigo Manglano-Ovalle

ACCIDENTS

11 from SCAR TISSUE Gary Indiana

11 AN OBVIOUS OPINION Steve Lafreniere

13 from BUMPY SIGNALS: SELECTED LETTERS OF TIGGEY
COMPTON Kirsten Golland

13 "AS I WENT OUT..." Peter Milliken

14 from INTRODUCING HORROR HOSPITAL Dennis Cooper

15 MY HANDLE Johnny Pixchure

16 REVIEWS David Sedaris

18 CUT IT SHORT DICK Kay Rosen

19 THE BLOODY GIRL GOES TO THE PLAY OR IT CAME
FROM FRANCE Jacqui Disler

22 TEN BY TEN Lynn Martinelli & Rob Wittig

23 from THE ENGINES OF DESIRE Rob Wittig

REVIEWS

25 HOUSEKEEPING Maggie Doyle

25 INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES Lionel Bottari

26 FIVE NIGHTS OF LIVING ART Emily Lozano

27 REAL STORIES Brendan deVallance + Nancy Martell

27 REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST Michele Rabkin

28 MILLY'S ORCHID SHOW Mike Lash

29 SATELLITE SHOWCASE '88 Maggie Doyle

29 SCENES FROM HELL Kevin Henry

29 TERMINAL MADNESS Kevin Henry

30 THE PHANTOM OF THE BAR SHOW Danny Ray Leopard

EDITOR'S NOTE

No single explanation can really explain human behavior; it can at most illuminate human behavior and allow us to see something we had not seen....An accident may be considered a paradigm. Why did it happen? The road was icy at that point. And the driver of the small car was in a great hurry because he was late for a crucial appointment, because the person who had promised to pick him up had not come. And his reflexes were slower than usual because he had had hardly any sleep that night because his mother had died the day before. And just before the accident his attention was distracted for one crucial second

by a very pretty girl on the side of the road, who reminded him of a girl he had once known. Yet he might have regained control of his car if only a truck had not come toward him just as he skidded into the left lane. The truck driver might have managed not to hit him, but...If we add that the truck driver had just gone through a red light and was, moreover, going much faster than the legal speed limit, the policeman who witnessed the accident, as well as the court later on, might discount as irrelevant everything said before

the three dots and be quite content to explain the accident simply in terms of the truck driver's two violations. He caused the accident. But that does not rule out the possibility that the other driver had a strong death wish because his mother had died, or that he punished himself for looking at an attractive girl the way he did so soon after his mother's death, or that the person who had him down was partly to blame.

---*Discovering the Mind, Volume III: Freud v. Adler and Jung*, by Walter Kaufmann.



Accidents

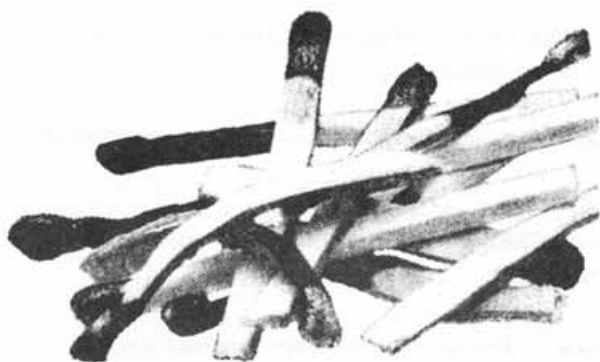
guest

curated

by

Steve

Lafreniere



The next *P-FORM* will feature a special section guest curated by

Linda Novak plus reviews by Cal Fuller, Robert Daulton, and

Emily Lozano and a crossword puzzle by Sven Echo.



Wide World Photos

Lionel Bottari is a poet/plumber and actor/electrician who splits his time between the underground art scene and the basements of apartment buildings.

The City Moon ("News from Ancient Wichita") was a newspaper operating in Kansas in the late 1970s.

Dennis Cooper is a fiction writer, poet and publisher. A novel, *Closer*, is due in March from Grove Press. He is a critic for Artforum and Artscribe and lives in New York.

Brendan deVallance is a performance artist.

Jacqui Disler is a writer and critic. Her first skinny volume of poetry, *Leopard Radio*, will be available from ESP in the spring.

Maggie Draland Doyle is a performance artist and critic. She recently completed her doctorate in performance studies at Northwestern.

Kirsten Golland is a social commentator and community organizer. She lives in Oakland, California.

Kevin Henry is a performance artist living in Chicago.

Gary Indiana is a social critic and novelist. He writes a bi-weekly column, "Spectacle," for the *Village Voice* in New York where he lives.

Steve Lafreniere is easily fascinated. He has lived in Wicker Park for years and years.

Mike Lash lives in Chicago.

Danny Ray Leopard is a video artist and an editor of *P-Form*.

Emily Lozano is a student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Inigo Magnallo-Ovalle will receive his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute this spring.



Nancy Martell is an editor of *P-Form*.

Lynn Martinelli is a visual artist who lives and works in Chicago.

Peter Milliken is a musician and writer and lives in several Ohio cities during different times of the year.

Johnny Pixchure is an artist living in New York after spending most of his life in rural Alabama.

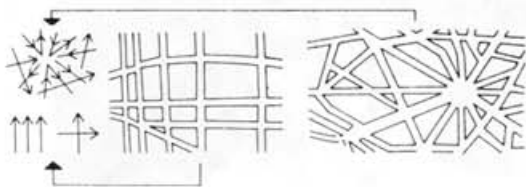
Michele Rabkin is an interdisciplinary artist and critic and editor of *P-Form*.

Kay Rosen is a Chicago-based artist. Her work is represented by Feature in New York.

David Sedaris is a Chicago writer/diarist/provocateur living in Uptown.

Rob Wittig is a Chicago writer and project foreman for IN.S.OMNIA, an international electronic literary message system.

THIS IS NOT A REVIEW



Ping Chong considered by Kevin Henry

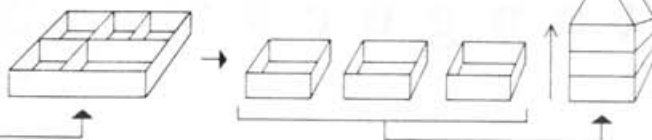
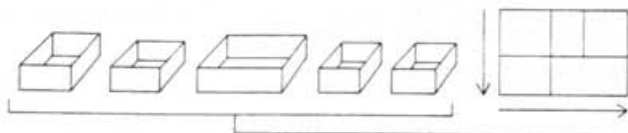
THIS IS NOT A REVIEW. This is a list in no particular order or chronology with no attempt at arranging significant details over non-significant details (although, for my taste, the latter prevailed). Think of this as a list: a list for shopping or for things needing attention.

This is not a review.

1. A mix of international music (Asian, European, American)
2. A clock (with the big hand on the twelve and the little hand on the three)
3. An empty stage (bathed in bright pastel light)
4. A man (dressed in a nice suit describing his intentions—a prologue? An excuse? A formality? It's anyone's guess.)
5. Louder music (more of the same, see #1.)
6. Two rows of people (forming a line upstage, parallel to the audience, swaying as people might sway in mimicry of palm trees or any poorly rooted product of nature)
7. A clock (apparently not plugged in because the big hand is still on the twelve and the little...see #2)
8. Tape sounds (over the house P. A. system-media, news, etc...)
9. People behind microphones (speaking in non sequitur—full of disenchantment, banality, non-civility...to list but a few—done in a round, like children singing “row, row, row your boat...”)
10. Dancers (moving in pedestrian fashion)



17. Clock (see #s 2 and 7)
18. Knife (or close facsimile held by German woman and lunged mime-like into the vacuous space between pedestrian people)
19. Scream (performed by another participant in what one is to believe is a direct reaction to mime-like lunge, see previous entry)
20. Movement (see #10)
21. Pregnant woman (holding conversation, or at least attentive to child-like pleas)
22. Child-like pleas (heard over sound system)
23. Statistics (random facts and figures recited by cast concerning violence)



11. Masks (worn over the eyes of all the participants, audience, of course, not included)
12. Pregnant woman (playing herself playing a pedestrian)
13. Language (more of the same, see #9, spoken uniformly with little noticeable attempt at theatricalization)
14. Murder mystery (or hint of murder mystery, owing largely to the nature of the language, see #s 9 and 13)
15. Couple (dancing non pedestrianly and somewhat romantically-overarching)
16. German woman (speaking in German with an authentic German accent—no real hint as to meaning...a textural touch, no doubt)

24. End (house lights up)
25. Man (in suit see #4, allaying any queries or confusions and generally plummeting an already overly literalized event into the realm of complete explication—replete with trivial details of the construction process of said piece)
26. Questions (from the audience as to working methods, preparation time, autobiographical details etc.... Occasional remarks in a patronizing tone: patronage in the positive sense of the definition, see second entry in the Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th edition (the abridged edition) if you care.

s p e a k i n g

i n

t o n g u e s :



P. Taub

GUILLERMO GOMEZ - PENA recites lesson number one of English as a Second Language.

"I speak Spanish, therefore you hate me.
I speak in English, therefore they hate me.
I speak Spanglish, therefore she speaks inglenol.
I speak in tongues, therefore you desire me.
I speak to you, therefore you kill me.
I speak, therefore you change.
Pero cuando hablo en espanol, te adoro.
But when I speak in Spanish, I adore you.

Ahora, why carajos do I speak Spanish?
Political Praxis, pendejo."

The Brujo (witchdoctor) sits at a table surrounded by a microcosm of the San Diego-Tijuana border. A collection of red pimientos, toy soldiers, small objects that exude lo mexicano and the oriental, an image of an anglo-american male in a business suit is placed next to a statue of some pre-columbian god that sits opposite a representation of la Virgen de Guadalupe, a bottle of Neutrogena shampoo, a rubber army knife, and a dozen other plastic forms are laid out before him. A megaphone towers over these objects and across the

table, hidden behind touristic memorabilia of Tijuana, a small tape-recorder delivers radio sounds of the blues, heavy-metal, news in Spanish and English, mariachi ensembles, evangelical sermons, and german pop tunes. Around his neck hangs a necklace of plastic bananas and toy grenades, on his head sits a white pachuco hat dangling a long braid of hair, over his eyes rests a pair of california sunglasses, from his ear drops a skull earring, on his upper lip he wears his own black "mostacho" twisted at its ends, below this he opens his mouth and delivers the voice of a Latino radio announcer:

"Today the sun came out in English
the world spins around en ingles
and life is just a melancholic tune
spoken in a foreign tongue. . .
like THIS one."

Guillermo Gomez-Pena sticks out his tongue stretching it below his chin and slowly moves his head from side to side deliberately exposing it to our clinical gaze. Are we merely spectators, medical examiners, or targets? Is this an affronting gesture or a literal presentation? What is certain is that as audience we hold no tongue depressor. We are his "dear foreign audience." There is no barrier, no border between us and the exhibition of his most vital organ.

A tongue is a muscular organ attached to the floor of the mouth. It is essential in the digestion of nourishment and cultural sustenance. It is our principal organ of taste. It defines convention in home-cooking and selects the spice of culinary exoticism. Laid out and exposed it blinds us in our quest to situate "otherness" into a color scheme. It is an organ without pigment, an anatomical "form without content." We may, for the moment, be silently tongue-tied and unprejudiced, but as soon as Gomez-Pena activates his organ we cannot turn a deaf ear to the tonguing of geography, ethnicity, and the intrusion of the "other-side" within our limits. His monologue, or rather monologues of languages, dialects, and jargons represents the synthesis of a multitude of characters from the border. As such the tongue is also a muscle trained by socio-cultural contexts to deliver speech simultaneously revealing and constituting its own histories, and fictions.

"Hello Jack. Jack are you there?" He mimicks a phone call into the raised megaphone, reaching beyond the border of the audience into the vast sameness that the U.S. pretends to have in its hold. "Pardon my bad English, Jack, but I came too late to this country to be domesticated." It is an apology, directed to the part of the audience that is "Jack, el senor monocromatico." And yet the audience chuckles uncomfortably, conscious of their gaze (or rather listening) that has already fixed his "otherness". Trouble is sensed on the border that resides within all of us. Even when well guarded it continually fails to laugh-off the other, put in its place, and domesticate that which crosses all obstacles, in this case language, and with it history, and with it new-history.

THE
DETERRITORIALIZATION
OF THE
BORDER-BRUJO
GUILLERMO GOMEZ-PENA
RANDOLPH STREET GALLERY

By Inigo Manglano-Ovalle

To Gomez-Pena, the whole notion of the U.S. as a monolithic Anglo-Saxon culture, where states have begun to decree an "official language", is becoming ridiculous to sustain. "We are no longer talking culture, we are talking demographics." This notion is something that the border-artist deconstructs before our very eyes and ears. There is no "artistic border" for the brujo's discourse. A "tongue," as a style and quality of utterance, in the domain of the border becomes a multivalent, multicultural, and/or multilingual instrument. "Please check my pronunciation," we are asked at one point, but what, or rather which pronunciation do we judge, and under what standard, and when? This becomes a ridiculous proposition having spent the performance hearing one man speaking with complete command a whole range of tongues. As he jumps from one stereotypical character to another we hear the accents of Hispanic-English, Mexican-Spanish, American-English, Chicano-Spanish and inglenol, California-Talk, American Tourist-Spanish, the French of the literati, the Cholo-Punk Speak of the border youth, el habla del pachuco, etc. All these voices are synthesized into the hyper reality of the border, a multihybrid tour de force of types and personajes incompatible with a monochromatic "melting-pot".

When the border-brujo speaks it is hard to know whether we are being french-kissed or tongue-lashed. He exorcises us and chastises us, invites us and rejects us, implores and ignores, bends over and delivers. "We scold you, we remind you. Because we are so fucking minute what else can we do." Continually drawing lines between things and crossing them, using much the same strategies as pre-postmodern Chicano poetry did with code-switching, he discloses postmodernism as "just another identified -ismo", and calls for a new terminology. What was once the Hispanic as expatriate artist has now become the Latino-American-in-the-U.S. as migratory artist. Our notion of borders between anthropology and art criticism, media and performance space, political and artistic legitimization, comes into question. "Where can we draw the line between curiosity and exploitation, dialogue and entertainment, representation and tokenism? . . . I am not your tourist guide into the undetermined otherness, *mi amor*, this is not a seminar in interracial relations."

Gomez-Pena's strongest examples of linguistic and cultural deterritorialization are voiced in his invented hybrid languages. These semi-recognizable intonations are borderless languages where the ancient stumbles in the yet-to-come, where different times and distant cultures clash in experimental constructs. "*Spaecolum saecolorum*" (mirror of a new age) begins a Latin ecclesiastic hymn in which the resurrection of memory itself insinuates a future. The change continues simultaneously incorporating Spanish, English, and ancient Aztec, "*EL T.V. video deus pater omni potenti est Texcatlipoca eletronic.*"

His most arresting example of hybrid lingo is the vocalization of the

"geopolitical wound called 'The Border'." It is the incantation of the shaman as he erases the artifice of the border, and exorcises history as the "mere imprecision of your (our) memory." A multi-layered composition of pre-Hispanic Nahuatl and Huichola are interwoven with oriental tonics. What we hear is a lexicological and phonetic stylization of colloquial border voices thrown into a time warp. The precolumbian encounters the "homopunk." We move in intervocalic leaps from "Aztec to hightech", from papagodo to Bladerunner. It is a prophetic pronouncement of the orientalization of southern California, the coitus of two cultures on the border, where the far-east and the south-of-the-border find themselves face to face again. Was it not the Asian peoples, crossing the unguarded Bering Strait, who were the first "undocumented" to colonize what is now *las Americas*? As history reveals itself it becomes an omen shouted into a megaphone.

"I'VE GOT THE FUTURE IN MY THROAT."

A new terminology is needed to describe Gomez-Pena's topographical voice. "Geolinguistics" is out moded, for it does not contend with the time element of a continual epic migration. We need terms that are transliterate, transmigrant, and undocumented, that avoid lexicological legalization. "Alien", "immigrant", and "hispanic art" become obsolete in the transgressive future of *panamericanismo*. It becomes necessary for the border-brujo to invent "a new mankind, the Fourthworld, the migrantkind. . . *los que partimos y nunca llegamos.*" (We who leave and never arrive.)

At the end of the performance the border-brujo stands and begins once again his proto-posthistoric *pronunciamento*. He dons a satin skull mask of the Mexican wrestler-saint, offering us a hybrid of the pop-culture superhero, and the Toltec warrior column of the ancient site of Tula. His mask sports the colors of *la Virgen de Guadalupe*, mother of all of Mexico, herself a hybrid of the christian image of virginity and the Aztec goddess of fertility and death. As the lights go out, and Gomez-Pena's voice grows distant, the light blue and white features of the mask allude to the human skull adorned with mosaic turquoise and jet, this tongueless mask is said to have been a gift to Cortez from the Aztec emperor Montezuma.

... I fell off the train twenty miles from Verona. I don't really speak Italian. The train had paused at a little station in the countryside. The night was very black.

"Verona," someone in the car sighed. I was dozing. The word jolted me and my four overweight suitcases into action. I sprang for the pneumatic door.

"Verona, ici?" I asked a placid looking girl while struggling with the outer door.

"Sì, sì," she nodded dreamily. "Verona—"

I stepped off the train. It was already in motion. I was thrown about fifteen feet, the luggage flew away and bounced into a small ravine. A number of English tourists came running from the platform.

"This isn't Verona," I observed. It didn't even look like Verona, really.

"No," one of the tourists said sadly. Meanwhile, the train had stopped. The conductor and another official came crunching along the gravel embankment. They began inspecting me for lacerations. I explained in French what had happened. They assured me in Italian that this sort of thing happens all the time. Next, I was helped back onto the train. I sat down near three teenagers who began chatting excitedly. I do understand Italian. They watched me with avid expressions, waiting for me to throw myself off the train again.

— GARY INDIANA, SCAR TISSUE



An Obvious Opinion

Performance is our pathology. Certainly the illusion of control, in our lives and of them, is as deeply rooted as the control of that illusion. We're moderately programmed, but caged. So much so that 7,000 years of recorded history seems less like bragging than an apology for meaning. We love to pretend and then call it civilization.

The accidental is a banally old enemy, like jealousy or diarrhea, but more awe-inspiring. Before the present age, the contiguous proximity of pain and painful death made it not unreasonable to follow one's daily routine in avoid-

ance of the unpredictable. Catastrophe crept unchecked with little in the way of protection or relief to vary its outcome. Endless political upheaval was rife, a consequence of contagious and violent caprice. Religion notwithstanding, tortures were designed, endured and improved on. In fact, anyone poor, powerless or out of sovereign favor could find themselves on the wrong end of enforced calamity any day of the week.

Not that things are vastly better now. We've made selected environments somewhat more hospitable over the

past few centuries, yet with the armories of science at our disposal, we still feel in mortal danger just getting up in the morning. And no mention of the horrors unleashed by the latter is necessary.

The last twenty years have seen an in-kind spiralling of apprehensions. The reasons for our anxiety are concrete but seem oddly unconscious and removed. They may have to compete with the other mediated rites and disequilibriums whistling through our days, but they're there. Millennia of pandemic disease, agricultural disaster, cyclical famine, stupefying warfare and the inevitable victim-blaming over the whole thing have slit wicked scars in our collective memory. There's a reason the knee jerks.

If fear (of pain) circumscribes the shape of our lives and polices its limits, the welcomed integration of codified behavior into most societies has been the singular result of a pigeon-holing method of cognition, itself rooted in this fear. A principle of western thought is a belief in the beginning and finity of concepts, each linked to the next like sentries, yet independent. From this myth of fortification and safety a kind of strength wells up, walking us through a well-worn network of thoughts and acts every hour of the day. Even if we wanted to, complete transgression of codifications this unconscious would be impossible without psychosis either requisite or an end-result. Anyway, no matter how much we may try to move beyond the present situation, it's doubtful we want to see it utterly changed. It's against our "nature."

Surely fascination and desire play cat and mouse with the higher (lower?) systems of rationality we've climbed up into. But a systemic repression of those urges inevitably rises from some ancient, more indelible program to smite us. Just try standing on a public bus and singing at the top of your voice for no reason. Especially for no reason. No, our internal chaos is mostly kept clamped tight, *vincebus eruptum*, by tele-consent. All this while our cities, communities, families and solitary selves float in the sunny semi-consciousness of logic, as if in fear of our lives.

Naturally the First World has evolved a cult religion complete with appropriate fetishes out of all this radiating dread. Money and property have supplanted the more home-spun vagaries of "happiness" as the central dream and hope of average Americans, most notably in Reagan's decade. But it's a goal in the service of happiness' smug twin, security. Consistently in the 1980s, annual polls of graduating university students have found their top-ten listings of desired goals with "financial security" perched confidently at number one. At number three or four can inevitably be found "personal contentment," posited somehow as unconnected to the latter, separate in its allure.

This near-hysterical fetishization of security and feelings of cocooned protection from the absoluteness of the world isn't anything new. The wealthy and powerful have always worshipped like that. What is new is the pansocial enormity of its reach into all strata, economic and social. In the west, a kind of concerted cultural disengagement has subtly accelerated since World War II, and can be researched in its decadent end-phase in every nightly news broadcast. Perceived as cliché, issues of weight are routinely deferred in favor of furious cheer. Crises other than those with signal-

ly personal ramification to the network's target demographic are pretty much whisked out of the picture altogether. Onus and obligation have entered the pantheon of spectacle, while the fear of fear (of pain, of embarrassment, of discomfort) have substituted a creepy autism in their place. Lifestyle as armor.

Hopefully, none of this will be news to anyone reading thus far. Artists and interested parties, congenitally critical, will have noticed the present state of affairs. Many already make art that reflects various crises in social relations. But many less attempt to unmire us from them, a big difference.

In considering notions of the accidental event, I originally wanted to get at a useful definition of performance. My idea was to maybe discover the reasons that much contemporary performance seems to me as disengaged as the social landscape it is arguably trying to fathom. The cult of iron-clad control seems to have conscripted even some of the most previously off-hand methods to its fold. Is this a sea-change? If so, does it have some basis in the current horror of any but the most distanced of ironies, the driest of forms, the coolest of contents? Is the quotidian now really all that "scary" (number one yup code word)? If everyone runs to the same side of the ship, won't it sink?

Since the generality of experience is both shaped by and best examined through its exceptions, I wanted to highlight all that is *not* performance, to this end. It seemed that the best way to gain insight into the relationship between accident and performance would be by minutely examining accidents themselves. But I fast realized that I'd end up in a bog of phenomenology, causality, Freudian concepts of intent and extrinsicality, etc. The subject is vast. P-Form is small. Clearly some limits had to be set, and in attempting to do so by elimination I found myself with other ideas altogether.

In research it became obvious that the complexity of the studies on chance occurrence and mistakes isn't really the result of the impenetrability of its vocabulary or methods. It simply results from the fact that accidents are "understood" only through the constructs and ideologies of those studying them. This is of course a basic tenet of semiotics, and one with an interesting outcome as regards our subject: Although in the realm of causality the two can't easily be semiologically compared, it is in the performed as well as the accidental event that not only the meaning, but the purpose of the world *can* be revealed. In general . . .

The subtleties and "soft codes" imbedded in the accidental seem to point in a direction away from the linear "cool/hot" debate in contemporary art. As applicable as the above conclusion is to modes of static art-making, to simplify things we will here exclusively address aspects of the accidental in terms of its impact on live events and everyday incidents: the acted-out.

In *fin de siecle* America, a cultural shift seems both imperative and unworkable, supportable and silly. Historically, transgression has rarely had its patrons. But the cocooning of ourselves so thoroughly away from the universe of chance and the accidental will only bode poorly for any real use of the quantum expansion in raw information piling up on all fronts. A thaw seems in order.

— STEVE LAFRENIERE

from Bumpy Signals: Selected Letters of Tiggy Compton

November 7, 1966

Dearest P,

How's about Friday night after the drinks at Cava's? I'm not positive Francis will be open to any schemes. Got him to the Farraty's do for the bullring people, and he was sassy as ever especially to Constance and Reid who he rather dislikes. Anyway do try and show with Jack on hand.

Must fill you in on the oddest thing, tho. Tuesday last, All Saints, I took the auto into town for a few hours as I was to meet F for lunch. I was early but I started in on one of those headaches the instant I walked in the cafe. The ones I told you about. The music is of course always quite banging everywhere even nice places on the boulevard. And christ, within ten minutes I was a perfect hydra so I shouted (!) across to the prop. and got the box turned off for my trouble. It was another few minutes and Philip McCollum, if that is his name with the blonde hair, the one with the finches at Villiers? trotted in. He stays in the neighborhood and this is his regular cafe. His name is Philip at any rate and we chatted a bit. I nearly had to throw my head into my arms with the headache's pounding. He asked if I had a prescription. I then realized I had the darvon plus with me. It was F's darvon as he'd packed it in the bag for a hike on the mountain back when. But I looked and it was made out to Hebba (?) quite peculiar, in my bag. But a darvon is a darvon so I tossed back two with gin. I continued chatting with Philip and still no F. I phoned the rectory at Parven spoke to the concierge with the outcome that F is with the orchard people. He will have to cancel. He is entirely too wrapped up in that project for any good results. So I returned and Philip ordered lunch and more gin and lemonade. At that point my headache had flown but also I felt odd. The thought flashed across my mind perhaps I was experiencing an overdose because of the gin. I hadn't even thought! But I was eating and not nearly so "tired out" as those having an overdose I'm sure. Philip, a very observant individual tho said I looked pale. I laughed but noticed I was having difficulty lifting my cutlery. In a very few more minutes I was SWOONING and Philip peered at me alarmedly. He asked to see the bottle with the darvon and opened it and sniffed. P, he made such a frightful face and said "this is NOT darvon." What it was he was not certain and you know Hebba's crowd, God knows what! I thought I could walk to the ladies but the next second it seemed the most absurd idea I'd ever had. An hilarity of some great degree came over me. Did you ever see Snake pit? The scenes with the asylum patients screaming one thinks at first glance, but then it turns up they are laughing? This is how I was feeling, something was very, very wrong. At first I remember thinking that if a gnat or fly got into the room I would become terrified. A gnat! But after that and Philip had calmed me a bit he asked the prop. to call for help. I'm positive he wanted to put me in a straight jacket, tho he insisted he only wanted to get the m.d. I honestly can't tell you how long we had to wait there as I was more unaware of my environment by the minute. The strangest part was not knowing or forgetting there was a problem at all. It was so unlike any tipsiness from drink or even the time we tried the marijuana with Ribos although the latter didn't do a thing to me at the time. Everything was curiouser tho and I vividly can recall having a sort of vision! P, I have known you a very long time and we don't have to have secrets, but please never tell F what I am going to tell you — he will think me a lunatic. Or Jack. There is a word, onomatopia (sp?) which means something that looks the way the word for it sounds. Like BANG! or SMARMY, you see? This is what happened to me next. The prop. came from behind the bar and his great dane followed as the little fence was left open. He is most tame and I have patted him on occasion, but now he seemed wet. He appeared to have egg dripping from his face. I reached to pat him and this egginess was all over him. I drew my hand back and thought STICKY. I don't think I said it aloud, but P it was if I had cast a spell on the poor thing. He appeared as a great black stick to me, branches sprouting out to boot! It was obviously an hallucination, but quite clever and convincing. As a stick he looked pleasing and not at all alarming. But the queerest trick was yet to come. The prop. left, evidently in search of an m.d. that is down the street and Philip was glaring at me peculiarly. I suppose he was frightened as his eyes were so round. I was seized with the idea of the Goyas in the Prado. I reasoned that I was in the Prado. Then I was in the Goyas. Then I became still and had the word SEDIMENT on the brain for a while. I was most outside of myself. Time passed very slowly as sediment and I felt very lowly and saw myself as very very small in the larger "scheme of things." I flew back to earlier and earlier memories that were like harsh vivid dreams. The subject matter was more normal tho such as walking to the orchards with Mme. Coulter when we lived at Nice and bonfires. I saw things with a great understanding and P, I didn't care much for it. This is difficult to put down, but I'll elaborate perhaps Friday if we can slip away for a bit. It all ended up with myself sat on a window bench as if driving an auto and tried to get away in this manner! Imagine! This phase of things was told me later by Philip as I really can't see myself back at that cafe inquiring after the whereabouts of my mind with the prop. I'm sure they've derived some mirth from the whole scandal. Meriel put me to bed when they took me home. I slept well, I believe I was put "out." F was away and never heard about it, my orders. He's got too much on his mind in any case. I feel perfectly fit and no aftershocks but plan to confront Hebba when she returns. What could it have been? The doctor did send a blood sample to the clinic but we will just have to wait on that.

Anyway, Gerald is also well. He sends regards and will hopefully be present and sober on Friday. P, I look so forward to a chat. It's always too long since. And bring all the gossip from W1, I'm positively starved.

Best, Tig

— KIRSTEN GOLLAND



As I went out one morning to breathe the air around Tom Paine



I'M SORRY FOR WHAT I'VE DONE



from Introducing Horror Hospital

Episode 7

"Miss Clark," announced Jerry Sands, A&R man for Columbia Records, "please bring in the day's batch of demos. Thanks." He put down the phone, swiveled round in his chair. His eyes strayed to the opposite wall with its dozen, framed platinum records. The midday light through a window behind him made them appear three-dimensional like giant, piss colored life savers. "Ugh." He did a hit of coke. Sniff, sniff.

Miss Clark dropped a half-dozen large, bulky envelopes onto his desk. Jerry waved her away. As she strode off he eyed her ass and made a mental note: "Ask her out next chance I get." He automatically reached in a drawer for his bottle of coke, but, unscrewing the cap for the nth time that day, he asked himself if he wasn't already too high. "Oh, half a hit," he thought. Sniff.

He tore the envelope open one by one. Each contained a glossy photo, a tape and a few pages stapled together. To save time he'd taught himself how to recognize whether a band or performer had any potential at all from their pose. For example the first packet came from a woman whose facial expression spoke volumes. "Yuppie, soft soul, CD audience. The market's flooded." She hit the trash.

Next was a country rock outfit ("Jee-zus!") then a couple of hip hop groups ("That's over.") The final photograph caught Jerry's eye for two reasons. First the band looked ridiculous. Secondly he thought the boy on the left was a beautiful girl at first. "Horror Hospital?!" Turned out the girl on the right was a boy and the boy to his left a girl. "Huh?" Jerry tried the accompanying letter.

It was full of inept, contrived rage and self-important pronouncements, most of which held an unintentional charm, at least to someone on coke. "Maybe," Jerry decided, "they're some kind of speed-metal offshoot. That sells. Could these kids be the Wham of hard rock? I should see them and take Miss Clark . . . Mmmm . . ." He did two more spoonfuls of coke.

Crossing the room, he fixed his haircut and tie before the platinum disc that he used as a mirror. By sheer coincidence it was Bad Company's *Greatest Hits*. "I look clichéd," he realized, but he knew that to think about what he was doing would mean going back into therapy. "Don't think, behave," he said, forcing a broad smile to crease his face. "That's Jerry Sands."

Episode 8

Backstage at Olio, Trevor sat on a folding chair getting into Machine mood. The other band members roamed through the tiny club looking for dealers or friends. Brainless Wonder, a syntho-gloom duo scheduled to headline the show, were in the dressing room's toilet stall shooting up. One had just wrecked Trevor's concentration by nodding out or o.d.ing or something equally old school.

Suddenly Dull rushed in, grabbed and shook Trevor's shoulders. "You won't believe this!" Trevor reluctantly opened his eyes. "Believe what?" "An A&R man from Col-

umbia Records is out there to see us play." Trevor blinked. Brainless Wonder came staggering out of the toilet stall. "Columbia Records," one slurred, "where?" "To see us," Dull shouted. Trevor clutched his guitarist's arm. "Get the group back here quick!"

While Dull corralled the band Trevor attempted to grin all the happiness out of his system. If he went onstage in this state of mind, he'd definitely seem pseudo-punk. "Disaster." He jumped to his feet and started bouncing around like a boxer. That tired him out a bit. Then he took a long look at Brainless Wonder spasming on the floor. "Think pathetic," he urged himself.

Horror Hospital clustered around their lead singer. He advised them to try even harder than usual to stay in tune and keep the chords to the different songs straight. "Just look pissed and concentrate on our future, okay?" Dull bit his cuticles. Devan farted. Trevor hugged Kim, who had always been his favorite drummer, for luck.

"Trevor Jones? There's a call for you." A club employee had entered the room. He stood waiting to lead whoever answered away. "It must be my mom," Trevor groaned. He pried himself off of Kim. "I'll be right back. Psych yourselves up, I mean down, guys." He followed the gofer, whose ass exactly looked like Tim's, up a steep flight of stairs. "You can talk in that office there." "Thanks."

Trevor picked up the phone. "It's God," he joked. "Trevor Jones?" asked a female voice he didn't recognize. "Sure." "I'm the mother of Tim Wilson," she said. "Oh, hi," Trevor giggled, "he hasn't shown up here yet. Want me to have him call?" "No," said the woman, "Tim was killed in a traffic accident this afternoon. He wanted you to know." Trevor put down the phone. A moment later Dull banged on the door and yelled, "We're on!"

Episode 9

Jerry studied the crowd from a small, ringside table. "These kids can't afford to buy records," he muttered. Miss Clark looked amazingly chic if out of place in her beige Kawakubo "dress". She flinched every time a "young witch," as she'd termed the punk women, came within two or three feet. "Think of them as our shadows," he cooed, "flickering in a candle light, dancing on the bedroom walls." She nodded, grimaced.

"One two three, one two three." A balding teenaged boy had commandeered the stage. Jerry squeezed Miss Clark's hand, then inhaled a quick spoonful of coke. Sniff. "Hi, I'm the brilliant entrepreneur who runs Olio," said the announcer, "and here's a band whom I like fairly well. Horror Hospital." There was some cursory applause then the kids Jerry knew from the photo trooped out.

One of them tore the microphone right off its stand. His eyes were puffy and wet. "I just heard some bad news and I hate all you fucking shits. You're just fucking nothing! I just..." The band began their first number. The flustered singer dropped to his knees and threw the microphone across the stage. His body trembled and swayed out of time with the music.

Jerry nuzzled Miss Clark. "Well," he yelled in her ear, "this is rather amusing. I think he's doing a punk James Brown Revue type of thing. It's a new one on me. There's a freshness for sure. But how to get it on vinyl? See, that's the question. You'd lose all their humor, I think. And unfortunately the music's bullshit. Let's see what develops, eh?" Sensing that she was supposed to agree, Miss Clark agreed.

Shortly thereafter the song fell apart. The singer crawled to his microphone, held it up and blubbered, "I'm the one who should die. All you fucking assholes know it. I want to die..." His words deteriorated in sobs. The other band members glanced at each other. One started to play and the others joined in. It could have been a new song or the first one again.

"Well, I'm afraid it's too Johnny One Note," Jerry yelled. "For a concept like this one to work you've got to pace it like clockwork. Remember the Tubes? *They* were an excellent band. But their records sold shit. Couldn't capture their comic genius on vinyl. No, the 'horror' is wearing off. I'll give them two minutes flat to change my mind or..." he glued his mouth to Miss Clark's.

Their tongues sloshed together for several minutes. "Let's...go...home," he sputtered. She fanned herself with the ashtray. He did a smidgen more coke then helped his date from her chair. As they stood, his eyes strayed to the band. "I want to d-i-e!" the boy singer screeched. Jerry grinned, raised one arm, made a pistol-shaped fist and aimed it at the stage. "Bang."

— DENNIS COOPER

My Handle

If it weren't for my father's father's family crest and his later-to-be-wife's known penchant for "breeding", my father's father and the woman to later be his wife would (unknownst to them) not otherwise have been invited, by the hostess's design, to that gala reception for some heads of state, fallen in love and soon thereafter married and made a small family — 2 children: brothers, my father and his brother.

My mother's mother and her to-be husband grew up as neighbors and childhood sweethearts who married with the families' blessings at age seventeen and immediately set about making a large family.

My father, while visiting his brother at Yale, met my future mother who was then dating his brother. She, who in her words, "couldn't resist that rugged, handsome football captain," and he, in my opinion, in competition with his brother, probably brought about by their mother's indifference to the both of them, had sex. The condom broke; it could have been defective, but my guess is it was because Dad was so heavily hung (and probably a rough fuck), and she got pregnant — with me.

It was during my mother's second month of carrying me that she was unexpectedly visited by her aunt who was traveling around the States doing research on some kooky "scientific" project. The four of them had dinner: the aunt, my mother and her two men. During dinner, my father's brother dropped his spoon and my mother's aunt remarked that he was due for a disappointment; that's what dropping one's spoon meant. It was then that my father decided to marry my mother. The aunt was unaware of the situation on hand.

So when I was two-and-a-half my mother caught a flu and my father had to stay home and take care of me for

several days. I really never otherwise saw him. One time when he was changing my diaper, I pooped. He was holding me up by my legs with one hand while his other hand cleaned up around my hole, all the while gently talking. I haven't the slightest remembrance what he was saying, but I do remember his voice's gentle tone during the sensation of poking his finger in and out of my hole. My dick got hard. He made eye contact and pointed to and touched it a few times, continuing to talk to me and, with a laugh, slapped my ass, put down my legs, shook, hugged and kissed me with playful roughness.

Thirteen years later I was on the track team. It was following practice and I was being helped by the coach on my new routine of complex variations on leg lifts/sit-ups. I was on my back and the coach was kneeling in front of my feet, holding my lower legs parallel to the floor by the calves, talking me through the exercise. Then he went to the next variation and moved to my side and held my legs up perpendicular to the floor by the thighs. I jerked through some of the movements, his hands slipped down to my ass and his finger thumped against my hole. He was calmly telling me not to strain. I immediately got hard and flashed the scene with my dad cleaning my ass, etc. when I was two-and-a-half years old. The coach noticed my dick pointing in my shorts, gave a vague smile and pressed a little harder as he removed his hand to stand up, saying that was enough for today.

If it weren't for that dropped spoon and my mother catching a flu, I wouldn't be having swollen glands, headaches and nightly sweats and I'd probably be alive next year.

— JOHNNY PIXCHURE



Robert Blair, *I Cut My Fingers On A Can And Received Seven Stitches*, 1988



Elizabeth Sloane Haddon, *I Can't Believe I Dropped A Six-Hundred Dollar Bowl and Had to Pay For It!*, 1988

fy" has shown that it is not difficult for persons with good ideas and a little skill to present an evening of didactic entertainment. We await more from these two.

— Libby Wolfson

ROBERT BLAIR

CHRIST MEMORIAL

The problem with Robert Blair's recent performance isn't his lack of technique, but his nagging predictability. *I Cut My Fingers On A Can And Received Seven Stitches* bears a remarkable similarity to many of the performances held at the Christ Memorial Performance Space over the past five years. Part of the blame goes to Dr. Richard Sullivan, curator of their ER program and the other part goes to the performers themselves who, like Blair, have performed at Christ Memorial before but still refuse to work with the space itself: to confront its limitations (funding cutbacks have left it very cramped and there are definite problems with the harsh lighting systems) or to deal with its potential.

I Cut My Fingers opens in Blair's home where, preparing his vastly overrated fasolada, he slices two fingers on his right hand while prying the lid off a half-opened can of tomato paste. While his frustration with the mechanical failure of his can opener is appropriate, one has to wonder at Blair's premise for wanting this particular can at all. It had been sitting in his refrigerator half-opened for nineteen days and, while the dark crust on top of the can worked visually (matching the color of his blood), the opening itself seemed a forced drama as the paste had certainly expired and Blair himself lives three doors down from a highly regarded grocery store. Besides, fasolada calls for fresh, crushed tomatoes, not paste.

The slicing of fingers was followed by a lot of the same clichéd dialogue we have heard time and time again. The four-letter words carried little charge, especially to anyone familiar with the Christ Memorial performance series. Rather than shocking the viewer, Blair's diatribe served as nothing more than the predictable tirade of a dock worker with a deep splinter. The call for help and the ride to the performance space were, again, very predictable, full of obvious preoccupations with physical and financial worry.

Once inside the cab, Blair, his right hand wrapped in a colorful dish towel, began a jumbled, repetitive monologue which he would deliver time and time again but with no real passion, insight, or meaningful variation. Once at the ER Space, acting weak and nauseous, he repeated most of his earlier monologue, this time dragging it out with a lot of self-indulgent personal, family, and financial history. The poorly-written dialogue is repeated once more in the curtained operation space where Dr. Malek Patel tries to salvage this dismal performance by introducing some real skill and tension. The stitching itself, while visually striking and expertly performed, was marred by Blair's constant, whiny narration. The man simply cannot allow any attention to drift from himself and refuses to see himself for the dated and slow-witted performer he actually is. As in Blair's last piece, *I jumped off a flatbed truck and drove a nail through my foot*, he once again closed the piece by relying upon his trademark swelling, this time forgoing the crutches and underlining the theme of re-interpretation by relying on his left hand. This time, though, Blair's swelling wasn't enough. I found his post-surgical movements to be forced and awkward with none of the grace or skill I would expect of a performer with half as much experience. His inflated reputation and lackluster conceptual skills were brought into focus by Connie Knowlton who performed that same evening with her breathtakingly lavish *Gunshot In The Neck* piece. Knowlton's visual flair, comedic gifts, and ability to sustain tension were greatly appreciated and we hope to see much more of her work in the years to come.

— David Sedaris

ELIZABETH SLOANE HADDON

CHENEY WAINSCOTT

If it is true that you get what you pay for, then the audience definitely came out on top following Elizabeth Sloane Haddon's recent performance *I Can't Believe I Dropped A Six-Hundred Dollar Bowl and Had to Pay For It!*

Haddon's performance began as an inspired parody of bourgeois values and went on to herald the potential powers of feminist collectivization heard before but not often enough. As op-

posed to much of the earlier 70s progressive political work in which the performances, however highly correct, wound up being dismantled as either simplistic or dogmatic, Haddon's gift for dark comedy and flair for drama give this piece an added dimension.

To begin this performance Haddon and a friend (played authentically by Martha Reeves) visit Cheney Wainscott in order to purchase a wedding gift for Haddon's niece. After parking the hilariously chic Jaguar XJ6 sedan the two women enter the exclusive department store only to discover that the niece's china pattern has not been registered as they had foolishly presumed. This leaves the viewer to doubt not only the niece's motives (anything from Cheney Wainscott will do?), but her very existence. Is Haddon shopping for herself? For a lesbian lover? For all women? The confusion over the recipient adds to the overall conceptual and comedic effect and leaves the viewer to question the notion of "gift," "china," "pattern," and the verb "present."

Discouraged by the lack of formal registration, Haddon plays the role of a woman who, not having seen this "niece" in ten years, is at a loss as to what to purchase. Clothing is out of the question as this is presumably a wedding gift, so she concentrates on the home. Does the "niece" have a VCR? A microwave? A device for mincing solid foods? Haddon solicits genuine laughs when she goes to a pay phone in order to call this "niece" for hints, only to find that she has left her long-distance credit card at home and none of the cashiers will open their registers and give her change for a fifty. Martha Reeves, in the role of the friend, throws out one gift suggestion after another in a superb post-Eve Arden tone. Does the niece have a CD player? An exercycle, an IRA? Reeves herself worked with this theme in last year's *Christmas Shopping Piece*, but here she takes away that hint of hysteria and replaces it with a subtle, bored sarcasm. Her suggestions lead the two women on an exhaustive tour through the top five floors of the store where, after remarking on how silly the new Italian after-dark dresses look on the hangers, they pause for lunch at the fourth floor's Burled Chestnut Room.

Following several drinks and a light meal the two resume their search which eventually leads them back to the China department. Admiring



Douglas Manny, *Hit and Run*, 1988, detail

a Lennox punch bowl, Haddon (slippery-fingered due to the Burled Chestnut's greasy Medallions of Infant Quail) picks it up and drops it. The bowl crashes to the floor where it breaks into a thousand splinters and Haddon plays it to its full comic potential: coughing in a pathetic attempt to cover the shattering sound and then trying desperately to kick the shards beneath the display cabinet before she's found out. Reeves plays the role of the embarrassed friend to the limit, distancing herself from Haddon and coming to her aid only when she realizes that Haddon has the car keys.

While in last year's *Christmas Shopping Piece*, the store displayed a painting reading:

*Lovely to look at
A joy to hold
But if you break it
Consider it sold*

this time the message went unspoken, though clearly implied due to the expressive physical language of Margo Belstrum, who played the role of sales clerk. Employing a series of facial movements, Belstrum motivates Haddon to pull out a charge card in order to pay for the broken bowl. Meanwhile, Reeves suggests that the bowl was really quite pretty and would have made a fine wedding gift, so why not buy another? Here Haddon breaks down to confess her inability to pay for two punch bowls and tearfully considers having to give the "niece" a Mary Cassat sketch from her own collection, something she remembers the soon-to-be-bride admiring as a child. The saleswoman, touched by Haddon's generosity, suggests an arrangement which will leave them all fulfilled. For a fifty dollar bill, the saleswoman wraps the broken punch bowl, encloses a card, and rings for Thomas Mattocks to bring the package to James "Blood" Holms who will have it shipped by UPS. Thus, when the package does arrive heavily insured, a man will be blamed for it and Haddon, Reeves and Belstrum will all be off the hook.

— David Sedaris

DOUGLAS MANNY

CLARK AND DIVERSEY

Douglas Manny's *Hit and Run* follows close on the heels of last month's *DWI* (performed near the Minneapolis Performing Arts Center) in

which he jumped an exit ramp and destroyed the front end of a '72 Charger, Manny's standard performance vehicle. While in *DWI*, the Charger collided against a guard rail (the rail itself mocking the shape of the bumper in order to create a duality of form), his recent performance did not busy itself with formal concerns so much as with the social and political implications of the Agrarian Revolution.

In *Hit and Run* Manny comes to terms with his weakness as a performer. He tends to deliver clumsy physical movements and often appears dazed, almost preoccupied, so it was a wise choice for him to incorporate another performer into his recent piece. As the second player, Cheryl Tandem removes the visual focus from Manny and takes it upon herself with verve and confidence. She appears at the beginning of the piece carrying the trademark plastic bags of a large supermarket chain (the bags themselves serving to define her as "pedestrian" more so than her practiced amble). Tandem steps off the curb and freezes midway across Clark as Manny approaches in his Charger and strikes her down as she literally "crosses the road," an obvious reference to an ageless joke. As Manny "plowed" into her (again touching on his agrarian theme), Tandem began a breathtaking transformation consisting of a single lateral movement built on simple but elegant hurls. In the process of her transformation from the street to the vacant lot, Tandem transforms herself both physically and conceptually. Losing her shoes, her "pedestrian bags", quarts of blood, and her purse, Tandem mimicked the concept of displacement from an urban to a rural environment, surrendering her identification with the city and getting back to the land.

My problem with this is that the whole concept of displacement seems more important to Manny than the manifestation of that displacement. While Tandem, the "pioneer" moves from one landscape to another, the move is so linear that it seems almost too obvious, almost predictable. As in *DWI*, Manny again ends his piece with the theme of escape. While Tandem escapes back to the safety and comfort of a 19th century concept of agrarian life, Manny again chooses to escape further into that familiar landscape of blighted energy in which we all dwell.

— David Sedaris



GEORGE HERRIMAN

Cut It Short Dick

*It's time Richard spoke.
Inside he cries.
It's raining.
He lies about the room.
It could be concluded,
Richard confessed. But it
was clearly all over
between them. Behind
him. Everywhere he
went he remembered
in spite of himself.
He missed her so,
he thought. The
note had instructed,
"Repeat after me,
'the deluge.'" He
considered drowning.
His sorrows came to mind.*

*"It's time," Richard spoke.
"Inside," he cries,
"It's raining!"
He lies about the room.
It couldn't be, concluded
Richard, confessed. But it
was clearly all over —
between them, behind
him, everywhere. He
went, he remembered,
in spite of himself.
He missed her, so
he thought. The
note had instructed,
"Repeat, 'After me,
the deluge.'" He
considered. Drowning
his sorrows came to mind.*

— KAY ROSEN

The Bloody Girl Goes to the Play or It Came From France

The phone is ringing. Sometimes the phone makes these little murmurs on its own but this time there really is someone on the line. It's Marek. He's a friend of my boyfriend, Robin. Robin is a film editor and met Marek while working in Paris. Marek is here in the states on holiday. He is the son of the second most popular singing idol in France. Charles Aznavour is the first most popular singing idol in France. Robin takes the receiver and begins chatting. It is decided that we should go to a play and that Marek will come by our apartment in an hour. In the interval I change the bed and put on the new seashell sheets I bought with the money I earned last week. I remind Robin of Botticelli's Venus. I am a part-time extra in soft pornographic films. The seventy-five dollars I got for going down on a private eye in a phone booth I blew on these Springmaid sheets. We only live in one room, although it's very spacious. The bed is like our living room sofa and with some fluffy pillows and a patchwork quilt it looks homey enough for guests.

Marek arrives and has brought with him some pure-grade pharmaceutical coke. This is the first time we've met. While he is busy pouring out the lines onto an antique mirror, I furtively try to psych him out. It seems he's just a wealthy playboy, tall, dark and handsome, generous to his playmates and really without affectation. He rolls up a large denomination and we snort up the cocaine through the imprint of a dead president. Marek and Robin talk about technical aspects to film editing: sync loops, image splicing and midnight. The play we're going to is a parody of an old fifties horror movie. It's called "The Island of the Damned" and was written by Charles Ludlum. I'm not sure who the original screenwriter and director were, but I remember watching the movie on my miniature black and white TV set not long ago. It's really a classic. We are so buoyed up by the dope that nothing seems to matter. Marek speaks very fluent English and after taking some brandy for an aperitif, we leave our little squalor with all the excitement of venturing into the real world high as kites.

Robin doesn't argue when Marek insists on paying for the taxi and also buying the tickets for the play. I guess he got used to this treatment in Paris where Marek solicitously tour-guided him to all the trendy places and refused to take no for an answer to his lavishness. Anyway, he has so much money that it probably means very little to him. It doesn't have the significance it would have if he were one of our starving artist friends.

The theater for the play is really a converted garage space. As we take our seats, there's the buzz of every first night in the air. People are milling about engaged in hushed conversations. The stage itself is set with a number of tall scaffoldings; it is not totally in the round, but it is more open than the proscenium-type stage. As the lights go down, the first actor appears above us at the topmost platform. I forget his name, but he is one of the Ridiculous Theater ensemble. He begins by letting some spit very slowly drool from his mouth so that it streams to the main stage below. It is a very long tendril of spit, at least ten feet in length. His character is like that of Igor in Franken-

stein. He is the mad doctor's assistant. He is moaning and giving the impression of being in some sort of bereaved state. This is really hilarious, but in our suspended belief we have to take the cue that something is up on the island and God is not in his heaven, all is not right with the world. Soon the mad doctor appears, Ludlum himself. He's in a state of anxiety and confusion over his experiments. This is where we find out that the scientist proposes to create the third sex. In the movie, he is somehow trying to transform animals into humans, thus providing a new labor pool for the work force. I'm not sure if the labor idea was mine or not. But the animals that were almost made human by surgical intervention moved very slowly through the jungle flora chanting and intoning a single phrase: "Are we not men?" Ludlum ignores this in his rewrite but does use the concept of the House of Pain. All throughout characters scream in anguish, "Not the House of Pain!"

At this point I am beginning to feel self-conscious and notice that some biological phenomenon is happening to me. Ah shit, it's my period. I try to ignore the little trickle that I feel inside. I don't even have my purse with me and I very much doubt that there are tampons in the women's room. I'm feeling this ice cube dissolve in a highball, but without the coldness; in fact there's no temperature, just a slow, deliberate flowing that eventually saturates the capri pants I'm wearing warmly. Nothing to do for it, just relax and enjoy the play; to coin a phrase, let it bleed.

Two characters have arrived in this scene. They are shipwrecked. They are a very British-East-Anglia-accented young romantic couple in pith helmets. We find out that *herr doktor* might have it in mind to use them as spare body parts or tissue transplants in his experiments. But at this point there is just much covering up of what are the real goings-on here on the island. The mad scientist is probably concerned about his government funding, so there are lots of scene changes and tricks being played to keep them in the dark as to the location of the House of Pain and the purpose for its existence.

In the movie, there is this idea of creeping back. After the animals have gone to the House of Pain and have been transformed into near humans there is a resurgence of their animal natures. The characteristics that distinguished them, like horns and hooves, claws and fur, begin creeping back, so that they have to return to the laboratory or House of Pain to submit to operations that try to correct this defect. The mad doctor has one prize specimen, a woman that he created from a panther or some other large cat. She has been the most resistant to the creeping-back process, but exhibits a kind of wildness over docility, so that she too must return to the House of Pain. Successful in comparison, the doctor believes she is the most suitable for breeding among his experiments and plots to contrive this match with the young British man. The problem is that the young couple just want to leave the island and get back to civilization. Also, the woman poses a threat as being the betrothed of the young man, who is not likely going to breed with a semi-cat-human because he is in love with his fiancée. Eventually there is a Spartacus-like rebellion

among the "Are we not men" throng of animal-men, so that the island habitat is destroyed in a huge conflagration. I think that's how it ended. And I think the young romantics escaped in a little boat.

Meanwhile, Ludlum is doing his best to get everyone bedded and to keep his secret safe as to his intentions. I guess since this is set in the early twentieth century, there is no question that these are Frankenstein-like operations he's performing. There's no question that any kind of genetic engineering is going on. Our mad doctor is obsessed with creating an alternative to the duality of the sexes, to giving birth to the third sex. To achieve at last the final solution.

I am becoming aware that more of my clothing is getting wet with my own blood and maybe I'm making a mess of the theater seats. It seems the cocaine has had some effect in increasing the gush streaming from inside. But I am still so high that I could care less and my attention is increasingly drawn to the stage as the actors move with agitation. There is a kind of fever pitch with the cast racing about in a frenzy. The mad doctor has been found out and his scheme revealed.

At the final climax, Blackeyed Susan appears onstage with a sheet draped over her. Of course, we don't know what it is and this is played for high comic effect. Finally, the unveiling of the creature: a very statuesque third sex with beautiful breasts and a rubber chicken leg as a sex organ. The actress blinks madly and reminds us of Charles Laughton's wife in "The Bride of Frankenstein." At this moment it strikes me that it was Your Turn to Curtsy and My Turn to Bow, the title of a novel I had read about an adolescent named Peter who wanted to be crucified or nailed to a cross or maybe something about the changing sex

roles or maybe how confusing it is to want to be Christ. And if there had been a curtain it would have been drawn here. The actors take their bows.

As we begin to leave the theater, I am in the awkward position of acknowledging that, yes, I am bleeding and what can be done for it? The easiest of solutions is to edge along with my back to the wall hoping no one will notice my plight. Actually, everyone was so amused that they are indulgently engaging in laughter and capsule reviews after Ludlum's brilliant performance. We exit unnoticed and Robin hails a cab. Inside the taxi Marek is being very gracious, he leans towards me and says, "It is not your fault God castrated you." To this I smile knowingly but am still anxious to return home.

When we enter the apartment, I strip off my soaked clothes without thinking; my thighs are stained to the knees. Marek and Robin take more coke while I prepare to take a shower. As I am rinsing, Robin appears, drawing back the shower curtain. "Do you want him?" he asks. I say, "I don't know, but you do," looking into his deep-set eyes with as much sympathy as I can. He says, "Come out in fifteen minutes." I don't know why Robin is doing this. If he is testing me, I'm off my guard and don't intend making a scene over it. I don't understand what attracts him to Marek. He never seemed to care about money before. All I know is when I return to that room, we three will make love. What I don't know is if Marek plans to make me sacrifice Robin, either in taking him or taking me. No one ever knows when they will become a teenage hemophiliac with AIDS. With all this menstrual blood, my new Springmaid sheets will be ruined. I can tell.

— JACQUI DISLER

even pour adieu.

BIG HOG COOKS TOWN

Dresden, Tennessee has been burned before by a wide assortment of both accident and bagatelle, but nothing can touch the latest burning of Dresden. A live pork torch was turning on a wild run by the explosion of a butter lamp, apparently the property of one Bloodgood Cutter, a drover out of Reno, who narrowly escaped burning to a cinder on the road. The torch, in a frenzy to avert the flames it wore about itself like a cloak, ran beneath the floor of a man made insane by lightning ten years ago, Fate Perry, who was sleeping above Tuck's Restaurant, and caught it on fire.

Perry had gone to his room at 11 o'clock to retire. He lit the lamp which caught fire within, and Perry threw it into the street. The lamp struck the Town Hog fairly in the middle of the back and exploded, covering the hog with burning butter. The squeaks of his Hogship rattled the sky.

BOOKS CANNED WITH ASS

the consumption of

He laid the troll, which looked its belly along the sternum until it slumbered peacefully, then cut the jawbones out. N. B. — rubble yields these trolls. The meat is inedible.

BUDD SMOKES OUT THE NEUTRODYNES

Candidate Budd was locked in the American Jail yesterday afternoon for treating the inhabitants of the neutrodyne cage to a lighted cigar. Budd threw the cigar into a mound of rake-straw, thereby terrifying a score of dynes and starting a fire in the cage.

One buck dyne melted down like a holiday candle, while another bubbled and burned. Their peaceful nest was a ball of flame. Then the flames were stamped out and Budd arrested. Our analysis: It takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it.

The Dead Were Wed

Yesterday, in Union City, Stover was wed. The Island of

Thanks to nailing operation, Ragged can now put his hand in his pocket and throw a baseball overhand.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ONEBA RUNS PEN INTO FINGER

WHILE WRITING HE WOUNDS HIMSELF WITH METALLIC POINT — DR. LAPPONI IS CALLED IN

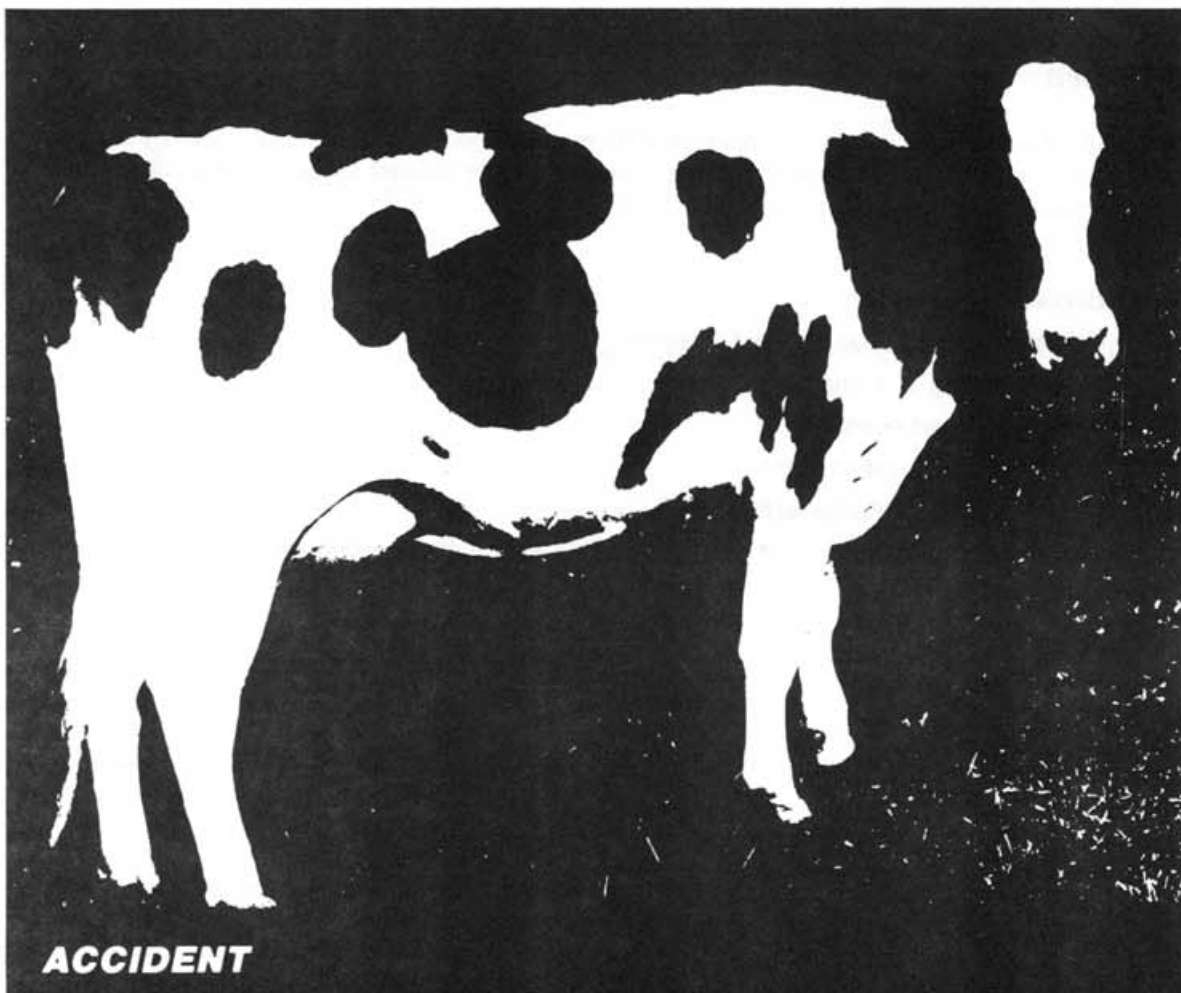
While writing today Oneba ran the metallic point of his pen into his finger, making a small but painful wound, which Dr. Laponi was immediately called upon to heal.

Too late, too little, Oneba dead again.

CHILD'S STOOL GREAT FOR USE IN GARDEN

Blackwell Cutter fertilized his lawn with 300 lbs. of stool saved over last year. expectin'

— THE CITY MOON



Ten by Ten

Let's try this: 10 events read in order of importance (from most important to least important) by ten people. Events defined as taking place in the physical presence of the observer. People defined as useful generalizations. Then, an indication of each person's purported perception of accidental events.

EVENTS

- ↓ Blizzard
- ★ Community production of *The Fantastiks*
- R_x Grand opening of a chain drug store
- Ⓟ Performance art event
- © Chicago Cubs baseball game
- Bar, at 11:00 p.m. Friday night
- ½ Half a moustache, worn as a provocation by a young man passed on the street
- ? Getting lost
- ◇ Wedding
- Ω Fatal house fire

Anthropologist

◇ ½ R_x © Ⓟ ★ — Ω ↓ ?

(The half-a-moustache follows the classic event of the wedding since the anthropologist draws illumination from both norms and deviations. *Accidental events are triggers to human reactions.*)

Someone With A "Born To Shop" Bumper Sticker On Their Car

R_x ◇ ? ★ Ω ↓ ½ — Ⓟ ©

(Getting lost makes a great tale to tell after a gruelling day of bargain hunting. *Accidental events are exasperating.*)

TV News Reporter

Ω ↓ © R_x — ★ ◇ ½ Ⓟ ?

(The half-a-moustache and the performance art event are still potential news stories, but with a limited interest group. Getting lost could mean missing a story altogether. *Accidental events are lucrative.*)

Person With A Literature Background

★ ? Ω ½ ↓ — © Ⓟ R_x ◇

(No matter how pitiful the current manifestation, it's still comforting to think that a work like *The Fantastiks* can stay intact for 100 years, 200 years, because it's written. Getting lost is second because of its reputed spiritual value. *Accidental events are potential subject matter.*)

Person With Visual Arts Background

Ⓟ ½ R_x — ↓ ? ★ © ◇ Ω

(Given an esthetic that values naturalness, energy and spontaneity, it would seem that the bar, or even the blizzard would come first, but loyalty to one's friends and curiosity about the scene wins out. It could also be argued that the list would go right to left with persons of a sophisticated pop/trash sensibility, but kitsch events are funnier to read about than to attend. *Accidental events are closer to chance, therefore closer to nature, therefore closer to truth.*)

Sports Fan

© ★ — ↓ R_x ◇ Ω ? ½ Ⓟ

(*The Fantastiks* come second because the cast and crew obviously worked so hard. *Accidental events are annoying.*)

People I Grew Up Around

— ◇ R ↓ Ω ? © ★ ½ P

(The blizzard is important because of its inconvenience. *Accidental events are dreaded.*)

Rural High School Teacher

★ ◇ R ½ ↓ Ω © — P ?

(Note that the reaction to the half-a-moustache is largely sympathetic. *Accidental events are to be coped with.*)

Cranky Amateur Critic of Pop Culture

R © ★ — Ω ? ↓ ◇ P ½

(According to the cult of Authenticity — e.g. “real” blues as opposed to pop blues, “genuine” old McDonald’s hamburgers as opposed to slick new McDonald’s hamburgers — self-consciousness is the greatest sin. *Accidental events are “real life.”*)

Wilderness Camper

↓ ? ◇ Ω R — © ½ P ★

(With a vision of the world that casts humans as blighted interlopers in an otherwise pristine Nature, the order could be a simple progression from the least human beings involved to the most. But something about the supreme perversity of the makeup and the prancing at *The Fantastiks* demands that it take last place. *Accidental events are closer to nature, therefore closer to truth.*)

— LYNN MARTINELLI & ROB WITTIG

from The Engines of Desire

Desire led seven people to the King Street station in Seattle on an exceptionally hot midnight of 1922. More precisely: the word “desire,” one of 49 other words in an ad that had been placed that very morning in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. The grouping of six letters (surrounded by the words “all” and “fulfilled”) had been powerful enough to produce the strong but nameless desires that drove them onto the deserted platform, from which, they had been informed, the train — seven luxuriously appointed steel carriages rivaling the Orient Express or the private cars of royalty — would depart at the stroke of twelve.

Sober, hard-working, Northwesterners, they pause uncertainly on the platform. Whistles. Puffs of smoke. Steel rails gleaming in the moonlight. But curiosity (or desire) impels them to venture inside . . . since no one is there to ask for a ticket, since the doors are open, since this is what seems to have been intended.

What they don’t know is that the same ad has appeared that morning in Spokane, and that others, there, are stepping hesitantly into an identical train.

Inside the Train

People must have lots of money to ride the train. I’m scared to go in some of these cars. I wish I knew somebody here. Some of these folks I wouldn’t care to know, though, if you want to know the truth. They must be theater people or something.

In the Bleachers

Be seated, ladies and gentleman, and, above all, please be

patient. I promise that the entertainment I have devised for you has no equal in the annals of the world and the Inland Empire. Something, in short, truly worth waiting for! And you will have to wait. How long? One? Two? Three hours? Some of you begin to fidget already. Ah, but think of the ancient Greeks who would sit through three or four tragedies, one after another. Nine hours of sublimity. I refuse to believe that good Americans, men and women who have wrestled their fortunes from the mines and the forests of this unfriendly land, cannot equal the Greeks in fortitude.

Researchers

I first became aware of the *Engines of Desire* legend in 1972, when the downtown rail yards in both Seattle and Spokane were excavated (for the Kingdome and Expo 74, respectively). Artifacts and documents, unexpectedly found by construction workers at both sites, led me to a strange and intriguing tale.

Yes, there were two trains, each with different, yet equally sumptuous, private passenger cars. There was some sort of disaster outside Pleasante Stoke, now a ghost town. Reports of the time said there had been no survivors. No names of the dead were listed, “out of respect to the families whose standing in society would be irreparably harmed by association with this shameful atrocity.”

Inside the Train

Everything in this car is a mirror. The walls are mirrors. The furniture is made of mirrored glass. The upholstery is made of

sequined fabric. The metal fixtures are chrome-plated.

Ahhh! It's perfect, isn't it?

A knock at the door. Someone wants to enter! He's trying the handle now. BE VERY QUIET. Maybe he'll go away.

And you, perfectly naked, all alone, are reflected, nakedly perfect (you fabulous creature) a billion times. Just you, like the day you were born (only you're better looking now) . . . everywhere you look it's YOU, it had to be YOU, no other would DO, just wonderful Y-O-U-U-U!

Researchers

I've never had sex on a train. In a plane, yes. We waited till everyone was asleep. Then slipped into a bathroom. Quarters being cramped, positions were limited. Bend over the sink and from the rear. A few quick strokes and it was over. Just so we could say we'd done it in a plane. My memory's playing tricks. I say "we," but it was clearly my own obsession, to which my partner willingly catered.

But I'm getting sidetracked. Notice how the railway figures of speech spring readily forth.

Inside the Train

Every car on this train has rules posted in it, placed there to assist, or encourage, or perhaps control the passengers.

One car contains the following rules:

1. Avoid contact with eyes and lips
2. Do not perforate
3. Peel off, working down from forehead
4. Push stick up gradually from bottom, slide gently under arms
5. Discontinue if ringing in the ears occurs
6. Keep out of reach of children
7. Shake can well; turn upside down
8. Do not rub or wring

Points of Departure

From the moment the train pulls out of the station heading East to Spokane, there are no eyewitnesses. Yellow journalistic accounts, nonetheless, described "a train furnished like a plush bordello," "passengers surrounded by naked houris gently waving palm branches," "conductors of indeterminate sex." Nonsense. Predictable Orientalist decors supposed to signify the voluptuous. Why presuppose conventionality from the creators of such a singular occurrence? What would people of intelligence, perhaps brilliance, devise? Who knows what desires were fulfilled inside, or what machinery had been provided?

Researchers

Sex and trains have always been linked. Victorian engravings focus on the madonnas of the sleeping car, foregrounding the Gibson Girl in undergarments ready to step into the upper berth — or, rather, YOUR upper berth. Even then the ads held out a promise of sexual fulfillment. Buy a round trip ticket and the time of your life awaits you. Analogies. The rocking of the train and the complementary or contrapuntal motions of sex. Cradle of dreams.

Silent films. Pearl White tied to the tracks. The eternal virgin and the onrushing locomotive. What's really going on here? We are offered, I suspect, an image of a new and monstrous kind of sexuality. Woman and machine. Flesh and metal. A possibility that secretly thrills the audience, which tries to pretend it's watching another story. Something about landlords.

In the Bleachers

Imagine that sometime towards morning a train heading eastward from Seattle and a train heading westward from

Spokane will collide right here at Pleasant Stoke, where nothing dramatic has ever happened before. Conceive the suspense, the slowing of time, as two gleaming steel beasts charge headlong at one another, the clang and shock of impact, the moment of stasis, and finally the breaking apart into steel shards scattering wildly and randomly — the sheer kinetic delight of a train wreck.

Is it art, you ask, such a spectacle which clearly delights and moves us, but doesn't instruct? Point well taken. Nature, after all, can move or delight us with its thunderstorms and floods, with its grand repertoire of spectacular effects, but what instruction do these ordinary disasters hold? None! Unless the artist, the shaper, intervenes to introduce meaning. Thus, with your indulgence, I have introduced human beings into the display! I have assembled a cast, and contrived to bring them to a precise pitch of excitement at the moment of impact, which, with the sensation of collision of the great machines themselves, will create a masque I have entitled *The Engines of Desire Lead But to Destruction!*

Researchers

Can't sleep tonight. At Pleasant Stoke: for whom was the pleasure greatest? The audience in the bleachers? The people in the cars?

Post Script

I am skipping across the puddles of last night's brief shower. I am excited. The Circus came to town last night and today the hands are staying the tents, unfurling the banners, and pacing the animals from a hard week's ride. I love the bustle and smell of it all . . . most of all, the Midway. The lopsided little tents with their bold and garish canvasses depicting the unnatural wonders to behold within.

I walk with hands in pockets to stand back on heels and survey the immense murals. I'm musing the truth so overwhelmingly splashed on broadcloth and perhaps dimly reflected in the tiny tent beyond.

My eyes are transfixed. Before me, in a tangle of poles and rope an enormous sentence is being raised . . . THE GREAT WRECK OF THE ENGINES OF DESIRE . . . and below that: See The Tableau of the Most Horrible Wreck of the Century . . . LIVE! The picture is raised to its full height of more than twenty feet: a lurid depiction of exploding trains and twisted rails mangling the bodies of horrific dandies and matrons. As they spew forth from this macabre cornucopia they are calmly observed from the grandstands beyond by well-dressed partygoers. I stand a while in thought and then walk on. The dime in my pocket will be spent on a less obvious fantasy.

— IN.SOMNIA

AFTERWORD

Train wrecks were, in fact, staged as theatrical events on the western plains in the last century; archival photographs exist of crumpled engines surrounded by gleeful crowds, but, due to the illicit nature of the proceedings, the time, place, date and names of participants are rarely identified.

ENGINES OF DESIRE was written on the electronic literary message system, IN.SOMNIA, which began as the literary/art group Invisible Seattle's "Omnia" in 1983. In 1987 the city of Spokane invited IN.SOMNIA to participate in a technology fair. Sculptor Clair Colquitt installed one of his "Insomniums" (a public writing receptacle tied by phone lines to IN.SOMNIA, a cross between a telephone booth and a confessional) in Seattle, and one in Spokane. The text grew as an interchange of desires between the Invisibles and the pseudonymous fairgoers.

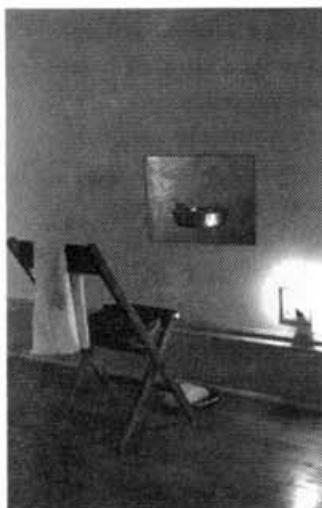
HOUSEKEEPING

An installation by HAHA:
Richard House, Wendy Jacob,
Laurie Palmer, John Ploof.
Walker's Point Center
for the Arts. Milwaukee.
September 30-October 21, 1988.

HAHA transformed WPCA into The Illuminated House. The three-story, site-specific work included projections, found domestic objects; space was sculpted by light and five stations of narration. From the outside, a projection of school children could be seen on soaped windows. By the bus stop on National Avenue, a transparent space permitted passers-by to peer into the first story space sculpted to suggest multiple confessionals, each set with a chair, a night light, a wall sconce filled with a caustic, purifying blend of lard and lye.

The voyeuristic opportunity to witness private moments in public space was sustained throughout the structure. In The Dark Basement, Richard House read by candlelight *HEAD: Hate, Envy, Anger, Deceit*, a narrative of two brothers transforming the cellar into a workshop and a tunnel. The younger brother is charged with maintenance tasks and responds by decapitating the elder, whose head keeps washing ashore requesting choir boys.

We are invited to wander through The House. Four narrative voices simultaneously fill the acoustic space. In the stairwell, Laurie Palmer reads *Utopia* by Bernadette Meyer. We enter the second story overhearing Wendy Jacob



Installation detail -- J. Ploof

reading *The History of Greenwood, Kansas* in The Living Room. We pass a purse, a bucket, a tub filled with lard and lye. Three quarters down The Hallway, is House seated across from an accordion found on Maxwell Street and thirty-five apples arranged in two rows on a window sill. He is reading the Biblical narratives of Moses and the burning bush, and the selection of the King of Israel. In The Bedroom, John Ploof is lying face-down on the bed reading *Emperor of the Air* by Ethan Canian, a story of domestic violence told from a boy's point of view. His room is drafty and austere, with a single wooden coat rack and two windows. In one hangs a suit coat covered with molasses and feathers. It is visible from National Avenue.

The central room of this "story" is created by double sliding doors. Through slim cracks we hear and see industrial size fans blowing feathers through the cracks and out the window into the night. The barely self-contained storm, the

only thoroughly illuminated room in The House, creates a psychological counterpoint to the parable told in The Basement.

House's trope of the house/body is a haunting 4D version of Andre Kertesz's photographic series *On Reading*. Here the voyeuristic chambers create an austere environment in which the narrative voices are contextualized in a doubly fictive space. The voices echo throughout like accidental attempts at dialogue. Blood lust in the basement. Feathers in the attic. The middle story appears to pry open a space for meditation, silence, absolution. No one dipped their fingers to bless themselves with the lye.

MAGGIE DOYLE

INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

From "Bedtime Stories" series
Randolph Street Gallery
October 22, 1988

TALES OF THE LABORER

Bryan Saner's movements combine a pitcher's concentration with a high diver's timing. His "pitch," initially covering the facts of the hard lives of the coffee plantation workers, was well accentuated by his movement: a falling backwards, then flipping over in mid-air to land on his hands, face down. This image underscored his narrative about the men who pick 100 lbs. of coffee to earn a dollar, who must support families on a dollar fifty a day.

The latter part of his performance kept up the same

physical pattern, while changing the narrative to describe other, more personal descriptions. One concerned an encounter between a young person and an old man, and their evident joy in being reunited. All the while Saner kept his falling and flipping movement going, which lessened and seemed to break the relationship to what he was saying. Ultimately, he had to follow his own act, and one had to wish the last part had come first.

CEREMONY OF LA CUMA

Meeting Alvaro Melara face to face and speaking to him in his own language is one matter; watching him perform before an unfamiliar crowd of English speakers is another. Melara has a hypnotic presence: his words are mystical and intense, and he has a concentrated energy that emanates from his face. He knows the plight of the Central American poor intimately, and so developed the character "Emilio," whose only possessions are his gourd canteen, a little net bag, the torn clothes on his back, and his "cuma," or Salvadoran machete. The guy you see sleeping in the streets of D.F., Ciudad Guatemala, San Salvador, Teguchigaipa, San Jose; the Central American common man.

Melara's performance starts in this way, with Emilio, looking like a bum, curled up on the floor. After a long pause, marimba music begins, and he gets up, immediately swinging his "cuma" in a passionate dance. One could feel something was lacking; and that was Emilio's natural environment, the presence of other Salva-

dorans or speakers of Spanish with an understanding of what was being portrayed. Those who could shout the insults, encouragements, familiarities that would have made the stage and setting for this character who danced in a vacuum, whose power could not be focused. When he ended the dance, shouting "BASTA!", it was more than the character speaking: it was the voice from the other side of a brand new cultural bridge asking us Norteamericanos to meet halfway across.

CABILDO DE MUJERES: WOMEN'S TOWN HALL MEETING
Sandinista television brings things that certainly don't get aired on our own public television system, and this series of women addressing issues of respect, rights, abortion, equal "re-education" for prostitutes and johns, and equal pay was a surprise. At the same time, beaming down on them from time to time was a male chairman. No news followed as to which of the womens' issues, so passionately and eloquently stated, were included in the new constitution. Yet they did speak their piece in the media, and in half an hour covered more territory than has been aired in the last year under Chairman Ronnie. Somehow I don't expect much will get out from under Great and Glorious George either.

**DEATH OF SANDINO 54
- AXE ST. ORCHESTRA**

The Axe St. Orchestra beat out time in a big birdcage, while the conductor resplendent in his tux

festooned with wooden medals perched on a ladder, running them through the stages of the war in Nicaragua. A character in white-face turned the pages of a book, exposing corresponding drawings and collages evocative of that tiny country's history. We all must, either for love or by duress, perform for our masters. Eventually, the Orchestra fell silent, unwilling to follow the conductor as far as we have followed the President. He turns up the volume on the recorded cheering and martial music; everybody loves a winner, let's fix one for the Gipper. It doesn't work; perhaps he should have conducted his business a bit differently.

Axe St. puts on a good performance; here's hoping they do equally well predicting the future.

LIONEL BOTTARI

FIVE NIGHTS OF LIVING ART

Linda Montano
School of the Art Insitute
November 3—9, 1988



Seven Years of Living Art, New Museum

I take a handful of leaves from the girl at the door, bring them to my nose and sniff them. For a moment my nose burns, then it begins to itch but I can't scratch it because my hands are full with my coat and the leaves.

"What is this?" I ask.

"Sage," she says.

I ask her what it is for but she is already handing leaves to the person behind me. "What is this?" he asks.

I walk into the performance space and everyone is sitting against a wall, chatting—"Is this a performance or a lecture?" "I think we're supposed to participate." "Is she here yet?"—and fidgeting with the leaves—"What are they for?"

There are soft-edged circles of red light on the floor—the only light in the room. I find a spot near the door and sit cross-legged, rubbing the sage into my palms, trying to scrape away the skepticism with the sweat. There is a brief introduction and the chatting ends.

Then she speaks.

"Welcome. I'm Linda Montano."

She has been here all along, pacing under the lights as if to exorcise the inhibitions from the room. Dressed in green and bathed in red, she smiles often and gestures openly.

"Seven years for seven chakras," she says, explaining her latest life/art piece.

"The first chakra (or center of energy) is the sex chakra, located about two inches above the anus. The color for the first chakra is red." She sounds a little like a school teacher I had in the fifth grade.

Then she plays a porn

tape and I begin to worry about what she will ask us to do. Afterwards, I wait for her to call it art.

"Get comfortable," she says. "You can lie down if like. Now relax your sphincter muscle."

My what?

"Feel your sex chakra."

Do I have to?

"Become comfortable with your genitalia."

I can't tell if she expects us to masturbate or not—so I don't. Instead I try to decide how rude it would be if I got up and left.

"Call on your opposite."

This is either getting really ridiculous or really profound—I can't tell which. After this we get into groups and divulge our sexual inhibitions to three or four total strangers and massage each other. We end the workshop by getting in a circle and sharing our thoughts on the evening.

Seven of us are staying overnight and we set up our blankets around a circle of light. We talk about Indian philosophy and the presidential elections until one o'clock. There's a tape with a subliminal message playing, but all we hear are crickets. What's the message Linda? someone asks.

"Imagine a flower blooming at your first chakra, and imagine that energy extending to every cell in your body."

The night is over and the week has begun. I come back Sunday for security and money; Monday for courage; Tuesday for compassion and love; and Wednesday for communication and creativity.

Thursday morning we wake up to silence. There is no soft school teacher voice to coax us into reality. Only a note saying "Goodbye, from Linda May" in green ink under a blue light on the floor.

EMILY LOZANO



Collaborators/Discrepancies

REAL STORIES

Collaborators/Discrepancies
by Iris Moore & Beth Tanner
excerpts from

Four Seasons: Three of Clubs

Frank Navin

3408 Banton Road

Jeff Ragsdale

N.A.M.E. Gallery

December 2 & 3, 1988

Beth talks to us —
hmm — she's awkward./I can't remember anything she said, just the way she said it./This story is very real and very personal, and it gets to me in the heart./ Expected desire, expected behavior, extreme desire to join a community, find a place./ Friendships, Love and Respect, Sexual Lifestyles, Social Beliefs./Events ordered by custom, an illusion of propriety./ Film is projected, a beautiful image./Phone calls are made to Mexico and information is

translated across languages and cultures./Ritual and fear./Death and making it up./A life is claimed, AIDS is revealed./A well rehearsed story is presented, both on stage and in life./A woman sits at a table and tells us a story./I'm still not sure what Beth told us./This is a real story./ Does a story begin when it ends?

No way do I buy any claim to realness for this story./ But my appreciation is not hindered./The fanciful props were tied to the story by conceit./Frank Navin presents us with a story./It hits lightly. It is messy./ Visual stops — fractured the narrative./Beautiful images strike me: smoking flower puppets, cityscape on a hat, subtle matching outfits./Live standup bass (always a nice touch, but I see unrealized potential)/Technical failures confront us, but do not detract from the feeling of the piece./ The matter-of-fact rhythm worked against the fetish quality of the props and costumes./Very personable and kind of awkward,

Frank is very engaging./He's off-beat. It's like he can't keep a beat./But I don't care. The details were together./Frank speaks frankly to us about what's going on.

Finding the story, making it up./True story — definitely./Like around a campfire, it was sort of scary, too./A ghost story actually, the kind of story that unfolds; a house, the people, the unknown past, sifting through possessions left behind./Large question marks bash us on the head, "What is this leading up to?" "Where is he taking us?"/With our permission./Gay horsemen, a little boy, the rubber hose, the porn movies, trophies and carpentry, on the run from an Amish past, mysterious deaths./ Like some gone daddy theme./ Dead ends a mystery./A hideously empty house. I'm afraid to breathe./This story goes nowhere until Tom Brokaw ties up the loose ends./The story of a boy and his death and the loose ends are captured — sort of./Still questions, still scary, still real./ With our permission — the audience ends the story.

What is a real story?

A recitation of a fact, an event bounded by memory? Looking out a window, watching a scene, what roles to reception and recitation and desire and memory play? If it's a half a story who makes it whole — the person telling or the person told?

BRENDAN deVALLANCE

NANCY MARTELL

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Blair Thomas
Malgorzata Komorowska
Lauri Macklin
Randolph Street Gallery
December 9-10, 1988

These are my memories of *March 23*, a performance about memories by Blair Thomas, Malgorzata Komorowska, and Lauri Macklin.

I remember vividly the physical environment in which *March 23* was performed. A few simple elements (white paper floor covering, piles of white cloth bundles, two tall, bare trees) transformed a set of thrift store furniture into a delicately surreal landscape.



Some Remembrances

I remember some of the actions of the four performers. Blair Thomas was evidently the occupant of the sparsely furnished room. What we saw of his existence exuded a sense of entrapment — I remember no indication that he ever left this space. He was visited by three masked figures. Lauri Macklin and Ira Rosenberg appeared in medical outfits, in dark suits, in duplicates of Thomas' costume. They pushed Thomas around, jumped on him, manipulated his

actions, his belongings, his furniture. From time to time, they revealed other, larger masks attached to the set. The grace and stealth of Macklin and Rosenberg's dancerly physicality contrasted sharply with Thomas' weary, tense clumsiness, further enhancing the sense of him as trapped, beleaguered. The third visitor (Ingrid Carrillo) was a tiny woman with a cane, wearing an old lady mask. I remember her quietly turning over the numerous white bundles, revealing dark (red?) stains on each. At the end of the piece she removed a series of masks to reveal that she was actually a young girl.

The element of *March 23* of which I remember nothing is the recorded text which accompanies the performance. It was read by a variety of voices, young and old, male and female. The words flew by in long, dense segments without repetitions, cross-references, or any obvious relationship to the actions being performed onstage.

If *March 23* had been performed in silence, or with only musical accompaniment, I would look for its meaning, its resonances, solely in the gestures of the performers. Since, however, it was accompanied by a gentle but incessant torrent of language, I feel obliged to seek some meaning in the words. If the words hold a meaning completely independent of the movements (if the artists wished to create two parallel, non-intersecting planes of meaning, one verbal, one visual), then the text must be reinforced to with-

stand the sensual strength of visual experience. If the language had been simplified, shortened, and repeated, it might have become as memorable as the image of the Nurse leaping agilely on to Thomas' back, or the Old Woman gravely brushing Thomas' hair.

MICHELE RABKIN

MILLY'S ORCHID SHOW

starring BRIGID MURPHY
Third Wednesday of
every month
Lounge Ax

The "First Anniversary Holiday Extravaganza of Milly's Orchid Show" opened with a special champagne and treat reception



on Wednesday, December 14 at Lounge Ax. It was my good fortune to be there one year before for Milly's first Orchid Show and I haven't missed one since.

Milly's Orchid Show, hosted by Milly May Smithy (Brigid Murphy) is an Ed Sullivan-formatted variety show of dubious content. Milly usually opens with a little song

— this evening it was a holiday melody sung by Milly and her unwed sister Lilly May (Paula Killen). Imaginative lyrics and well-rehearsed choreography recall the Nashville diner circuit of Milly's aspirations.

The potpourri began as Mizzi belly danced to the inspired dumbac beatings of Michael Zerang. This was Mizzi's first appearance and she was well received by the jovial sellout crowd. Second on the program was Inka Alasade, an Orchid Show favorite. Her political poems with musical accompaniment are well conceived and biting. This month's film was "City of Men" by Jay Bonansinga. Milly has made improvements in this section in recent months by actually learning to use the projection screen properly. Unfortunately, her impromptu bumbling was one of my favorite spots in the earlier shows.

The end of the film usually marks the coming of intermission and the call for "open mikes." An extraordinary forum for good and bad alike, open mikes are all received with the dignity anyone who has the guts to enter is due. Unfortunately, Milly's other sister and sidekick Willy May (Consuelo Allen) was not there, so we missed her ongoing series of recitations of Shakespeare with a spoon delicately poised upon her nose.

One of the Orchid Show's most memorable acts was performed by 8 year-old Francisco and 10 year-old Talanito Flores. Their act

opened with a Mexican folk song — Francisco singing and Talanito accompanying on the guitar. Next they showed us some fancy rope-handling; spinning, leaping, skipping, all professionally mastered. Their finale, a duet of ropes in perfect unison, ended with a long and sincere standing ovation from the audience.

Monk the Wandering Wizard breakdanced out of a straitjacket (his signature piece), and Milly, our no-talent lyricist, sang a blatantly liberal song that she sends with love to our new President. In rare form, she closed this segment by blasting Ronald Reagan with "you ain't done I got some toes you ain't kissed."

Performance artist Brendan deVallance (performing on his birthday) closed the Anniversary show with a piece called "What if my Brain Hurts A Lot." This piece, starring his character Deat the Clown, opened with an exploding cigar and continued with a variety of props, poems, and bizarre situations. Brendan's performance somehow teeters dangerously between poignancy and slapstick.

Milly's Orchid Show is a varied cacophony of acts that is sure to please devoted performance art enthusiasts and novices alike. Brigid Murphy has conceived of an excellent venue in Milly's Show, and her portrayal of this less-than-glamorous girl singer adds life and excitement to the audience's experience. I hope she has the endurance for another year.

MIKE LASH

SATELLITE SHOWCASE '88

MoMing Dance & Arts Center
November, 1988

Paul Sturm explosively launched MoMing's Satellite Showcase with the sound sculpture entitled *In the Diplomat's Shadow*. With eight on electric guitars (Sturm, Andy Cobine, James Coombs, Will Devitt, Pam Land, Michael Mann, Dave Singley, Chris Smith) and four on drums (Joby Barnett, Rebecca Kite, Lenny Marsh, Nathan Sturm), the group command of tonal planes, volume, and density drives like a locomotive through a stone tunnel of sound into a spasm of stunned silence. Sturm's work continues to give the body an acoustic Roling.

With Lisa Gold, Michelle Kranicke, and Margaret Reynolds, Julie Salk choreographed traditional dance movements with the self-reflexive mime staples of "musical chairs" and "audience as the Real show." Playing audience to Us, the group used Delsarte's iconography of Interest, Horror, Humor, Boredom, and Gossip. A whimsical, well sculpted dance drama entitled *Keep Your Stub* demonstrated appropriate behavior in a crowded theatre. Based on theatre etiquette tips from Charlotte Ford, Emily Post, and Amy Vanderbilt, with sound score by J.S. Bach, Salk achieves a work of energy, grace, and wit.

Fireline, an intermedia installation by Kaja Overstreet, was ambitious in intention, unachieved in effect. Loosely based upon Frisch's *Biederman and the Fire Raisers* with conceptual allusions to Bateson's work with cybernetics, the work incorporated two video monitors, audio overlays, a visually splendid (if pre-set) space, and live performers (Marianna Buchwald, Laura Dame, Gino De Grazia, Douglas Crew, Richard Wolf, and Overstreet). Each of the elements of the installation may have been viable had we been able to hear the audio or the video tapes, had the performers been well directed or rehearsed, if each of the media had been understood technically before combination. With an abundance of resources at hand, this work — if recrafted — has a viable future.

MAGGIE DOYLE

SCENES FROM HELL

John Haskell
N.A.M.E. Gallery
October 21-22, 1988

Scenes From Hell was a disappointment. Not a complete disappointment but rather a curious one, similar to a poorly played victory. Everything was there but nothing really gelled. The writing itself seemed to be the crux of the problem; it was overwrought with literary conventions that would have worked much better on paper. In Haskell's attempt to breathe a

little new life into a form that is increasingly deflated, he moved away from the essence of that form. He broke up a narrative into so many tiny pieces interspersed with quotes and anecdotes that it was hopelessly beyond following. There was a sense of contrivance in both the structure and length of the disparate elements, such that the whole piece felt puzzle-like and preresolved. The work had no direction of its own; it was guided by Haskell's own formidable actorly talent of being able to make "nothing" sound like something (a true Reaganism). This is where the conventions of theater just can't hold up in a gallery setting. Monologue, when it really works, has something visual and truly time-oriented involved; this something is very hard to place a finger on, yet it involves a higher more polished form of narrative that relies on an audience and not an editor. . . it should be "mentally-spoken" and not "mentally-written." In the end, Haskell betrayed himself by falling back on only one of his talents and relying on the other talent to carry the dead weight. This piece could be described as "six stories in search of an ending," which brings us around to the most annoying problem of the whole night: to end the piece Haskell simply closed his mouth long enough to signify to the audience that he wasn't going to reopen it.

KEVIN HENRY

TERMINAL MADNESS

James Grigsby
Live Bait Theatre
ended October 15, 1988

Terminal Madness was anything but terminal, and the "madness" part might be better defined as zaniness (a noun which belongs in the company of such descriptive words as "fun," "really fun," and "great fun"). Unfortunately this was anything but that. The show had a film, a very flashy looking flat film, as a kind of prologue that looked like something PBS would have put together if they could convince Laurie Anderson to collaborate with James Burke (not a bad idea). After Grigsby's film debut came a performance that could have redefined the word "wooden"; Grigsby, in a Czisko wonderland of genderless vegetation pranced, as only he can prance, through yet another insipid monologue that was so vaguely condescending that it felt like being gummed to death. This show was cute in the way that poodles are cute and was so full of cliches about sexuality, art, and culture that I spent most of the time wondering how long it takes him to get his tongue disengaged from his cheek.

KEVIN HENRY

THE PHANTOM OF THE
BAR SHOW

*Chicago Bar Association's
Christmas Spirit Production*
Chicago Hilton Towers
December 11-17, 1988

In the astonishing, indeed reprehensible, opening number from the Chicago Bar Association's annual Christmas show, all that is best and worst in amateur (or nearly so) theater is presented with cruel clarity. The best aspects are the unintentional formal interventions, almost Brechtian in nature, which operate to subvert the conventional staging of musical theater. The breathtakingly badly delivered lines, the delightfully missed cues and most importantly the excruciating, yet transcendent voice-cracking performances all function as pleasant subversions.

These good moments, sadly, are immediately negated by the nauseating, xenophobic, young-white-professional content of the initial musical number. It begins innocently enough as a mediocre satire on the aldermanic practice of purchasing votes, specifically from semi-literate non-whites, in order to win elections. This satirical sketch quickly degenerates into an ethnic-white-young-professional coalition song/rant about leaving the city to escape crime and trash (human and otherwise) and moving to the clean, white (pure) suburbs. But this proves to be a pain in the ass, as the young professionals now have to travel an hour or two to work each day. If this seems tedious, remember it's only a

musical routine.

So, then the white pros move back to their old neighborhoods only to find, gasp!, that they're now inhabited by brown people. The brown folds are represented by the traditional stereotyped garb of their respective countries of origin, for example, the Latino guy wears a sombrero and serape, while the Indian woman wears a sari and performs a silly Hollywood version of an Indian folk dance. Of course the young pros are equally stereotyped in dress wearing deck shoes and plush sweaters casually draped over their shoulders, but in terms of personal degradation there is no comparison with the aforementioned representations of non-whites.

The most distressing aspect of this clever musical number is that power openly displays its hand by passing off racism as a harmless little ditty. Several months ago political opportunists and cops stormed the Art Institute school lobby and stole a painting, justifying this action on the grounds of riot avoidance. But here, at the Chicago Hilton Towers, in an equally private setting, nothing of that sort is possible, not with Chicago's most formidable legal clout in attendance. Black, brown, but mostly white attorneys and their female arm-pieces sip wine and laugh, all the while considering what they see as nothing more than harmless fun. Of course they can laugh. Each of them has nearly as much power as one individual is allowed in this republic. So what the fuck.

DANNY RAY LEOPARD

Corporate Catering

Delivery

Carry-Out



Mon.-Fri.: 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Sat.: 11 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Phone: 642-6633

750 N. Franklin
Chicago, IL 60610



"Soft, buttery,
mainline sensory pleasure..."

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"Chock-full of
top-quality ingredients..."

CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS

CINNAMON ♦ BLUEBERRY ♦ CARROT WALNUT
CLASSIC ♦ BASIL PARMESAN
AND MANY MORE!

636 N. ORLEANS 787-5656

MONDAY-FRIDAY ♦ 7:00 AM-5:30 PM

The Visiting Artists Program Selected Programs, Spring 1989

Mon., Jan. 23, 7:00
School Auditorium

Stephen Melville, on "the other" in the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan

Mon., Jan. 30, 7:00
School Auditorium

Martha Gever, editor of *The Independent*, on sexual politics

Mon., Feb. 6, 7:00
School Auditorium

Edgar Heap of Birds on his textual installations and paintings

Mon., Feb. 13, 7:00
School Auditorium

Mary Kelly on her work: *The Post-Partum Document* and *Interim*

Mon., Feb. 27, 7:00
School Auditorium

John Malpede, performance artist and director of the Los Angeles Poverty Department

Mon., Mar. 6, 7:00
School Auditorium

Sander Gilman on "The Hottentot and the Prostitute: Race, Gender and Difference in Manet"

Tues., Mar. 7, 6:00
Rubloff Auditorium
\$6 (\$3 students)

Richard Serra, sculptor, on the controversy surrounding "Tilted Arc"
Co-sponsored with the League of Arts and Ideas

Wed., Mar. 29, 4:30
School Auditorium/Free

Jackie Winsor on her minimalist sculpture

Mon., Apr. 3, 7:00
School Auditorium

Stephen Campbell, Scottish artist, on his figurative paintings

Mon., Apr. 10, 7:00
School Auditorium/Free

General Idea, 3-person collaborative, on their work in performance, sculpture, painting, video, etc.

Tues., Apr. 11, 6:00
Rubloff Auditorium/\$5

Susan Sontag, essayist, on her new book *AIDS and Its Metaphors*
Sponsored by the Chicago New Art Association

Mon., April 17, 7:00
School Auditorium

Michael Snow, structuralist filmmaker, on his work

Wed., Apr. 19, 7:00
Room 057

Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak, collaborative video artists, screening *Working the Double Shift*, *Private Eyes* and *White Dawn*

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Columbus Drive and Jackson Boulevard/Chicago, Illinois 60603
312.443-3710/3711

All events are \$3 to the general public and free to students and staff of area colleges, unless otherwise noted. These programs are partially funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

Getting in, shrapnel whistle, everyone looking up, not allowed to park. Fear growing, driving faster. Seeing little hut. Stopping by the stone wall and locking car. Running to little hut and finding it made of rags and poles. Rubbing my arms together, fidgeting and turning backwards and forwards in fear. Suddenly looking out of the door of the hut and seeing above, seemingly almost caught in the great trees of the old park, a diving aeroplane of fire. Made of fire, wings, propeller, body. The noise utterly shattering. I run. I run up the hill so mad with terror that I do it in spite of knowing that it is hopeless. I am doomed. Without making a sound I scream to God who I know does not exist. Was it for this that I have been kept. I think of the martyrs and witches burnt to death as I have often done before. In a moment I shall know what it feels like. Lit up by the terror of the flames. I see my beginning and end as someone else might see them, small, unfulfilled, messy. It is a horrible moment of clear-sightedness. The ball of fire in the sky is so large it will cover all the ground where I am. It is like another planet colliding with the world. My breath is coming in sore gulps. I am tearing it in so roughly that it seems to hurt the walls of my lungs. I cannot get enough of it.

There is the most terrible crash and a soft wall of heat hits the back of my neck. I look round to see the field a mass of flame. My heart leaps. 'It's come, it's landed,' it sings. The huge enormous fiendish thing has missed me. I am safe. But the relief is only a veneer on top of my terror. It is somehow quite separate from it. The two live together.

I realize as I look back that I have only travelled a few yards from the hut. As I watch, another ball, following the large one, falls flaming to the ground where it bursts through flames on top of flames (it is the second petrol tank, but I think it is a bomb). Then the air is filled with a frivolous, devilish crackle and dance of sparks. The machine-gun bullets going off.

I can think no more. My whole being is concentrated on getting under cover. At last I reach the top of the hill. A little boy with a stick in his hands gazes down at the flaming field. I scream at him in a voice that has risen so high that it has lost all its strength. It shocks me, but I cannot stop screaming, 'Where is there shelter? Is there no cover?'

He looks at me, snarls a little in alarmed shyness, says something inaudible and walks away trailing his stick. Fear has made me so angry that I go on shouting, although I am gasping for every mouthful of breath. I realize that I am at the gates of a golf club. An old caddy comes hurrying out of the gates. I scream at him quite uncontrollably. Something perverse in me enjoys my degradation. I only want to be looked after like a baby. He looks into me in a deep, cynical, understanding way, like a wise animal.

'You've had a shock,' he says, staring at me, doing nothing.

Rippling like torn cloth, my voice, in final exasperation and terror, whistles into impossible high weak notes.

'Can't you take me under cover?'

'Yes, all right,' he says ineffectually, 'come along with me.'

I will do anything, I only want to be led. He takes me into his tin-roofed hut where there are golf balls and old clubs. I sit on an old box and come back a little into my ordinary self.

'You sit there and rest,' he says soothingly.

I gasp more noisily and lie back. I must have human sympathy.

'Isn't it frightful? Isn't it filthy?' I babble. 'Isn't it the bloodiest, filthiest thing you've ever known? It ought to be stopped. It ought to be stopped!'

I find my voice rippling again and unable to check it. He looks at me uneasily, and saying, 'You stay there,' once again he leaves me. Left alone I realize that the roof is only tin. I run out swaying. I run across the court to the golf club. On the veranda three maids are hanging together, clinging, laughing, saying they thought their moment was come. They are in tearing spirits. Words bubble out of their mouths. I flop down in a chair and they take no notice of me. I am hurt. I have been much nearer to death than they.