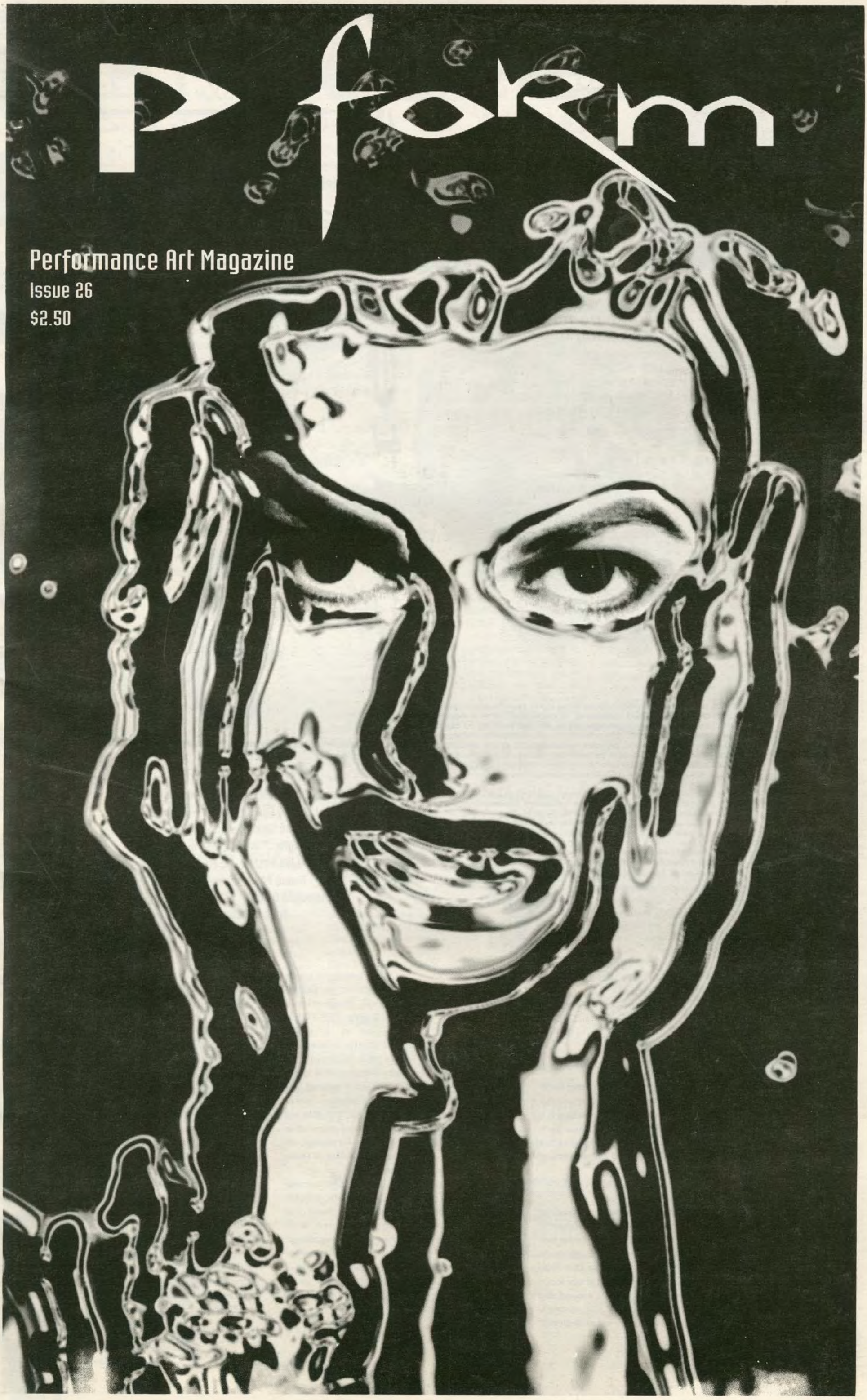
# P form

Performance Art Magazine

Issue 26

$2.50



# p-form


editorial staff
Michelle Manes
Carmela Rago
D. Travers Scott
Lonnette M. Stonitsch
Bob Whittinghill

staff writers
Carol Burbank
Ken Thompson

advertising
Pickles Oksietowicz
Christian Hansen

design and production
Fred Hickler
Seamus Malone
Mouli Marur
Marty Mroz
Pat O'Donnell
Michelle Pizzo

designatrix
Dan Trattler


# contents

feature


Hello, I Must Be Going... 1

2 Sing A Song
D. Travers Scott

Who Is Sarah Bernhard? 3
Carmela Rago

6 Algebra Suicide
The P-Form Interview
C. Rago

Genre Fusion
8 Tobi Johnson

Rodney King and The
Undermining Of Video Art 9
Cylena Simonds

Dancing Queen
11 Su Montoya


reviews


12

Sonic Works Festival Geoff Spradley
Lamb of God Hotel Thax Douglas
Saints and Singing Carol Burbank
Rio Negro Ken Thompson
Lisa Kotin John Leibrand
Nancy Reilly Ken Thompson
Diamanda Galas Steve McCall
Split Britches Cynthia Chris
Lisa Kron Anna Brown



P-FORM is distributed nationally by Fine Print Distributors, Austin, Texas. P-FORM, published quarterly, is dedicated to the development and understanding of performance art, as well as to building critical dialog in Chicago. Contributions are welcome. Features should be limited to 2400 words; reviews 500. Copy should be typed; Microsoft Word disk is strongly encouraged. Contact Randolph Street Gallery by phone or send manuscripts including author's name, bio and means of contact.

P-FORM is published by Randolph Street Gallery. RSG is supported in part by its members and by grants from the following agencies: The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, The Illinois Arts Council, The National Endowment for the Arts; and by private agencies including The Chicago Community Trust, The Joyce Foundation, The John T. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Robert R. McCormick Charitable Trust, and the Sara Lee Foundation. RSG is a member of the National Association of Artists' Organizations.

published by
**Randolph Street Gallery**
756 N. Milwaukee
Chicago, IL 60622
312-666-8585


Dear Ms. Manes:

What the fuck?? I've been waiting all summer for P-FORM. Do you have any idea what torture this can be? Everyday I bug my mail-girl asking if it has come—crying each night in a southern comfort. With the last two issues being so late (wasn't one a little skimpy too?) I'm wondering, what the hell is going on there?

FREAKIN ON THE P-

Gentle Reader:

During the soft rains and caressing winds of summer '92, the editors pondered the future of this publication. It seems the divine pause button had been pushed a little too hard, got stuck, and we were caught off-guard. The Dan Ryan racing above us, manuscripts piled at our feet.

A cycle of P-FORM history was winding around and we were already feeling the prickly nostalgic waves. Founded in 1986 by a core of dedicated artists looking to create a voice for the performance community in Chicago, P-FORM began as a xerox newsletter coming out of the basement of Randolph Street Gallery. It has evolved into a respected journal for writings on regional and national performance art, still published out of the basement of RSG. This year, P-FORM bid farewell to the editorial voices of many of its committed staff, leaving it open for change, yet vulnerable to the personal agendas of those working to shape its future.

Day to day events surrounding P-FORM became murky, grey; phone messages written, invisible ink. The wheels of change crank on. Some of us grew paranoid. Meetings disappeared. Walls talked, and they said some interesting things. Would money be granted for our continuance? Walking through the P-door caused feelings of unreality and indigestion not unlike those brought on by eating a bad burrito at 2'o clock in the morning.

Excuse me.

The summer wore on; there were more and varied calls for P-FORM from the readership. We turned to artists and writers for discourse on how P-FORM did, did not, and could best serve them. *High Performance* announced a change in format and an end to its review section, leaving P-FORM in an interesting, yet uncomfortable position as the only alternative source for performance reviews in the Midwest. 'Uncomfortable' because of the tremendous void left by HP.

As July temperatures reached record lows, Carmela Rago, the managing editor, stepped down, or should I say up, from the basement and announced her resignation. She will remain a contributing editor. On August 12, a meeting between P-FORM and RSG brought the news that P-FORM would continue to be published through the gallery. We also started negotiations on our internal structure, long overdue as we enter our seventh year of publication.

For those of you who have patiently and not-so patiently waited with baited breath by the mailbox or the newsstand— consider this, P-FORM #26, the breaking of a long dramatic pause.

-Ms. Manners

# CLUB LOWER LINKS: HELLO, I MUST BE GOING!

*The artist-to-artist rumor-to-truth transforming comlink this summer announced with great despair that CLUB LOWER LINKS IS GOING, GOING, GONE! Abandoned weeping and strutting ensued. (See testimonials.)*

*More buzz along the link heard the biz would be closed only temporarily. The dark, dank, sweaty haven for Chicago's performance artists and their fansketeers would be/was purchased by a gang of four? five? Finally some official news when P-Form was posted a press release promising more from the same, including a continued "current economy status consciousness" in drink and ticket prices, and a renewed commitment to "provocative, innovative and non-mainstream acts and events in time arts." CLUB LOWER LINKS RETURNS UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP! Sodden fare-thee-wells to Leigh Jones and plans for continued debauchery inflate the performance art community. (See testimonials and other things).*

*Lydia Tomkiw has announced the fall schedule, which is full of the usual unusual spokenwordvideobandspolitical-"buttloadsoffun" performance stuff. CLL is still at the same place (954 W. Newport, Chicago—312-248-5238). Good-bye, Leigh, and thanks for the mammaries (see other stuff). Hello again, to a new old Lower Links.*

*this so-called **art** has glorified homosexuality, exploited children, and **perverted** the image of jesus christ*

## TESTIMONIALS AND OTHER THINGS BY FAMOUS FIGURES AND FANS

*As most of you already know, Lower Links as you know it will no longer be. As of July 31st, I will no longer be involved with Lower Links. The good news is that new owners are purchasing Links because they care about what has been going on here for the last 4 years and wish to continue on with the usual programming format.*

*Since its opening in April of 1988, Lower Links has been a place where many performers have had an opportunity to test new ideas on audiences and generally develop their work. It has been a haven for many people, myself especially. I'll miss being surrounded by the incredible creativity Lower Links seems to inspire. Through that atmosphere I have learned so much about myself and the world. I'm sorry to lose it. Unfortunately, things change and I have to move on, perhaps to explore my own creativity.*

*I hope the new owners will be successful in their attempt to keep the business up and running and I wish them the best of luck.*

*Originally, as I thought I would be closing rather than selling Lower Links, I had asked a number of performers to write about what the end of Lower Links means to them. Some of these reponses were written with knowledge of the sale, but most were not.*

**LEIGH JONES**

*It's weaning time at Club Lower Links. My personal lips have been wrapped around the tit of Club Lower Links since the first time I performed. My work since then has been intimately formed by the confines of its physical and metaphysical space. I am talking about love. Most of the best of Chicago has been presented there due to the efforts of Leigh Jones. Without the assistance of public money she and her crew have provided a forum for the Fearless and the Shameless and for that act of courage in the current climate of repression they must never ever be underestimated.*

*Thank you Leigh Jones and Club Lower Links,*

**IRIS MOORE**

*Gurlette and I cried for a week when we heard the news and I painted my fingernails black. Gurlette hit the sauce. Lower Links' demise has placed a veil over our hearts and scrunched our double wide spacious trailer living down to a crushed sardine can, shrinking our hopes of ever escaping this armpit town called Altoona, Pa.! Our meteoric career crashed—no more witty abrasive chatter over cocktails with Leigh, Katie, Otto & that stud Ken. No more glamorous brunches with Iris and Larry. No more trips to Chicago! Who will have us now that there's no more Lower Links?*

*In Sorrow*

**GURLENE HUSSEY**

*If there's a heaven, it's gotta be like this at night. This place gave me the unconditional love I never got from my mother.*

**HEATHER MC ADAMS**

*I felt honored that Leigh Jones allowed me to do 12 shows at L.L., but my honor was ambiguous to say the least. I always felt the staff there thought I was a fool.*

*Lower Links had a great basement feel to it, friends having a party, but the corollary of that private joy was an insistent artist-as-loser mentality that scraped me raw sometimes in its dumbness.*

**THAX DOUGLAS**

*"LIFE CAN BE A DREAM"*

*I'd like to throw you down/and tie you up*

*Strap on a dildo/and fill your cup.*

*REFRAIN:*

*Life can be a dream/but mostly it's not,*

*It's just a tick tock tickin'/slippin' by of the clock.*

*I'd like to undress you slowly/and suck your cunt.*

*So wet, so tasty/with my fingers up your butt.*

*REFRAIN*

*I'd like to stroke your breasts/with my two bare hands.*

*Bite your lips/ and make lots of demands.*

*REFRAIN*

**SUZIE SILVER**

*Strangely, my immediate feeling upon hearing about Links' closing was excitement. Don't get me wrong—I have greatly benefited from and appreciate immensely Lower Links' support of local writing, music, performance, film/video, theatre and etc. It's been tremendous, as has been the exposure to many acts brought in from out of town. But it's too good to last. Links was incredibly supportive, but support is comfortable and rather unchallenging. I think it will be healthy for Chicago performers to be unsure again whether everyone in the audience will get their fisting jokes. Perhaps now performance artists in particular will explore other venues such as homegrown spaces like Millennium's End, innovative galleries or cooperative ventures with experimental theaters. The past few years have seen several exciting places—EMIT gallery, Process Studio, Art-O-Rama, Edge of the Lookinglass, Rudely Elegant, etc. - go under. Perhaps now emerging spaces will receive more diverse artist interest as well as larger audiences searching to replace the dependable and conveniently-located Links. Perhaps we'll see more ambient and street performance, outdoor installations. Perhaps four years has been long enough. Chicago artists have grown and developed at Links like in a wonderful school or laboratory, like penicillin mold in a petri dish. What's exciting is what's to come next.*

**D.TRAVERS SCOTT**

*How do you say this without becoming maudlin or nostalgic, hackneyed or insufficient? Was Club Lower Links an outlet of alternativisms or a petri dish of fomenting avaunt guardism or a kiva of aesthetic ritual or a bastion of the black-clad, funny haircut Dad's-old-sweater-given-a-new-lease-on-life crowd or a springboard of burgeoning new, sinuous-youth voices or a haven of blowzy drag queens or an intimate opportunity for national acts or a platform for politically charged agit-prop or a growth of cheap booze and lighting that makes anyone's complexion look good, or a trash metal rock-n-roll hip hop hot jazz funkadelic with the occasional poetry reading launching pad or a sanctum sanctorum of smokers tired of apologizing or a stop in/get wasted/stagger home/watering hole or refuge for those with no more energy to resist or resources to fight back or the slightest idea where the hell else to go or a surrogate mom with dank bar towel breath or a smooth hand stroking reassurance across our brows? Yeah, that. I suppose.*

**MATTHEW OWENS**

**CLUB LOWER LINKS: RUN! IT'S ALIVE!**

# Lagaya

## USES OF LIP-SYNCH AND THE PERSONA OF THE SINGER IN PERFORMANCE

The broken diva/lounge singer is an extremely popular and fertile persona, particularly among comedians, a recurring character motif on **Saturday Night Live**. The humor arises from a conflict between the emotional primacy of music, a primarily non-verbal expression of pure sentiment, and the lounge/diva persona, characterized by cynicism and capitalistic emotional detachment. (Witness the deadpan style of the signature solo singer, Frank Sinatra.) This persona can be seen as a pointed tool for assessing audience/performer relations: the audience's desire for an emotional journey and catharsis, and the obvious impossibility that the performer expected to deliver it could genuinely do so night after night. The presentation of the "real" (emotion, personality, narrative) versus the structured "false" theatrical is a key issue of performance art, manifested in the anti-theatrical continuum of Futurist cabarets, Happenings, corporeal artists such as Chris Burden, Paul McCarthy, and Carolee Schneemann, and more contemporary artists such as the *Kipper Kids*, Karen Finley, and *Blue Man Group*.

Chicago performance artist Andy Soma's *Randy Roma* persona is a sleazy lounge lizard who is also the "Avant-Godfather" of the Art Mafia. Appearing at Club Lower Links this spring, he sang a haggard version of **Vincent** by Don McLean and offered "protection" against paintings getting "accidentally" slashed, as well as entry into gallery showings or prestigious Biennials as "favors." Soma's Art Mafia paints the art-world as materialistic and non-altruistic. It is a natural progression from his early 80s work about building an "Art Army." This defense against America's rising conservatism in the 80s has matured into a questioning of what we are defending and what is worth defending (or "protecting"), as evidenced by an excessive era of Schnabel, Koons, Salle. In Roma, Soma articulates the confusion of real/illusory inherent in Soma's position as an artist.

Presumably, his schlocky songs are a hypocritical facade and the blunt commercialism of the Art Mafia is much closer to reality. Similarly, the romantic persona of the heroic individual artist has been deconstructed as more schlock through the postmodern tidal wave and the industry of art-world privilege as "reality". Yet Soma's obvious pleasure in singing—he's not just going through the motions—causes confusion as to what's really real or, more plainly, what we want to be real.

The performances of Chicago's John "*Sinatra*" Connors, for the most part, consist of singing and banter. He initially gained notoriety performing elegantly stylized renditions of the **Mary Tyler Moore** theme. Lately, however, Connors has moved away from such gimmicky work. His Barbara Streisand musical tribute/biography at Thax Douglas' revue **Homosexuality: the Abomination that's Sweeping the Nation** at Lower Links last winter presented a fairly rare sight: a gay male lounge singer. Consider how successful straight male singers are: Sinatra (with his infamous huge cock), Steve Lawrence (with ever-present wife Eydie Gorme), Robert Goulet, Neil Diamond, Dean Martin. Yet, straight men are traditionally denied emotion, and its expression, in our culture, creating a paradox given the emotional nature of singing. How society manages to excuse male singers' emotional outbursts, and how the singers maintain butch dignity, is a fascinating case of homophobic blinders. Connors' recent torchified rendition of **Fools Rush In** added another layer of queerness: referencing beauty-boy Ricky Nelson, who originally popularized the song. Furthermore, the *Sinatra* nickname foregrounds his contrast to the butch crooner—not only is Connors gay, he actually is nothing like Sinatra in voice, phrasing, or mannerisms.

Divas have been the traditional object of musical sentiment and expression for gay men, who identify with them as similarly oppressed in society, drawing inspiration from their physical and/or emotional fortitude. Identification with men was traditionally not possible—how can you identify with your oppressor? Connors seems to be eradicating the necessity of a female mediator, claiming the joys of being sentimental himself. Traditional queer roles are as fans: opera queens, Judy queens, disco queens. (Gay disco stars like Sylvester were the exception: the general public doggedly refused to even believe the *Village People* were gay; the other force behind the phenomenon, the djs, were initially ladies' men/het sex objects such as Francis Grasso of NYC's the **Sanctuary**1 ) Using the realm of song as a microcosm, Connors postulates that we do not have to be delegated to the audience — we can assume full societal participation and interaction.

In her theater/performance pieces **Music Kills a Memory** and **A Cocktail of Flowers: the Life and Afterlife of Doll Baby**, Chicago's Paula Killen

has explored the persona of the chanteuse, a female version of the lounge singer with one key exception: rather than the male lounge singer's secure arrogance, the chanteuse is typically somewhat shattered by the experiences of her life, seemingly on the verge of or recovering from a breakdown. She is victim of her feelings, abusive men and their addictions. She has more heart than a cold diva (Leontyne Price, Diana Ross, etc.) but is unable to control it like a male singer. Compare the depiction of addiction in Dean *Little Ol' Wine-Drinker* Martin to those of Judy Garland, Edith Piaf, Billie Holiday. However, essential to the chanteuse is her "Je ne regrette rien" toughness, which, in recent incarnations, exhibits a new ability to survive (Tina Turner, Chaka Khan, Linda Ronstadt and even Madonna's flirtations with the persona).

In each of Killen's productions, the chanteuse is capable of feeling and expressing through song a passion that sustains her beyond death. While only a concluding plot twist in Music, this is the central focus of **Cocktail**. *Doll Baby*, after struggling through an obsessive/compulsive existence reminiscent of Dorothy Parker's **Big Blonde**, dies after a gang rape and spends several years as a man in a sexless, liquid-less, colorless Limbo. She is revived years later by a doctor so in love with her he froze her body cryogenically and devoted his life to reviving her. Unfortunately, he dies immediately afterwards. Pondering the rationale behind her lives and death, wondering why this doctor devoted his life to her only to be deprived of his success, she finds the answer within her own repertoire: **The Guy's in Love With You**. *Doll Baby* abandons looking for goal-oriented success/reward rationales, realizing she infused the duration and process of the doctor's life with meaning and purpose. It is the passions, obsessions, and loves she has given and received that imbue value to the lives of her and her lovers, not their accomplishments.

In her privileging of nostalgia, sentiment, irrationality, and emotion, Killen rewrites the chanteuse persona as an active participant in life-giving, taking, inspiring, and coloring, rather than an admirable yet pitiable victim of uncontrollable emotion. Killen is legitimizing many traditionally "feminine" traits. The Limbo sequence most clearly expresses her masculine incarnation devoid of "female" essentials (passion, color, liquids), her singing in this realm a dry Humperdinck lounge style. A parallel can be seen in feminist writers' advocacy of "feminine" writers, such as Julia Kristeva's support of Mallarmé and Lautréamont, or Dorothy Richardsons' admiration for Proust and Joyce. As Deborah Cameron explains, "What most feminists of this type would insist on ... is that 'feminine' writing done by either sex is progressive because it challenges certain myths (rationality, unity) that are essentially patriarchal." 2

An interesting crossover is Liza Minnelli. She functions ostensibly as a male lounge singer, with her gutsy, deep voice, her boyish signature hairstyle and unconventional sense of glamour, her **Ultimate Event** concert with Sinatra and Sammy Davis, Jr., and the popularity of her **New York, New York** among male artists. Her desire to distance herself from her mother, Judy Garland, the epitome of the diva/chanteuse, helps explain this. Yet recent years have brought strange variations for Minnelli. Her **Results** album of dance music written and partially produced by Euro dance stars *Pet Shop Boys* brought her largest youth/pop success in years, if not ever. Significantly, it firmly repositioned her away from the sterile swagger of the male lounge singer. The first and biggest hit, **Losing my Mind**, was overwrought and melodramatic. Its video, directed by Brian Grant, features Minnelli in various states of obsession over a blond muscle-boy, stylized with an exaggerated gravity that spills over into camp. She runs through the rain in a torn coat, puts her gloves in the refrigerator, pours soda into a fishbowl and washes her face in a sink full of photographs. Most significantly it acknowledges the relationship between gay audience and chanteuse. The first shot of the video is an egg in an eggholder, the top of the shell cracked off and yolk dripping down the side—an obvious metaphor for the "hysterical" woman. The next two shots are of a thin young man with gentle features, watching through a window, wearing full facial makeup. He is not in drag, wearing jeans and a t-shirt, but the makeup marks him as gay spectator, watching her emotional torment throughout the video. Finally, Minnelli wakes up in bed, startled, and sees the voyeur outside her window. They smile wanly at one another and he turns away from the window. Minnelli lies back down, looking troubled, but then confident as she gazes directly back into the camera for the first time in the video. *Pet Shop Boys* and Grant bring out what her legions of gay fans always knew: the male posturing was a facade. **Results** reclaims passion and sentiment, yet campily reappraises the chanteuse/broken goddess connotations embodied by her mother.

## WHO IS SARAH BERNHARD?

There was a routine she did during an HBO Special in which she walked on stage with a martini glass. It was a feminist take-off on Dean Martin's world-weary, pseudo sophisticated vodka-soaked style of comedy, a little W.C. Fields, with a bit of the diva in the doldrums persona a la Judy Garland or Shelley Winters. How did she portray this without any hint of self pity? I wondered. Just then she started crying, big drunken sobs, and I laughed. Here was the self pity, and it was so big, so exaggerrated, it was very funny. It was also something that neither Martin nor Fields would ever really do in front of an audience, to act sloppily self-pitying, totally drunk. She waved away her tears with a gloved hand, and introduced her next guest.

When she did this same routine sans tears at the Oak Theater recently, she took it one step further. This is how it worked. As the lights dimmed, we caught sight of a group of figures backstage left. A swelling in the audience sounded like "AAAHHHH..' and ended with "Saaaandraaaaaah!" Her band came out, took their places and began to play and hum the chorus of "Fever." Bernhard came stumbling out (like a starlet from La Dolce Vita) resplendent in a black gown, wearing sun glasses, holding a cigarette in one hand (which simultaneously, delicately touched her forehead), her martini glass in the other. This routine brought me here tonight. She just stood, staring through her sunglasses, at the audience, for a very long time. I have rarely seen a comedienne do this. Actors do not like (as a rule) empty spaces. I had never seen anyone use so much (almost uncomfortable) empty space. After a time the empty space framed and explained the picture, and I felt a sense of "Aha!" And where did Bernhard take it? Into the song "Fever," parodying Peggy Lee, the Beat Poets, telling/singing about Jack Kerouac, Alan Ginsberg, and Joni Mitchell (being a hippie freak)), and gay life (she mentions that Whitney is "out", Merve is "out," Joni is "out"). She stopped singing, pulled out a long (phallic) flashlight, flashed it at the audience and asked, "Who's gay in Chicago?" She sang about her life, our culture, adding her own words to this and other songs she performed. Her singing has an unexpectedly lyrical and poignant vocal quality with real power. "Fever" became a song of pride, and strength. She sang in brilliant Van Morrison-esque scat (reminiscent of his "Blue Money 'Doo-Doo, Doo-yu-doo'" ), then asked "Who hasn't come out yet?" She said, "We love you!" almost in encouragement. Later she said, "I don't need my gay brothers, I don't need my gay sisters — I love everybody!" She enunciated the word "everybody" while nodding her head and pointing the flashlight throughout the crowd. She scooped the audience in one fell swoop and had them in her net for the remainder of the show. Then, she went back to her song.

Carmela Rago

Minnelli used a similar technique at the **Concert for Life** AIDS benefit held by the rock group *Queen* in tribute to their late lead singer, Freddie Mercury. The finale was a surprise appearance by Minnelli, in stark contrast to the previous rock superstar guests such as *Guns and Roses*, apparently in deference to her and Mercury's close friendship. Liza sang *Queen's* **We are the Champions**, in her signature cabaret style. **Champions** had been recorded by *Queen* in a traditional rock & roll style, a loud anthem with heroic guitars and Roman male chorus backup, all mucho macho (evidenced by its popularity among fans of winning sports teams such as the *Chicago Bulls*, rock and professional athletics both being virulently homophobic). Yet Minnelli interpreted the song as the torch number it really was, singing with full emotional bravado and no macho stoicism, even breathily speaking some lines.

**I've taken my bows**

**And my curtain calls -**

**You brought me fame and fortune and everything that goes with it -**

**I thank you all -**

**But it's been no bed of roses**

**No pleasure cruise -**

**I consider it a challenge before the whole human race -**

**And I ain't gonna lose -**

**We are the champions - my friends**

**And we'll keep on fighting -**

**-'till the end.** 3

With homosexuality and "feminine" values/experiences foregrounded by Minnelli, the songs aspirations as an anthem for more than sports fans become more apparent.

Beyond Baudrillardian musings on real v. simulacrum and our poor postmodern condition, the real v. artifice tension found in the various singer personae can function as a parallel to culturally validated v. invalidated, dominant v. disenfranchised. The techniques and strategies of one are applicable and worth investigating for their use in terms of the other. Lip-synching is one such technique for exploring this dichotomy: the pre-recorded music assumes the dominant, privileged stature, and the performer positions herself in relation to and/or dialogue with it. The difficulty with this technique, however, is overcoming the authority inherent in the prerecorded song or voice due to (generally speaking) its widespread familiarity and authenticity as REAL.

In his performance **Stave**, presented last fall **at Lower Links**, Lawrence Steger sang and lip-synched to express confusion over "genuine" and "constructed." With a strong voice and casual sentiment, he sang the *Velvet Underground's* **Some Kind of Love** in a bathrobe against a brilliant blue wash and gentle soap-flake snow flurry. This was followed by its opposite: a grotesquely overwrought lip-synch of David Bowie's **Eight Line Poem** in an

**Rub jelly on your shoulder, la de da de dah**

elaborately eccentric outfit of wet, loose underwear and near-whiteface. The real-Steger singing is confused by the theatrical lights, snow, Steger's ironic emotional detachment, and the rather absurdist lyrics such as "Rub jelly on your shoulder, la de da de dah...." Even the "everyday" and therefore real robe is suspiciously out of context. The "fake" (lip-synching) is similarly confused. The performance is bizarrely grimaced and contorted in such a unique way it seems wholly original, unique to Steger, and therefore real. He puts far more feeling into it than anywhere in **Some Kind of Love**, so much that he collapses at the end. Similarly, the costume is so original, with its large dripping sleeves, discrete garters, and seemingly irrational choices of what parts of the body to cover and not cover, it seems real, rather than any kind of pastiche, emulation, or imitation.

NYC performance duo *Split Britches* utilized lip-synch in **Anniversary Waltz**,

THE LIZ★S

a piece exploring, among other things, the pressures and influences of traditional (real, empowered, validated) partnership roles on a non-traditional partnership, such as their doing Nancy Sinatra and Lee Hazelwoods' overwrought cover of **You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling** amidst confusion and transformation of butch/femme-coded clothing. Sinatra and Hazelwood's media-hyped relationship foregrounds the aspect of social pressure; the lesbian juxtaposition connects the mass cultural roles with lesbian subcultural roles, questioning how to differentiate between imposed roles and natural expressions of difference, as well as cultural-sexual traditions. Their critique, however, was extended a step further by their performing the song with Peggy Shaw dressed as a ventriloquist's dummy, sitting on Lois Weaver's knee, as they both lip-synched. This addressed a more manipulative aspect of relationships: the paradoxical desire to be free from socially-imposed roles, yet expecting a partner to adhere to such a role. This have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too is particularly applicable to same-sex relationships where the delegation of gender roles is not self-evident. For instance, the societal double-standard towards male and female promiscuity (men fool around, women are sluts) manifests itself in the varying levels of monogamy among committed same-sex couples, and the difficulties present in trying to arrive at mutually satisfying arrangements given this double-standard.

The evolution among cutting-edge drag queens from lip-synch to original material parallels their move from female impersonation to genderfuck and seems to represent more of an effort to find an original, real voice rather than emulate an existing cultural product that is artificial for them. NYC's *Hapi Phace* will do classic Streisand, but follows the song with sign language rather than lip-synch. Not only does this break with drag tradition, but also illustrates the unique physical expressiveness of signing. *Phace* reverses the emulatory nature of lip-synch, her movement performance overpowering the song so that Streisand becomes merely an interpreter of the signing for those audience members who don't sign.

In Chicago performance artist Beth Tanner's **The Adored and The Adorned**, presented at **Blue Rider** and **Balliwick** theaters last summer, Doug Stapleton performed in drag persona *Gurlene Hussy*. He lip-synched to his own voice singing k.d. lang's apocalyptic-industrial cover of **Secret Love**. The lyrics were given direct implications of lesbian and gay male desire as "secret love;" when sung by a non-traditional drag queen in torn-leather dress and ratted hair, clown-white base and garish makeup, this rather simplistic reading expands to specifically address "inappropriate" gay and lesbian desire such as the drag and S/M cultures central to Tanner's piece. Finally, *Hussy's* lip-synching to his own voice foregrounded his maleness, further resisting a simplistic interpretation of drag as female impersonation. It also fractured Hussy's identity, symbolic of gay/lesbian fracture from traditional cultural archetypes. The emulatory aspect of lip-synch presented Hussy/Stapleton emulating himself or, more specifically, a self-created ideal- perhaps a self at once contemporary and unified with these archetypes.

GURLENE

**You wander around on your own little cloud, when you don't see the why or the wherefore...**

The Native American *Spiderwoman Theatre* included in their performance **Power Pipes** a cheery lip-synch of **Don't Sleep in the Subway**, developed in residency at **Randolph Street Gallery** last fall. The ensemble formed a bouncing subway car around one member who had been affecting the mannerisms of a mentally unbalanced homeless woman. She loudly announced the song's first verse: "You wander around on your own little cloud/ when you don't see the why or the wherefore/ You walk out on me when we both disagree/'Cause to reason is not what you care for." Within the context of homelessness, the vacuous glee of a song about a painful breakup parallels the chilling emotional detachment used to avoid such issues. The group stood, shouted "Shut up!," then finished the verse with her, "I've heard it all a million times before/Take off your coat my love and close the door." Immediately the chorus from Petula Clark's hit recording came on, and the group dispersed into an outward-facing circle, lip-synching with broad, exaggerated smiles. On the transitional lines, however, they sang along loudly and off-key, drowning out the recording They formed a chorus line, carefully counting out steps and kicks, then spun as a whole formation. The shouting and counting obscured all but the chorus, which they aped silently. This use of lip-synch indicated an ability to engage and work within the dominant system without being overshadowed by it, to subvert rather than simply emulate. Their wry sarcasm, vocal interaction with and obscuring of parts of the recorded song, juxtaposition of the scene with describing Native American celebration of a woman's first menstruation and traditional drumming, the choreographic strength through unity, all engaged and manipulated dominant culture as represented by the song. They inserted their voices, rather than merely pointing out the omnipotence of the dominant culture and their disenfranchisement.

A bizarre use of lip-synch can be found in Michael Jackson's video for **Black or White**. After a parade of predictably multicultural dance scenes, Jackson is 'set' on an inner-city doorstep with token children of mixed races. He sits to the side, however. The central figure is child-superstar McCauley Culkin, who delivers the song's rap bridge. Culkin lip-synchs, not to Jackson, but to some unseen rapper. A pale blond paragon of idealized white male, affluent experience speaks with the voice of an older, black male who, we assume from the setting, is inner-city and not affluent. This is staged as an educational lesson. The set strongly echoes the "inner city" look of *Sesame Street*, the same big black front steps shot head-on where similar racially-mixed children receive pearls of wisdom from adults. Jackson could have easily chosen a schoolyard, playground, rooftop, alley or blacktop - sites frequently chosen by kids themselves in hip-hop and rap groups such as *Another Bad Creation*. Culkin addresses the camera directly. He is clearly the lesson's subject, a positive example. Teacher Jackson listens enthusiastically, smiling and bobbing his head in encouragement.

The lip-synch in this sequence is neither emulatory of, nor interactive with, the recorded voice. Culkin is colonizing the rapper's voice; his archetypal star power and racial empowerment eclipse the voice's authority of authenticity. Culkin needn't emulate, he owns the voice. Jackson's earlier hit "rap" had been performed by ultra-Anglo Vincent Price in **Thriller**, evidencing a progression from formal appropriation to utter colonization of a voice. Given that the author/instructor is a black man whose appearance has become progressively more Anglo over the years, the politics of the video are apparent. Under a guise of racial harmony, the actual lesson seems not just physical emulation of white, but historical, behavioral emulation as well: colonizing, exploiting, and appropriating other cultures, including one's own.

This exploration and expression of personal voice, expressed by artists' use of the singer persona and lip-synching, is essentially an exploration of the self, an effort at self-discovery. Beyond simplistic "knowing thyself," this self-examination holds key implications for serious social issues. A persuasive strain of feminist thought, espoused by Maria Black and Rosalind Coward, proposes that the patriarchal constructions of language and discourse can be undone not by exploration and understanding of women's language, but by men discovering themselves as male rather

**wipe all** *hiv-positive* **people off the face of the earth**

than the universal norm. "There is a discourse available to men which allows them to represent themselves as people, humanity, mankind. This discourse, by its very existence, excludes and marginalizes women by making women the sex. Our aim is not just to validate new meanings of women but to confront men with their maleness ... Men are sustained at the centre of the stage precisely because they can be 'people' and do not have to represent their masculinity to themselves ... Men can never be displaced from the centre until they can be forced to recognize themselves as men and to take responsibility for this."4 Similarly, Richard Dyer's article **White** suggests that, "White power secures its dominance by seeming to not be anything in particular ... Looking, with such passion and single-mindedness, at non-dominant groups has had the effect of reproducing the sense of oddness, differentness, exceptionality of the groups, the feeling that they are departures from the norm ... The colourless multi-colouredness of whiteness secures white power by making it hard, especially for white people and their media, to 'see' whiteness. This, of course, makes it hard to analyze."5 Dyer continues by analyzing whiteness on screen in an effort to understand and de-centralize its dominance. The parallel benefits to be derived from analyzing heterosexuality follow suit. For artists, critics and thinkers who may fall into one or all of these three dominant social groups, discovery and articulation of their own voice—beyond taking it for granted but striving to understand its unique characteristics via comparison, contrast, juxtaposition and deconstruction—is a vital task.

**Lee:: You never close your eyes anymore when I kiss those lips**

**And there's no tenderness like before in your tingertips**

***Nancy: You're trying hard not to show it***

**Lee: Baby**

***But, baby***

**Baby**

***Oh baby***

***I know it***

*photo: Sherry Antonini*

**D. Travers Scott** is a writer and performer living in Chicago.

*1Goldman, Albert, DISCO, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1978, pp.115-116..*

*2Cameron, Dorothy, The Feminist Critique of Language, Routledge, New York, 1990, p.10.*

*3 F. Mercury, from the album News of the World, c. 1977 Queen Music Ltd., BMI.*

*4 Black and Coward, Linguistic, Social and Sexual Relations: A Review of Dale Spender's "Man Made Language", The Feminist Critique of Language, Deborah Cameron, Ed., Routledge, New York, 1990, p. 132*

*5 Dyer, Richard, White, Screen, Fall 1988, No. 3, p.44-46.*

# Alge
# Suic

ALGEBRA SUICIDE IS A PERFORMANCE DUO WHO MESH SOUND, MUSIC, POETRY, AND VISUAL MEDIA (I.E. SLIDES) TO CREATE THEIR UNIQUE, INTRICATE, ENTERTAINING PERFORMANCES. ALGEBRA SUICIDE IS POET LYDIA TOMKIW (WHO MANAGES THE BAND AND IS A PART OWNER OF CLUB LOWER LINKS), AND HER HUSBAND, MUSICIAN DON HEDEKER, A PROFESSOR IN PSYCHIATRY AND THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS.

**CARMELA RAGO:** HOW DID YOU COME UPON THAT NAME?
DON HEDEKER: A LINE IN A POEM ".. JUST LIKE A FORM OF ALGEBRA SUICIDE..." SOMETHING DRAMATIC, AND CONNECTED WITH POST-PUNK. I WORK AS A STATISTICIAN LOOKING AT STATISTICAL MODELS. I CO-AUTHORED A PAPER THAT LOOKED AT SUICIDE.
LYDIA TOMKIW: I NEVER FELT DESPERATE ABOUT SCHOOL UNTIL I STUDIED ALGEBRA.
DH: THERE'S A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENCOUNTERING ABSTRACT CONCEPTS IN ALGEBRA AND SUICIDE IN YOUNG PEOPLE. YOU HAVE TO BE DEVELOPMENTALLY READY TO ENCOUNTER CERTAIN MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS.

**CR:** WHEN DID YOU START WORKING TOGETHER?
LT: WE MARRIED IN 1981 AND FORMED ALGEBRA SUICIDE IN 1982.

**CR:** HOW DID YOU START WORKING TOGETHER?
LT: I JUST WANTED TO BE IN THE BAND.

**CR:** IS THERE TRUTH TO THAT?
LT: I WAS STAGING POETRY READINGS AT THE ARTFUL DODGER.
DH: WHEN I WAS IN GRADUATE SCHOOL, I HAD TO QUIT PLAYING IN THE PSYCHO CAPONES. WE FOUND THAT IT WAS EASIER FOR US TO WORK TOGETHER (BECAUSE WE WERE ALREADY LIVING TOGETHER) THAN IT WAS COORDINATING REHEARSAL SCHEDULES WITH THREE OTHER PEOPLE. WE STARTED TO COMBINE HER POETRY WITH MY GUITAR. THE FIRST TIME WE EVER DID A PUBLIC PERFORMANCE WAS PLAYING ON LABOR DAY AT THE WEST END IN 1983 (THEY HAD JUST REMODELLED). BACK AT THAT TIME, THE POETRY CROWD WAS SMALLER AND TENDED TO STICK TOGETHER. IT WAS A MORE SUPPORTIVE GROUP.
(THAT YEAR, ALGEBRA'S SUICIDE'S FIRST RELEASE, TRUE ROMANCE AT THE WORLD'S FAIR WAS CHOSEN BY TROUSER PRESS TO APPEAR ON THE R.O.I.R THE BEST OF AMERICA UNDERGROUND COLLECTION AS ONE OF THE BEST INDEPENDENT RELEASES SINCE 1977).
LT: THERE WEREN'T ALL THESE LITTLE CLIQUES...

**CR:** HOW DID YOU BOTH MEET?
LT: WE MET AT JAMIE'S ELSEWHERE. ONE OF TWO PEOPLE IN THE AUDIENCE, I ASKED HIM IF HE DID PRIVATE PARTIES.
DH: I WAS STUDYING PSYCHOMETRICS (PSYCHOLOGY APPLIED TO STATISTICS). SHE ASKED ME, "WHAT DO YOU DO?"
LT: I WAS THINKING, "OH NO, ANOTHER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE!" I FULLY EXPECTED HIM TO SAY HE WENT TO OAK PARK HIGH. THEN I FOUND OUT HE WAS STUDYING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO! I WAS DOING A POETRY READING TWO DAYS AFTER WE MET. I TOLD HIM TO STOP BY. HE CAME LATE AND DIDN'T WANT TO DISTURB THE READING, SO HE WAITED OUTSIDE. I DIDN'T THINK HE WAS THERE. I WAS SO DISAPPOINTED! I WALKED OUTSIDE AND FOUND HIM WAITING JUST OUTSIDE THE DOOR.

**CR:** DID HE ACTUALLY SEE YOU PERFORM?
L.T.: I THINK HE WAS PEEKING IN THE DOOR.

**CR:** AND WHAT WERE YOU ACTUALLY DOING, LYDIA?

LT: SHARON MESMER AND I USED TO ORGANIZE THINGS (EVENTS) THAT WERE UNDER THE GUISE OF POETRY READINGS. THESE EVENTS INVOLVED COSTUMES, MEDIA, LIGHTS AND TEXT - THIS WAS BEFORE 1980. BY THE TIME WE ADDED MUSIC, WE WERE ALREADY ARTISTICALLY IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION IN TERMS OF VARIOUS DISCIPLINES. ONE THING THAT MADE DON AND I CLIQUE PERSONALLY AND ARTISTICALLY WAS THAT WE HAD A REAL SIMILAR AESTHETIC.

**CR:** IT SOUNDS AS THOUGH YOU WERE BOTH MOVING IN THE SAME DIRECTION ANYWAY...
LT: ALSO, I REALIZED EARLY ON THAT WE WERE BOTH REALLY GREGARIOUS PEOPLE. EVEN THOUGH WE WERE BOTH TOGETHER, WE WERE BOTH REALLY OUT THERE — WE NEVER HAD TO BABY-SIT EACH OTHER.

**CR:** LYDIA, WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND OR TRAINING?
LT: I RECEIVED MY BACHELOR'S IN CREATIVE WRITING, AND MY MASTERS OF FINE ARTS DEGREE IN INTERDISCIPLINARY ART FROM COLUMBIA. I WORKED WITH SUZANNE COHAN (WHO TAUGHT ME HOW TO MAKE HANDMADE SLIDES) AND JAMES GRIGSBY. THEY WERE BOTH WONDERFUL TEACHERS FOR ME. I'VE SINCE BEEN INVITED BACK AS A VISITING LECTURER, AND SHOWN STUDENTS HOW TO MAKE HAND-MADE SLIDES.
DH: I DID THE MUSIC FOR A COUPLE OF GRIGSBY'S PIECES.

**CR:** WHY WERE YOU DOING IT?
LT: WE WERE HAVING FUN.
DH: I THINK THE PUNK MOVEMENT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

**CR:** LYDIA HOW DID YOU COME TO DO WHAT YOU WERE DOING WITH POETRY BEFORE YOU MET DON?
LT: I REMEMBER ONE TIME GOING TO SEE A FAMOUS POET READ. I WAS SITTING ON THE FLOOR BECAUSE IT WAS SO CROWDED. I WAS SITTING WITH CRAMPS IN MY LEFT SIDE LISTENING TO THIS GUY WITH A COLD. (I WON'T MENTION WHO IT WAS). HE KEPT STICKING AN INHALER UP HIS NOSE, MUMBLING INTO HIS SHIRT. I THOUGHT TO MYSELF "LANGUAGE IS GREAT, WHY DOES THIS HAVE TO BE SO PAINFUL?" THAT EXPERIENCE MADE ME RETHINK WHAT I WANTED OF POETRY READINGS.
DH: THE FIRST TIME I SAW LYDIA READ. THERE WAS SOME SORT OF DRAMA ABOUT THE READING. THERE WAS A WHOLE MOVEMENT OF THE SEVENTIES. YOU DIDN'T WAIT FOR SO AND SO TO CALL YOU UP FOR A GIG, YOU COULD JUST DO IT. WE WERE BOTH REALLY INTO THAT SORT OF THING. WHEN WE MET, WE WENT TO PLACES LIKE LA MERE, O'BANION'S. THE PUNK MOVEMENT WAS ABOUT LEARNING HOW TO GET UP ON STAGE AND JUST DO IT.
LT: WHEN PEOPLE HEAR ABOUT US, THEY THINK WE'RE VERY ARTY, VERY SERIOUS - THEY'RE SURPRISED WHEN THEY SEE US. THEY'RE SURPRISED WHEN THEY SEE DON'S MAYBE INTO JOHNNY THUNDERS.

**CR:** LYDIA, HOW MUCH TIME DOES IT TAKE TO MANAGE THE BAND?
DH: IT'S ENDLESS. IT'S A MATTER OF HOW MUCH TIME YOU HAVE, HOW MUCH YOU'RE WILLING TO ALLOCATE

# b r a i d e

LT: I TRY TO LIMIT IT TO A MAXIMUM OF 40 HOURS A WEEK. AS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, I'LL CALL PEOPLE AT 4:00 A.M.

CR: HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO GET INTO THE LOWER LINKS THING?
LT: SUMMER IS A SLOW TIME FOR THE MUSIC BUSINESS. THE INDEPENDENT RECORD SCENE DEPENDS SO MUCH ON COLLEGE PLAY. NOT MUCH WAS GOING TO HAPPEN FOR ALGEBRA SUICIDE UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE FALL SEMESTER. WHEN THE LOWER LINKS THING HAPPENED, THE NEXT THING I KNEW I WAS SAYING, "SURE, I'LL TAKE IT ON." IT SEEMED TO BE A NATURAL PROGRESSION OF OUR INTERESTS.

CR: DON, HOW DO YOU APPROACH YOUR MUSIC?
DH: IT'S REALLY TAPPING INTO DIFFERENT THINGS. I DON'T APPROACH MUSIC OR MY WORK IN PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SAME WAY AT ALL. IN MUSIC, I DON'T TRY TO BE ANALYTIC — I DON'T USE THAT APPROACH. I TRY TO GO FOR THE FEELING OR THE RHYTHM OF IT - THE SONG CONSTRUCTION. YOU CAN COMPOSE AND ARRANGE AND BE VERY ANALYTIC, AND THAT CAN HELP YOU OUT IN SOME WAYS I DON'T THINK THAT I USE IT IN DEVELOPING A SONG. I LIKE TO KEEP IT DIFFERENT. I LIKE TO *GET AWAY* FROM ANALYTICAL THINKING AND LET THE MUSIC BE A RELEASE. MY WORK AS A STATISTICIAN IS ALL ABOUT BEING ANALYTICAL. MUSIC IS A RELEASE.

CR: IN ORDER TO ENJOY YOUR MUSIC, DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR AUDIENCE HAS TO BE A WELL-EDUCATED CONSUMER?
LT: I THINK IT HAS NO IMPORTANCE TO EXISTENCE. IT'S A LUXURY.
DH: IT'S A LUXURY TO SEE ART.
LT: IT'S NOT UTILITARIAN. WE'RE NOT GOING TO WHISK PEOPLE AWAY TO A BETTER PLACE. WE DON'T FEED PEOPLE. THE HUMAN RACE WILL EXIST WITH OR WITHOUT US - THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT WE DO IS THAT OUR PERFORMANCES CAN EXCITE SOMEONE — OPEN THEM UP — INSPIRE THEM TO DO SOMETHING SIMILAR. IF YOU CAN CREATE THAT EXCITEMENT FOR YOURSELF, THAT'S GREAT. IF YOU CAN TRANSFORM THAT TO OR FOR SOMEONE ELSE, THAT'S EVEN BETTER. I CAN'T TELL YOU, WHETHER OR NOT WE ACHIEVE THAT ALL THE TIME, BUT THAT'S THE IDEAL.
TO ME, LANGUAGE SEPARATES HUMAN BEINGS FROM ANIMALS. IF YOU CAN TAKE THAT, WHIP IT AROUND, AND MAKE SOMETHING GO POP BETWEEN THE EYES OF YOUR AUDIENCE, WELL, THAT'S SOMETHING.

CR: WHAT WAS THE HIGH EXPERIENCE, THE "POP BETWEEN YOUR EYES EXPERIENCE," WHICH INSPIRED YOU AS AN ARTIST?
DH: WHEN I SAW THE BEATLES ON ED SULLIVAN. AFTER THAT I WANTED TO LEARN TO PLAY GUITAR AS QUICKLY AS I COULD. ANOTHER EXPERIENCE WAS SEEING GLEN BRANCA AT THE WEST END WITH TEN GUITARS ON STAGE. IT WAS LIKE PUTTING YOUR HEAD IN A ROARING LION'S MOUTH. A THIRD EXPERIENCE WAS HEARING THE NEW YORK DOLLS' LATE JOHNNY THUNDERS FOR THE FIRST TIME. HE PLAYED MY GUITAR ONE TIME AND THAT WAS A VERY SPECIAL MOMENT.

CR: WHAT IS PERFORMANCE ART?
LT: FINE ARTS IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION.

CR: WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE COMEDY, OR CERTAIN ENTERTAINERS WHO RIDE THE FENCE BETWEEN PERFORMANCE ART AND MUSIC OR COMEDY?
LT: THERE'S A LOT OF PERFORMANCE ART THAT I SEE THAT ARE ESSENTIALLY SKITS — THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMEDY SKITS AND PERFORMANCE IS THAT PERFORMANCE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO TURN ON ITSELF. YOU WILL HUSH THE AUDIENCE WHEN YOU TAKE THE AUDIENCE INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION THAT IS NOT THE SUPERFICIAL GAG, OR THE EXPECTED OUTCOME, OR THE PAT ENDING.?

CR: WHAT'S MUSIC?
DH: WHAT'S MUSIC? SOMEONE WITH A JACKHAMMER MIGHT BE MUSIC. I THINK EVERYBODY IS ENTITLED TO THEIR ASSESSMENT. IT'S A DIFFICULT THING TO DESCRIBE.

## Algebra Suicide Discography

**SWOON:** [Widely Distributed Records, U.S.A.; Antler/Subway, Belgium] 1991 CD, 22 Selections
**The Secret Like Crazy:** [Cargo]CD reissue of 1987 release
**Alpha Cue:** [POMS, Germany] 1988 CD.
live performance
**The Secret Like Crazy:** [RAR/DOM] 1988, 20 selection LP
**Little Dead Bodies:** [Buzzerama] 1984, 3 selection EP
**Big Skin:** [cause and Effect] 1986, C40 cassette package w/ booklet
**That Flock of Crows:** [Buzzerama] 1984, 4 selection EP
**Algebra Suicide:** [Buzzerama] 4 selection EP


*abortion is* **offensive** *to our most basic* **principle**

*The Aerial/ ¿What Next?*

MUSIC · SOUND · LANGUAGE

composed
improvised
invented
found
collaged
mutilated
stolen
contorted
broadcast
exhumed
muttered
seduced
droned
imagined
liberated
recycled
crooned
digitized
broken
hidden
overheard
dreamed
coaxed
spewed
wailed
etc.

*David Moss · Malcolm Goldstein · Jerry Hunt*
*Stuart Sherman · Loren Mazzacane · Jin Hi Kim*
*Jeff Greinke · Chris Cochrane · Sue Ann Harkey*
*Nicolas Collins · Tom Guralnick · Philip Corner*
*Myra Melford & Marion Brandis · William Hooker*
*Lesli Dalaba · Bern Porter · Annea Lockwood*
*Pauline Oliveros · Alison Knowles Peter Garland*
*John Cage · Brenda Hutchinson · Trans Duo*
*Elodie Lauten · Ornette Coleman · Anna Homler*
*Peter Van Riper · Essential Music · James Tenney*
*Deep Listening Band*
*lots more...*

Write for a FREE catalog of our releases on CD and Cassette + related records and books:

*Nonsequitur Foundation*
*PO Box 2638, Dept. P*
*Santa Fe, NM 87504 USA*
*or call (505) 986-0004*

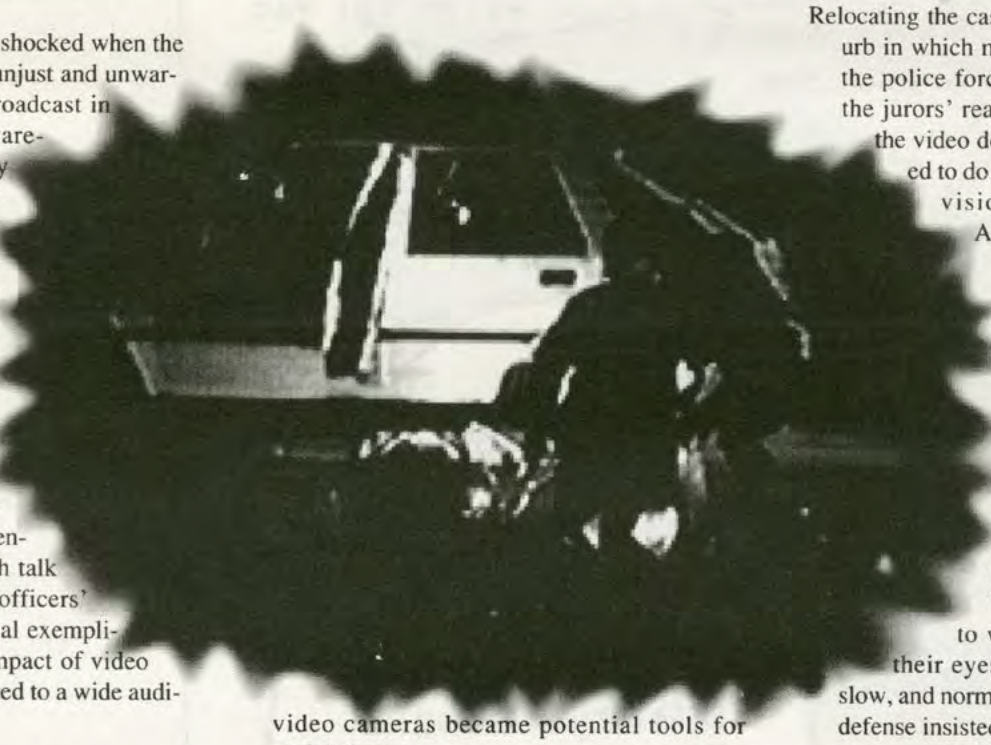


## design acknowledgements

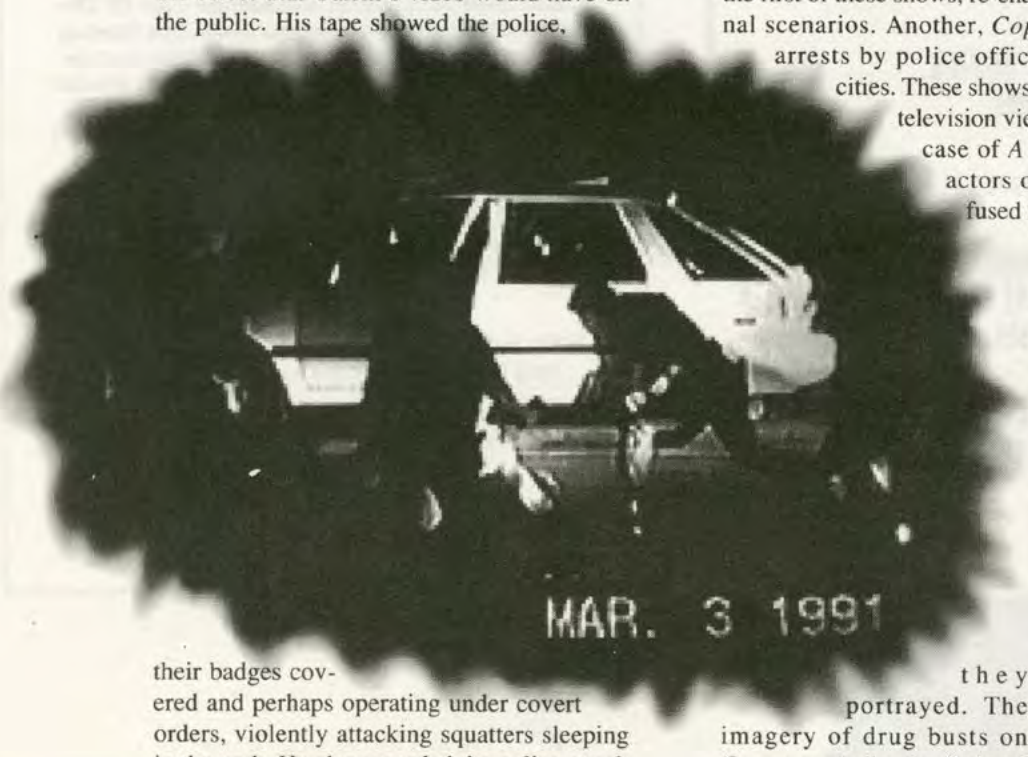
**Marty Mrotz** cover and pages 12–15
**Dan Trattler and Bob Whittinghill** contents page and pages 2–5
**Pat O'Donnell and Andy Soma** pages 1 and 11
**Seamus Malone** pages 6 and 7
**Fred Hickler** pages 8–10
**Michelle Pizzo** pages 16 and 17
vote quotes by **The X-Girlfriends**

# RODNEY KING AND THE UNDERMINING OF VIDEO ART

**AMERICAN VIEWERS** were shocked when the videotape of an apparently unjust and unwarranted police attack was broadcast in April '91. The ensuing awareness of police brutality inspired artists with renewed hope in the power of broadcast media. Foreshadowed by Paul Garrin's piece, Man With A Video Camera, an accidental documentation of the New York Police Department's unofficial raid on the homeless in Tompkins Square Park in 1988, the Rodney King tape initially generated national outrage, with talk of swift retribution for the officers' crimes. Instead, the King trial exemplified the sometimes futile impact of video documentation when presented to a wide audience.



During the 1980's, artists' groups had already begun to report their own analyses of news events on public access cable stations, without the effect that Garrin's video would have on the public. His tape showed the police, their badges covered and perhaps operating under covert orders, violently attacking squatters sleeping in the park. He also recorded the police attack on him when they discovered he was taping their actions. Garrin released the tape to the television networks and it was broadcast across the country, resulting in an internal investigation of the NYPD and a public statement by Mayor Ed Koch that he would be personally responsible for Garrin's safety. Home video cameras became potential tools for social change.

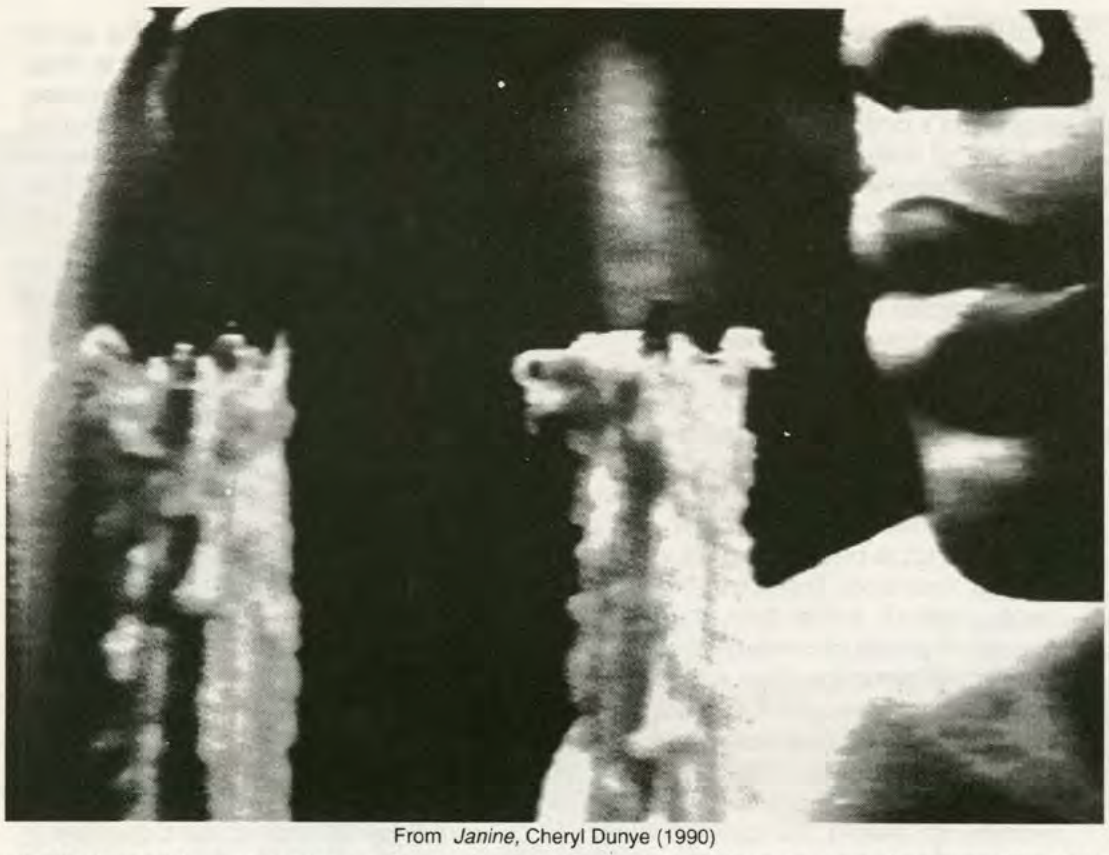



Around the same time television spawned several "true crime" shows. *A Current Affair*, among the first of these shows, re-enacts "real" criminal scenarios. Another, *Cops*, tapes "live" arrests by police officers in featured cities. These shows were unusual to television viewers and, in the case of *A Current Affair*, actors often were confused for the criminals they portrayed. The imagery of drug busts on *Cops* was similar the fictional drug busts of *Hill Street Blues*, *Miami Vice*, and other police dramas. This was the video vocabulary of the American people when the tape of Rodney King's assault was released to the networks.

Although it seemed most Americans were disgusted by a display of unnecessary force, the trial jury was successfully dissuaded from this inclination by the defense attorneys. In fact, many jurors admitted that the video played a key role in convincing them of the officers' innocence.

Relocating the case to Simi Valley, a white suburb in which many families have relatives on the police force, cannot entirely account for the jurors' reassessment and/or dismissal of the video document. The jurors were guided to do what television, especially television news, has repressed in American viewers for decades, to doubt the legitimacy of what they see. The defense dissected and analyzed each movement, replaying the cassette ad nauseam. The prosecution, however, relied heavily on the evidence of an unmanipulated playing of the tape. "As defense lawyers sought explanations for this or that baton swing or kick, the prosecutor, Mr. White, urged jurors simply to watch the tape and to believe their eyes."[1] During the slow, super-slow, and normal speed playing of the tape, the defense insisted that the image of King rolling on the ground beneath blows from batons was in reality an attempt by King to get up and, therefore, to resist arrest. Defense attorneys also used photographic stills from each frame of the video to further re-contextualize the tape. The poor quality of the recording as well as the jurors probable ignorance of video technology, most likely nurtured feelings of mistrust of the medium which television crime shows had already inspired. If the realistic enactment of murder and abduction on *A Current Affair* is false and the surreal docu-

Continued on page 10



From *Janine*, Cheryl Dunye (1990)

*the first amendment does not* **guarantee** *the right to receive federal* **support**

# Performance Video Genre Fusion

**PERFORMANCE ARTISTS** have been using video since the first portapacks were shipped to the U.S. over twenty years ago. Within the artistic milieu of the 1970s, video was seen by many artists as a natural extension of performance. As a reproducible medium with direct ties to popular culture, video fit easily into an ideology that shunned art as commodified object and celebrated a move out of the traditional gallery system. For artists like Eleanor Antin, Joan Jonas, Vito Acconci, William Wegman, and Bruce Nauman the qualities inherent in video were something to be investigated and integrated into performance as conceptual art.

Partly due to the novelty of the new medium, artists in those early years pushed video to its limits, investigating its qualities of time and sound as well as its ability to "witness" events. The end result was video that was so completely fused with performance, it became difficult to categorize. Consequently, this work was placed in its own genre and came to be known as "performance video."

Through the years, both video and performance have grown into separate genres, each with distinct identities. As opposed to the earlier fusion, very little work exists currently that walks the line between the two or challenges this segregation. Occasionally one or two channel video is used within a performance or a performance is created for video, but, for the most part, video is used by contemporary performance artists as a tool for straight documentation. In terms of its practical use, video offers the artist a document that serves several purposes; it can be used for self-critique and study, for granting purposes, and/or for self-promotion. In light of its base in time, video has the ability to provide a more suitable representation of a performance than still photography.

Of course, video can in no way reproduce the immediacy of performances intended for a stage venue, nor should it. On the other hand, is there a way to represent the concept of a performance in an engaging way through video? Is there a way to use video's qualities to actively support an artist's message? In this essay I will discuss three tapes that succeed in fusing performance and video while sustaining the integrity of each genre. While these tapes do include documents of performances, they also make successful use of elements specific to video as a medium.

In *Janine* (1990), Cheryl Dunye relates her early experiences as a young black lesbian. Through the narrative of her attraction to a high school friend, Janine, and her growing disillusionment with her friend's as well as her own values, the tape functions on many levels. Within this oral history, she touches on issues of race and identity, self-hate, and sexuality. For Dunye, this is her coming out story and, as a permanent document, it functions as a testament to her own self-empowerment.

As performance, her words are not strictly scripted, but flow freely as she remembers the events of her past. In conjunction with her personal testimony, she cuts in scenes of herself blowing out candles, which are then frozen in stills like memories, possibly alluding to the death of the past or, conversely, the birth of a new way of life. Through the simple use of a stationary video camera, a sense of intimacy is created that would be difficult to reproduce in a live venue.

In *The Spy: Hester Reeve Does the Doors* (1992), Suzie Silver uses the music video genre to create a tape that calls into question the authority of the male gaze. As Jesus, complete with beard, long hair and faces painted on her breasts, Hester Reeve lip sincs a hilarious, yet serious rendition of "The Spy." Behind her, a spectacular barrage of images from popular culture, including T & A films originally intended for men, become transmuted and subverted into homoerotic images aimed at women.

From *The Spy: Hester Reeve Does the Doors*, Suzie Silver (1992)

Through a combination of images and sound, the tape plays on male heterosexual desires and fears (ie: women as mystery and danger). Lyrics such as "I know your deepest secret fears," and "I know the words that you want to hear," combined with menacing images of bats, serpents, and a Jesus in drag, alternately seduce and repel the viewer with a fascinating spectacle. As karaoke with a twist, this tape refuses to accept for women lack of power as an option, and turns the symbols of male authority against themselves.

Partly due to its collaborative nature, The Spy is a balanced fusion of both media and is not easily classified as strictly performance or video art. It inhabits the grey area between the two.

For General Idea, a multimedia collaborative group from Canada, *Shut the Fuck Up* (1985) functions not only as a documentation of a performance, but also represents themes prevalent in their work. Using a traditional talking head/documentary-style format, text, found footage, and slides and footage of their own performance, the artists explore, with ambivalence, the artist's relationship to the media that attempts to define him or her. Using banal quotes such as "Those that live to please, must please to live." and "It doesn't matter what they say as long as they're talking," the irony of the artist's position both inside and outside of culture, as dependent on, but independent from, society is illuminated. Moreover, as a "made-for-television videotape...to examine the effectiveness of their work," this tape demonstrates its own ambiguous relationship to mainstream media.

On another level, the tape serves to document their performance *XXX Blue*, a parody of Yves Klein's infamous performance painting. Using stock footage from Klein's performance, they contextualize their deviation from it. In this sense the tape becomes a visual catalog of their work, illustrating the concepts behind it, rather than picturing it literally. In place of a video document of their performance they substitute a description: three giant stuffed poodles are dipped in blue paint and used as brushes to create three large "X"s. Moreover, in spite of problems with the mainstream media, the tape ironically comes with a complete press packet, ready for distribution.

As I've argued, each of these tapes represents a fusion of video and performance, becoming not only a document of performance, but also serving to support the underlying concepts of the performance through the use of video strategies. At this point in time, few performance artists are making extensive use of video as a tool. The question now becomes: is it necessary to provide granting panels and time arts programmers with more traditional

From *Shut the Fuck Up*, General Idea (1985)

performance documents rather than "performance-video"? Moreover, will this fusion create problems for the performer in terms of authorship if the work is a collaboration between a video artist and a performance artist? If enough artists continue to work in these areas, the next twenty years may generate some response.

**Tobi Johnson** is the Director of Programs and Events at the Center for New Television.

*Rodney King, continued*

ment of drug busts on *COPS* is true, it is not surprising that the jury was easily manipulated to an unpopular reading of the tape. The assessment proposed by the defense is in accord with the jurors previous understanding of the medium. The jurors abandoned their trust of news media's assessment, which, since the censored and decontextualized coverage of the Gulf War, has been considered suspect by many Americans.[2]

Other influential tactics were used by the defense. Overtly racist and desensitizing methods were employed by the defense, such as describing Rodney King as "growling like a bear", and a theatrical swinging of a metal police baton while cross-examining witnesses and addressing the jury. Though displaying large color photographs of King's injured face and using a lighted model skull to point out locations of his fractures might seem to favor the case of the prosecution, the defense used this evidence to its advantage, making light of the seriousness of the injuries By controlling the other possible forms of evidence that the prosecution could have used to influence the jury towards a guilty verdict, the defendants affirmed that they had nothing to hide, that their actions were not criminal. The prosecution's complete reliance upon the videotape and testimonies of several officers who believed excessive force was used made their case appear weak, especially when countered by the visually overwhelming display of technological, psychological, and moral truths of the defense. "You don't see an example of uncontrolled police brutality. It's not there. You see a controlled application of baton strikes for the very obvious reason of getting this man into custody."[3]

During the riots which followed the acquittal of the LA policemen, the attack of a Caucasian truck driver by African-American youths was captured on video. Again, national television news presented this tape with shock and indignation. Despite the ruling in the King case, the validity of this document was not questioned by reporters or the public. Since fear of black on white violence is perpetuated in our society, it seems unlikely that this videotape will be successfully manipulated to free the suspects.

The undermining of the video tape should be disconcerting to artists who use film and video for two reasons. First, many artist collectives have devoted their work to challenging the public's understanding of documentation as objective truth without recognizable effect. Paper Tiger, for example, has devoted itself exclusively to a critique of media and popular culture. *Unpacking a 'Revolution in a Box'*[4] targeted a news series hosted by Ted Koppel in which he celebrated the contribution home video cameras have made to news reporting. The host, in addition to analyzing the social message of the show, contrasted Koppel's pseudo-coverage of politically active video with information about organizations such as DIVA TV and Deep Dish TV, whose work defies the objectivity of home recording that Koppel endorses. The assumption has been that the public is willing to accept what the media displays as truth and believe it to be the authority qualified to determine truth. The King verdict demonstrates that the public's loyalty is unstable, but that they turn farther right when presented with an alternative. Second, individual artists have produced didactic work with the understanding that people will believe proofs shown on a screen or television. Video artist Norman Cowie[5] chronicled information given by the government and news media during the Gulf War, revealing to the audience, in found news footage, that the government was not telling 'the truth.' However, the King case has shown that some documentation can be disputed

The dominant ideology, in the form of the defense, has taken these two opposing tactics and used them to their own ends. The work of Paper Tiger, Norman Cowie, and other artists with similar agendas provides a necessary alternative to the propaganda delivered by the national news media. However, if video proof alone is not enough to sustain a liberal understanding of a violent action, how can an understanding of that proof be changed from conservative to liberal? What strategies remain for artists working in these mediums who wish to invoke social change? The prosecution, and perhaps artists as well, have underestimated both the resourcefulness of their opponents and the susceptibility of the public.

By Cylena Simonds

1. "Los Angeles Policemen Acquitted in Taped Beating", Seth Mydans, New York Times National, Thursday, April 30, 1992

2. WNPR News reported in February that images of the Scud missiles exploding in mid-air supposedly after successfully targeted by Patriot missiles was a deliberate attempt to mislead the public. Contrary to these depictions, the Scud missiles were very unstable and often exploded in the air before reaching their target without any defending attack on them by the U.S.

3. "Los Angeles Policemen Acquitted in Taped Beating", Seth Mydans, New York Times National, Thursday, April 30, 1992

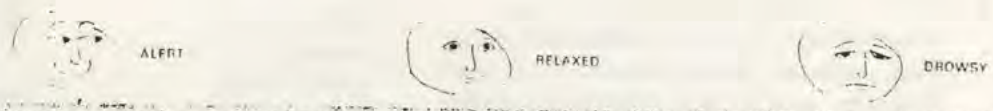
4. *Unpacking a 'Revolution in a Box'*, Don Rabbit, Paper Tiger, 1990

5. *Gulf War Tapes*, Norman Cowie, 1991

As we go along, (who knows?) an idea may occur in this talk. I have no idea whether one will or not. If one does, let it. Regard it as something seen momentarily, as though from a window while traveling. If across Kansas, then, of course, Kansas. Arizona is more interesting, almost too interesting, especially for a New Yorker who is being interested in spite of himself in everything. Now he knows he needs the Kansas in him. Kansas is like nothing on earth, and for a New Yorker very refreshing. It is like an empty glass, nothing but wheat, or is it corn? Does it matter which? Kansas has this about it: at any instant, one may leave it, and whenever one wishes one may return to it.

Or you may leave it forever and never return to it, for we possess nothing. Our poetry now is the realization that we possess nothing. Anything therefore is a delight (since we do not possess it) and thus need not fear its loss. We need not destroy the past: it is gone; at any moment, it might reappear and seem to be and be the present. Would it be a repetition? Only if we thought we owned it, but since we don't, it is free and so are we. Most anybody knows about the future and how uncertain it is.

John Cage
*Lecture on Nothing*
1959




# Dancing Queen

There was a queen or should I say a man in queen's clothing? I remember her clapping flamenco style, whirling around the guests, buzzing with enthusiasm; occasionally stinging mock and scorn with savvy. The droning of these evenings has never left my ears. I was a guest at the hive this night, it was to be my last evening there.

I tried to be small. I smiled in reaction to other's faces. The sloshing of drinks and swishing of ornate finery left no room in my ears for words. I was not thinking in words. I had a foggy focus, everything floating by—as in a daydream, but this of course was night.

I was swaying in the rhythm of these forms and faces. The music of clever sentences and the beautiful lilting responses. I sipped the honeywine. Gulping in my throat, it throttled out sound—a liquid scream. No!.....please. I side-eyed and whewed. They were all looking at the queen. The wave of relief undulated my mouth in shy smiles and my eyes in meandering glances. The motion made me heady, I was swimming from face to face.

I lit upon her piles of white hair, and flickered down, resting on her commanding eyes. She was *looking* at me. She was looking at *me*. I gushed red. Pivoting to the other guests for assurance, I realized they were all ticking to me and tocking back to her. My life-pendulum swung the seconds out in hours. I stopped swaying.

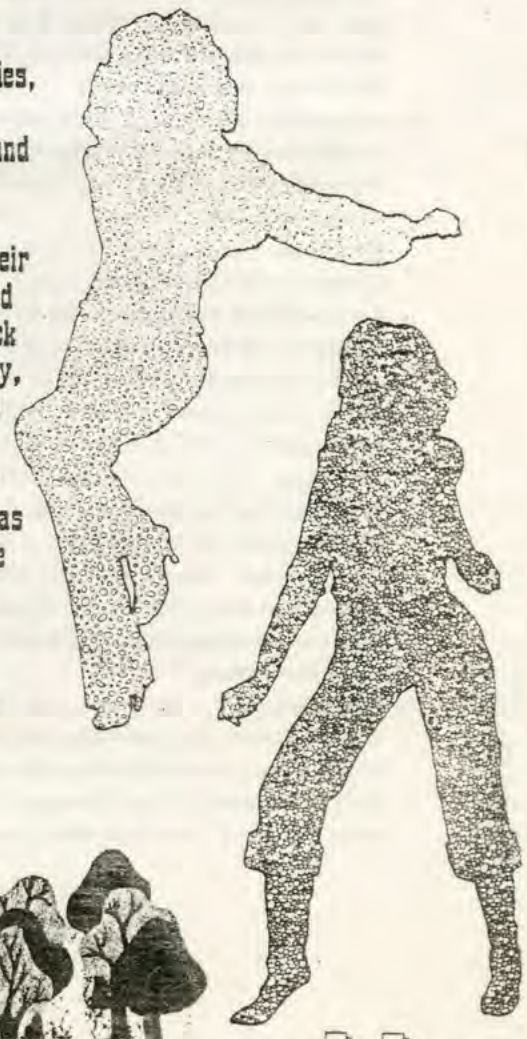
She thought me to be a dancer. My nervous fidgeting an internalized rhythm. A sense for the motion of emotion. I should share my gift, my body with all. I should let them all flow into my foggy rivers and turn them out gracefully to the great sea of touched souls. I shall dance for them...

Yesss, I flushed pink with pleasure. I puffed my plumage out and stretching my legs long, I strutted towards the center. I would mate with all, warmed with their admiration. This heat felt much like love. I was a love bird soaring out of my cold cage. I was shedding my feathers and they floated upwards as soft pink clouds. Layers of thought and clothing, exposed briefly, drifted to the ground. I felt a warmth grazing my nakedness like a hand. A wind breezed through my opened legs and whooshed my spine up. I opened my mouth to let hot shining stars sing out.

The thud sounded much like a bird that the wind has forced upon a skyscraper. Sometimes starlings litter the ground on very windy days. But this time I was alone. Only me and the hard cabbage that struck my head forcing me back to the night world of cold stone. My canine tooth had cut my lip. As I was tonguing the blood, I was struck again and again by the feasting remnants and snarling feasters. Bread, candles, hot brandies, chilled wines, bones originally intended for the dogs. As I collided and was being covered with searing insults and stinging bits of food, I became aware of my nakedness. Their icy laughter stopped me cold blue and frozen—the instant a deer's eyes lock with headlights on an empty highway, the eyes of a storm, that crystal cold moment hung between us.

She clapped her hands gay gypsy style and they all looked away. It was as if they continued driving down the road leaving me injured but alive. Alive enough to feel the burning of humiliation. A weighty tail hung between my legs as I limped into the forest of darkness.

**Su Montoya**



Sonic Works Festival

# Extending The Instrument

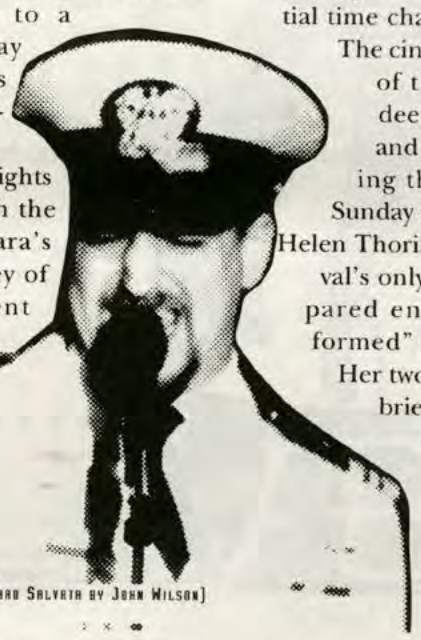
DiverseWorks Artspace
and
Commerce Street Artists Warehouse
Houston
January 30 - February 2, 1992

**SonicWorks,** a four-day music and performance festival held recently in Houston's DiverseWorks Artspace and Commerce Street Artists' Warehouse, was Houston's largest new music/performance event since New Music America in 1986. These American composer/performers, assembled here with the theme of "extending the instrument," presented a broad range of deeply personal and idiosyncratic styles, offering festival-goers ample opportunity for workshops, panels, and after-hours discourse.

Friday's standing-room-only event at DiverseWorks began with solos, then duets, from computer wizard Richard Zvonar (Los Angeles) and puckish, punkish vocalist Pamela Z (San Francisco). Zvonar relies on custom Macintosh software and a rackful of high-end digital delays and processors to improvise with materials sampled from a variety of audio sources. In his solo segment, these consisted of his own vocal drones and breaths, dialog from the TV series *Twin Peaks*, and fragments from a country music CD. In her solo pieces, invariably short, simple songs, Z establishes an ostinato (some combination of vocal chant, yelp, or beat from a brandished percussion device) with her own footswitch-controlled delays and harmonizers, then adds additional vocals on top. The two produce much stronger work in collaboration, in which Zvonar, more effective in an accompanist's role than as a soloist, allows Z to break out of the simple phrasing and timbral pallette she arrives at on her own.

By comparison, Thursday's festival-opening presentation by Shelley Hirsch and David Weinstein (New York) was technically very straightforward. The strength of their performance comes from Hirsch's engaging array of vocal personas, from *(in Haiku Lingo)* which resembles the keening of a Bulgarian yodeler to gut-wrenched gargles to the histrionic pillowtalk of a Southern belle, driven cooly and ably by Weinstein's non-sequenced synthesizer and drum machine. Like Diamanda Galas, Hirsch relies on three microphones for flexibility in placement in the stereo field as well as variety in echo. Wringing and jingling her hands and feet, Hirsch provided the most emotionally-charged purely vocal performace of the festival.

For infectious energy, however, it would be difficult to match percussionist/vocalist David Moss (Vermont and Berlin), who divided his half of Saturday's performance between what he called "the crazy, idiosyncratic thing that I do" vocally and excursions behind a mountain of trap and steel drums, pancaked cymbals, electric zither, guitar, and battery-operated toys. His vocal style consists of a steady-state, mid-range "burble" punctuated by basso rumbles, falsetto squeals, patches of Italian-esque gibberish, and non sequitur quotations from pop songs. The evening's highlight occurred at the end of his set when Joan LaBarbara (Santa Fe) joined him for a duet improvisation. Begun with hands on each others' shoulders, Inuit-style, their tense, hocketed heavings (with heavy-set Moss appearing ready to overwhelm the gamely determined LaBarbara) gave way to a delightful interplay between these two masters of improvisation and non-narrative discourse.



(Photo of Chad Salvata by John Wilson)

After being drawn to such heights in her improvisation with the ebullient Moss, LaBarbara's solo set, largely a medley of pieces from her recent Lovely release *Sound Paintings*, was a disappointment. Her latest compositions rely almost entirely upon multi-tracked layers of her own voice: low, fried drones, high-pitched warbles, jungle animal sounds, etc. In concert, LaBarbara sings one track of this "live" to the nearly indistinguishable, frozen accompaniment of the other tracks on DAT. LaBarbara's last piece, light a capella impressions of European and Asian languages one hears as a cafe-sitting international performer, fell flat, her efforts eclipsed by those of more impassioned performers heard during the festival's previous days.

Armed with an array of wooden pointers, a handful of spoons, a disposable lighter, and a very limber tongue, Jerry Hunt (Denton, Texas) ambled through three contiguous pieces in which his physical gesticulations are picked up by infared sensors and processed by a tabletop pile of homebrew electronic gear. The cause-effect relationship between physical motion and sound was most apparent in the second of these pieces, *Bitom: fixture (topograph)*, in which filtered white noise produced by the machines "reacted" to Hunt's tracing the limbs of a man seated in a chair with a light pen. Hunt's distinctive gestural vocabulary, a page or two from which David Byrne may have taken note, remains vivid long after any sense of identification with the environment created on stage (or evoked through impenetrable titles and program notes).

Connecting with the audience was absolutely no problem for The Art Guys, Inc. (Houston), whose playful vignettes corrupt the conventions inherent in a performance situation until "they're not quite right." Twisting the festival's theme, Jack Massing began the evening with...*Where They Ain't*, a piece for synthesizer and "remote performer," who, with the assistance of a long rope and pulleys from the opposite end of the stage, plops a baseball glove along the keys of a Casio keyboard. Not to be outdone, Mike Galbraith's solo "percussion piece," "Set The Table," finds his long, lean frame hunkered down, strutting slowly in a suit stitched neck to ankle with thrift store china, culminating in a cacaphonic plunge. The Art Guys' mastery of wit, humor, and ultimately, poignancy (in a harmonica/rattle elegy for Martin Luther King) was a welcome close to Friday's performance.

Spanning the 85' length of an artist's warehouse studio, Ellen Fullman's *Long Stringed Instrument* is the most literal embodiment of the festival's theme. Fullman (Austin) and her two assistants caressed its metal strings with slow, deliberate gestures, creating for the rapt audience the slowing of experiential time characteristic of meditative states. The cinderblock walls and high ceilings of the studio contributed to the deep resonances of the slow swirls and subtle beats of the strings during their 50- minute performance Sunday afternoon.

Helen Thorington (New York) was the festival's only guest whose sounds were prepared entirely in advance and "performed" through speakers in the hall. Her two tape pieces were prefaced by a brief statement of her professional biography and intentions: a wish to separate sounds from their sources in order to create unlikely juxtapositions of contributions from animals and nature as well as from recordings of music of diverse types. Though trained in literature, unable to read conventional musical notation, and reluctant to call her efforts "music," Thorington nonetheless creates very "musical" textures with her aural collages, possessing an innate sense of form and balance.

After each evening of concerts at DiverseWorks, a second wave by local artists ensued in the markedly looser environs of COMMERCE STREET ARTIST'S WAREHOUSE , permitting the crush of audience members to walk, talk, smoke, and drink during events lasting well into the next mornings. Highlights included Chad Salvata and E-coli's percussion-driven operetta *Final Broadcast*, the dreamy, electronically-processed drones of Bonnie McNairn and Jim Wilson's *Voice of Eye*, Static Ecstasy's space-engulfing sight-sound spectacle, and the incited circus of Jack Turner and Chemical Wedding's *Scream of Consciousness*. The breaks between scheduled performances also allowed for improvisations from festival headliners such as Moss, Z, Hirsch, LaBarbara, as well as Isabelle Ganz and festival organizer Elise Kermani.

All told, the four days of **SonicWorks** provided a rare opportunity for performances of a type not ordinarilly sponsored by the city's prevailing academic and cultural institutions. The festival's capacity crowds and buoyant spirit should put to rest once and for all the notion that there is insufficient support for new music in Houston.

Geoff Spradley

# The Lamb of God Hotel

## Karen Finley

The Kitchen
New York City
May 3, 1992

Karen Finley is like a pole vaulter who has set records so consistently that we are willing to buy any product she endorses. So anything she produces cannot really be considered a failure. When one stops painting sticks green and starts producing cucumbers, it almost doesn't matter that some are more delicious than others.

Kitchen-goers were disappointed that *The Lamb of God Hotel* wasn't the monsoon of hilarity that *The Theory of Total Blame* was, but you can't expect slow pink-on-pink recuperation to be as entertaining as shock treatment.

*The Lamb of God Hotel* is thoroughly post-modern, its characters would only be comic books if abstract expressionist slashes of ink were characters instead, things with mouths, eyes, legs, etc. What makes the foursome post-modern is. that set against a beautiful unchanging backdrop of tree sticks and blue lights, we're never sure who the characters are—all we know is that we're seeing a performance—just like in *We Keep Our Victims Ready*. KF moves with needle quickness from unnamed character to unnamed character, glittering like fruity colors off a trout's scales.

Andy Soma's character walks into a space with a suitcase (connoting travel, desire) and we are told woodenly by the other 3 (all the dialogue is on-purpose wooden) that he is at a hotel run buy a mother, a daughter and a son, or 3 people who are pretending to have such a relationship. That's what makes the wooden remarks so fascinating, wondering who is taking on these characters and why are they making them say what they say. Hapi Phace and Helen Schumacher tell us their plights plainly right away—she can't have any kids due to an illegal abortion and he's HIV+. They are ghosts from We Keep Our Victims Ready—sometimes they say the actual lines. The two women in the play are actually directed to sound like KF in declaiming their lines. Andy Soma's character is attracted to the woman who can't have kids in the same way, I suspect, as we are driven to participate in a tragi-trashy scenario because a) it is already 3-D scripture and all we have to do is step in; b) it is sometimes easier to stop clinging to the edge of the swimming pool of shame and trash and let ourselves float in awful oily guilt.

In the end, we think we're seeing a memorial service for Hapi Phace's character, but it turns out to only be a dress rehearsal directed by the character himself.

Many writers I admire have a blemish of misogyny on their psychscape. What I admire is the way they let this blemish stand without trying to cover it with cheesy PC makeup. KF's misogyny takes the form of the pity she surely feels for those men who, residents of the all-male emotional wishbone of homosexuality, are broken by the disease that has anointed them into heroism. It is a delicious perversity, similar to reading Mailer's or Burroughs' ravings against women, to see KF singing lullabies to the swaddled babes rocking in decimation's cradle.

My feeling about the play, there is no actual hotel. There are only three people playing a crippled game, who need a 4th character to make their game whole. The play which we get to see is the arrival and acceptance of the 4th character and the ensuing consequences up to a point.

**Thax Douglas**

---

# Saints and Singing

## Sweet Jane Productions

Cafe Voltaire
Chicago
June 13-27, 1992

In 1927, Gertrude Stein announced to a journalist that she was a genius because in her work " the outer world becomes the inner world and the inner world becomes the outer, and the outward is no longer outward but inward and the inward is no longer inward but outward." She was right.

Her plays do just that thing, and because they do it, words are made into a kind of music and painting. Her plays and operas are performance art scripts for the very brave. Ellen Beckerman, the founder of Sweet Jane Productions and the director of Stein's SAINTS AND SINGING at Cafe Voltaire (June 13-27) is very brave, and so her adaptation is music and painting and short and strange and very lovely.

SAINTS AND SINGING, starkly staged at Cafe Voltaire, is a very lesbian story. Two "Twins" (Amy Landecker and Amy Moon Mathieu) dress in diaphanous white, and play and kiss and love each other until their union is split by the marriage of Twin #1 (Amy Moon). The marriage is orchestrated by two twisted clergy-type women, one a"Priest"/dominatrix dressed in a bustier (Michelle Nance) and a clerical collar and the other a clownish "Deacon"/widow caressing a clay pigeon (Jennifer Bradley). The bourgeois mask of married tea-party politesse drives the Twin to madness; she kills herself with the lemon knife and becomes a Saint, rediscovering her beloved Twin and triumphing over the evil pair who tore them apart. The evil pair go mad, the saints win in each other's arms. "Saints and singing which had a good beginning and now has a very good ending."

This story is presented visually on a stage covered with white sheets. Things are representations of themselves: handfuls of berries are purplish glitter flung briefly in the air, a wedding is a baptism with wine, a veil pinned on, and being carried, protesting and terrified, across the stage to be arranged like a wedding cake bride. Madness and death are the voices of tormenters hidden behind white shades and the twins are trapped until they pull the cloth ;away and become Saints on the empty stage.

The words correspond to these images, but only in the vaguest sense. The words are Stein's private landscape, which I always imagine as her conversations with Alice B. Toklas because they're so cryptically romantic and repetitive. Beckerman makes the words into her own landscape with this melodramatic, surrealistic morality tale. The words become the score of an opera, sung in a separate language, a constant melodic chant that adds mysteriously to the story we understand in the actresses' pantomimes, performed as if the words they said corresponded exactly to their actions. The story becomes a dream, flowing from monologic arias to quartets screamed or woven quietly together, and because the words are American, layers of meaning pile up in odd and idiosyncratic ways.

In the end, it is all very entertaining, inexplicably coherent and fortifying. As Stein says in Act I, Scene I: "We have been baffled by harmony."

**Carol [illegible]**

[photo of [illegible] Stein by W.G. Rogers]

# Rio Negro

George Lewis and Douglas Ewart

Randolph Street Gallery
Chicago
May 8 - July 25, 1992

**I. In which Ames and I make fools of ourselves.**

Ames and I visited *Rio Negro* by accident. Waiting for a rehearsal, we wandered into the back room of Randolph StreetGallery where the sound/kinetic sculpture was living. We accidently turned *Rio Negro* into a performance.

Were the kinetic and sound elements of the installation motion-sensitive? Wondering, we ran really fast and suddenly stopped and remained frozen, to detect if our movements were affecting the installation. We ran in circles around the spinning bamboo rainsticks, our shoes crunching and kicking up leaves which were scattered on the floor, darted towards and away from the rainsticks. We listened hard. We decided the installation was automated. This seemed confirmed by a computer we discovered glowing behind a curtain, displaying commands as it cycled through them.

I wasn't particularly disappointed by this.

**II. In which I turn thoughts into sentences.**

ONE MONTH LATER

I am sitting and breathing hard, just having bicycled here from the lake. In the room with me are the three motorized rainsticks on their pedestals. They are hollow bamboo sticks, about six feet long, filled with some granular material. When they spin around, they make a sound which I imagine not to be unlike the sound of rain upon the tropical forest canopy.

I am sitting and my heart is thumping. A woman emerges from behind the sheet concealing the computer, and I think of Dorothy standing before The Great Oz. "Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain." The woman walks through the room, intent on some piece of business, and she does not even see me sitting there. I feel sneaky. Like a spy. Like part of the installation.

I am sitting and sweating a little in this cool room, and the rainsticks make me think of propellers, the kind WWI pilots pulled on to start their single-prop planes. I am thinking about those planes flying low over the rain forest, the blades of the propellers mulching the forest canopy like airborne lawnmowers.

I am starting to get a little nervous. What was soothing at first (rain, the twirling sticks, the gong and thump of the soundtrack, the gentle glowing computer) now becomes an ominous whir of tiny electric motors. The air goes a little stale. I look at the computer again. It looks old. I wonder that a computer can look old. I leave the room.

**III. In which nothing happens.**

In the end, *Rio Negro* denies access. Whether you are trying to dance with or find some peace in it, it keeps you away, grinding onward like a bulldozer whether you are there or not. It is a reminder that the old and the new are doomed to be in conflict. It will not come out and play with you. It will not lull.

It will transplant you, temporarily, to a landscape that is at once familiar and alien. The scenery is pretty, but you can't quite get the machinery out of the viewfinder. Your vacation photos are ruined.

The rocks huddled on the floor and the bamboo sticks pathetically arranged in the corners of the room can never hope to compete with the sterile gallery walls, the glossy tile floor. The poorly concealed man behind the curtain is always there. We choose not to see him. It's easier that way.

HEN THOMPSON

---

# Temporary Girl

Lisa Kotin

Club Lower Links
Chicago
April 11, 1992

In fairness to this work, I have to admit that *Temporary Girl* was the tightest, most consistently entertaining performance piece I've ever seen. Lisa Kotin-while no Jerry Lewis-displayed great talent as a comic actress.

Unfortunately, in content it never reached a depth beyond what you'd find in a CATHY cartoon.

*Temporary Girl* was a mixture of five character sketches performed by Kotin alone and five skits on film featuring Kotin with other actors. Kotin played an office temp at a financial publishing house whose flexible employment status and access to copy machines and postage meters permit her to go to auditions and stalk theatrical agents so she can get acting jobs. That's the kind of premise on which musical comedies are built; and apart from the film segments shown to the audience while she changed costumes and her not doing any singing, that's what it was.

In the film and in much of the performance, Kotin cast herself as the romantic hero. She was the only one hip or brave enough to feel alienated or demeaned doing office work.

Kotin dishes her co-workers and immediate supervisors in catty, unsympathetic skits while completely avoiding any examination or criticism against the institutions that put them there in the first place. Instead, Kotin did CATHY-esque bits about chocolate, *Jenny Craig*, shopping sprees, hysterical pains, being pushed toward marriage and feeling socially obligated to gush over babies.

At a time when corporate Amerika is teeming with genuinely heroic temp and company workers exercising subversive options like absenteeism, disinformation and sabotage, Kotin's character doesn't get any closer to anarchy than stealing her co-workers' doughnuts.

Kotin is cute, funny, loveable, and consistently a joy to watch. Ultimately, though, *Temporary Girl's* stories of alienation, anxiety and ambition succeeded only as a vehicle for displaying her impressive acting skills so it sucked.

JOHN LEIBRAND

Nancy Reilly

# The Gangster and the Barmaid & A Professional High

Club Lower Links
Chicago
May 29, 1992

Lower Links continued its Out-of-Towner Series when it brought New Yorker and Wooster Group-ite Nancy Reilly to Chicago to perform two solo works, *The Gangster and the Barmaid*, and *A Professional High*. Before the performance, she described the pieces as chapters from her forthcoming novel, also called *A Professional High*.

The premise behind *The Gangster and the Barmaid* was: what happens on Christmas Eve in an underwear bar in New York City? Ms. Reilly plays the barmaid, replete in black lingerie. It is a relentless little piece of theater, about 45 minutes long, where the barmaid's chatter is interrupted only by the author's voice, which acts as a kind of narrator. Ms. Reilly quickly and adeptly leaps from barmaid to narrator; her competent acting and the sudden textual shifts from first to third person lend a hyperkinetic, schizophrenic atmosphere to the underwear bar.

Unfortunately, the effect is numbing rather than engrossing. The lack of character and plot development, and the inattention to visual detail make the piece entirely dependent on the technical ability of the actress, and the cleverness of the writing. Neither are capable of sustaining the extended scene.

The second (more interesting and far shorter) piece, *A Professional High*, seems to follow the same character to the docks, where she has an argument with her slimeball boyfriend. For this scene/chapter, Ms. Reilly is seated in a chair, with one foot propped on a fish tank.

As the character in the scene is first threatened and then thrown from the dock, Ms. Reilly's black pump shod foot is first delicately floated and eventually drowned in the tank. It is a moment of visual poetry that plays nicely against the text, the thoughts of the panicked woman, the cool description of the narrator. What Ms. Reilly seems to be saying about the position of women (especially in relation to men) in our society gets summed up in that teetering, uncomfortable, nearly submerged pump.

The pity is that this intricate and brief moment cannot support the whole evening. Rather, it shows something for which the entire work could strive. Present throughout the evening was the specter of her forthcoming novel, which held promise of a cohesion that the performance did not provide.

HEN THOMPSON

*the best prescription for better* **health** *in* **america** *is a strong, daily dose of personal responsibility*

Diamanda Galas

# The Singer

Cabaret Metro
Chicago
Spring 1992

photo-Tom Caravaglia

Re-essentializing of the blues from entertainment to action, from lament to a cry of outrage-the performer from tourist attraction to the voice of an experience

The t-shirt sales were unnerving

Vocal/keyboard interaction ranging from a sweetly mourning to blues riffs as fisticuffs. Similar to her volume-vocal exchanges in the past, though utilizing an established, practically culturally ingrained musical form which can hardly handle the load—bursting apart when it no longer has the strength to maintain the intensity, but never losing sight of discipline

Chairs at the Metro, set up on the floor like a classical recital, audience participation in the show will be internal, personal.

An intensity of concentration—focus of an overwhelming energy

Minimal effects on vocals and piano, emphasis on performance

Historical reference of the Blues—the music of an oppressed people, appropriated, homogenized to a song and dance for mass white teen appeal

Anger

Devil Devil Devil

Control

Devil Devil Devil

STEVE MCCALL

Split Britches

LaMama
New York
May 7-23, 1992

# LESBIANS WHO KILL

News stories of the arrest of Aileen Wuornos, a Florida lesbian accused of murdering six men, provided inspiration for Split Britches' ***Lesbians Who Kill***, written by Deb Margolin and performed by Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver. Although Wuornos, a prostitute with a long history of sexual and physical abuse, has steadfastly maintained that she acted in self-defense, the prosecution - and the media - portrayed her as a man-hater and used her lesbianism as a motive for the killings. Having been convicted of one of the murders, Wuornos has been sentenced to die in the electric chair.

Indisputably a response to the Wuornos case, ***Lesbians Who Kill*** resisted re-enacting the murders or telling Wuornos' life story. Instead, the play was a rumination on issues raised by the case, regarding what motivates a woman to consider committing an act of violence.

Weaver, as May, and Shaw, as June, played a couple struggling with their own isolation and victimization as women. Their pent-up anger had become so intense that, as May said, "You can want to kill someone ... You can murder someone in your thoughts." Much of the play takes place in May and June's car, where they must wait out lightning storms, mimicked to great effect by Howard Thies' lighting. Their frequently-struck rural home was depicted in a black-and-white backdrop (painted by Nancy Bardawil and Matthew Owens), its sky recalling the tornado-prone Kansas of The Wizard of Oz. To pass the time, May and June played word games and a charade in which one must guess what male celebrity the other is fantasizing about killing. They planned murders they (probably) do not intend to commit. Then, in a plot line borrowed from *The Brothers Karamazov*, a radio news report informed them that an actual murder had taken place: were they guilty for just having wished it so? Is murdering someone "in your thoughts" the same as really doing it?

Shaw and Weaver's languorous exploration of their characters told us at least as much about May and June's relationship as it did about their involvement, wishful or otherwise, in the killings in question. They were equally comfortable, and convincing, expressing tenderness, such as that conveyed via turning costume changes into (usually modest) onstage stripteases, and conducting barbed lovers' quarrels ("I'm going to lock your cats out all night and hope they get lost, then I'm going to put your snow globe collection in the garbage in another county"). May and June's word games spilled over into the rest of the dialogue, which was filled with puns and free associations that allowed Shaw and Weaver to stretch from hysterically funny to genuinely poignant, from sultry to slapstick.

Typical of Split Britches productions, Shaw and Weaver continued their dialogue by bursting periodically into song (or lip-synch). They subverted the heterosexual promise of Frank Sinatra and other classic crooners into fond expressions of May and June's butch-femme romance. Not particularly talented as singers, their persistence in singing forms a brash parody of musical theatre. Without slighting the cleverness of Laka Daisical's musical direction, overuse turned some musical interludes into distraction rather than illumination.

***Lesbians Who Kill*** remained most effective when it described the level of frustration that every woman might reach in a misogynist society. The play was a work-in-progress. Shaw and Weaver found that in studying the Wuornos case and other recent, similarly sensationalized cases of violent crimes committed by lesbians, they were able to better understand their own feelings of anger when, for example, they were harassed by men on the street. They wrote, "In our work in Split Britches, we've tried not to co-opt the experiences of others for political and theatrical effect. We look to where our own images and histories intersect with the issue ... (we're) looking for our own desire and impulse to kill that comes from our own images of abuse in our daily lives."

It is important to recall that ***Lesbians Who Kill*** is hardly a unique expression of women's rage. Women-created female characters using violence (as opposed to male fantasies like the villainous bisexual murderess in *Basic Instinct*) have surfaced in feminist feature films over the last decade, from Marleen Gorris' *A Question of Silence* and Lizzie Borden's *Born in Flames*, to the more recent *Thelma and Louise* and *Fried Green Tomatoes*. In each work, violence, while not advocated, is depicted as the women's only way out of an oppressive or threatening situation. In general, each of these works has been received with pleasure by audiences of women who have found their images cathartic - and, not surprisingly, with ire from men, who found these works to be threatening, or politically irresponsible. *Lesbians Who Kill* contributed not only a lesbian perspective to this debate, but also an exploration of the catharsis such images may bring to May and June's empowerment, and also our own.

SPELL MISOGYNY RIGHT OR I'LL KILL THIS MAN -- Split Britches' Lois Weaver (LEFT) AND PEGGY SHAW (RIGHT) HAVE SOME NASTY FANTASIES AS MAY AND JUNE, A LESBIAN COUPLE SCORNED BY MEN, IN Lesbians Who Kill AT THE CLUB AT LA MaMa E.T.C.

*photo by amy meadow*

CYNTHIA CHRIS

# Lisa Kron

Randolph Street Gallery
Chicago, IL
June 5, 1992

Lisa Kron is a very funny person. I thoroughly enjoyed her performance at RSG. Really, I did. I thought she was funny from the minute she started the show. And she's talented, well trained, and charming, too. I liked the whole show.

Really, I did. I wouldn't say so if I didn't mean it.

It's not that it went in one ear and out the other, either. I remember lots of it, even now. I'm still singing the Lesbian Barbie commercial. I can still picture her first headshot which she trustingly shared with us. It was a truly frightening photo. I could probably still list each and every one of the props which she used to great advantage, illustrating the ludicrous world in which we live. I dearly value the memory of her reading from the Modess instructional pamphlet for young ladies. It was so sleep-over, so actual, yet so absurd.

It's not like she pretended to be anything she wasn't. She thinks of herself as the lesbian Garrison Keilor. She said so herself. She thanked a colleague for helping build her "nice little set."

She could really sing. Really. And could she ever relate to an audience I've rarely seen performers who had such a knack for putting everyone at ease immediately, an ability she could only have gotten from years of experience. I mean, I liked her. I enjoyed the show. Really, I did. I would go see her again in a minute.

It's not like she didn't have a concept, either. Her concept was so smooth, so built in, you could hardly tell it was there, like the professionalism which permeated the piece. It was so simple, I can hardly put it into words. She's a lesbian. Get it?

OK, it's not JUST that she's a lesbian. It's that she wants her chance at fame and fortune, but she's a lesbian. She wants to entertain everybody, but she's a lesbian. She would be making a living in traditional venues if she were willing and able to hide her sexuality. At RSG, you can see heteros and homos perform. On Johnny Carson, EVERYBODY'S straight. A woman singing is ALWAYS singing about a man.

She could have BEEN on Johnny Carson, too, if it weren't for the fact that the song she would have chosen to sing would have been "The Dyke I Like." Johnny would have loved her jokes, I'm sure of it.

Of course, Kron is aware of this irony, no doubt about it. She is conscious of abusing the stereotypes, both gay and straight, which she includes in her shows. She is conscious of the pull between the "normal" and the "other" which most of us experience. She is conscious of using the mainstream to point out the absurdities of exclusion. She must be. Because, as a straight woman, her comedy and singing, her charm and expertise, would just not have been enough to get her IN through the doors of RSG, especially during this OUT series.

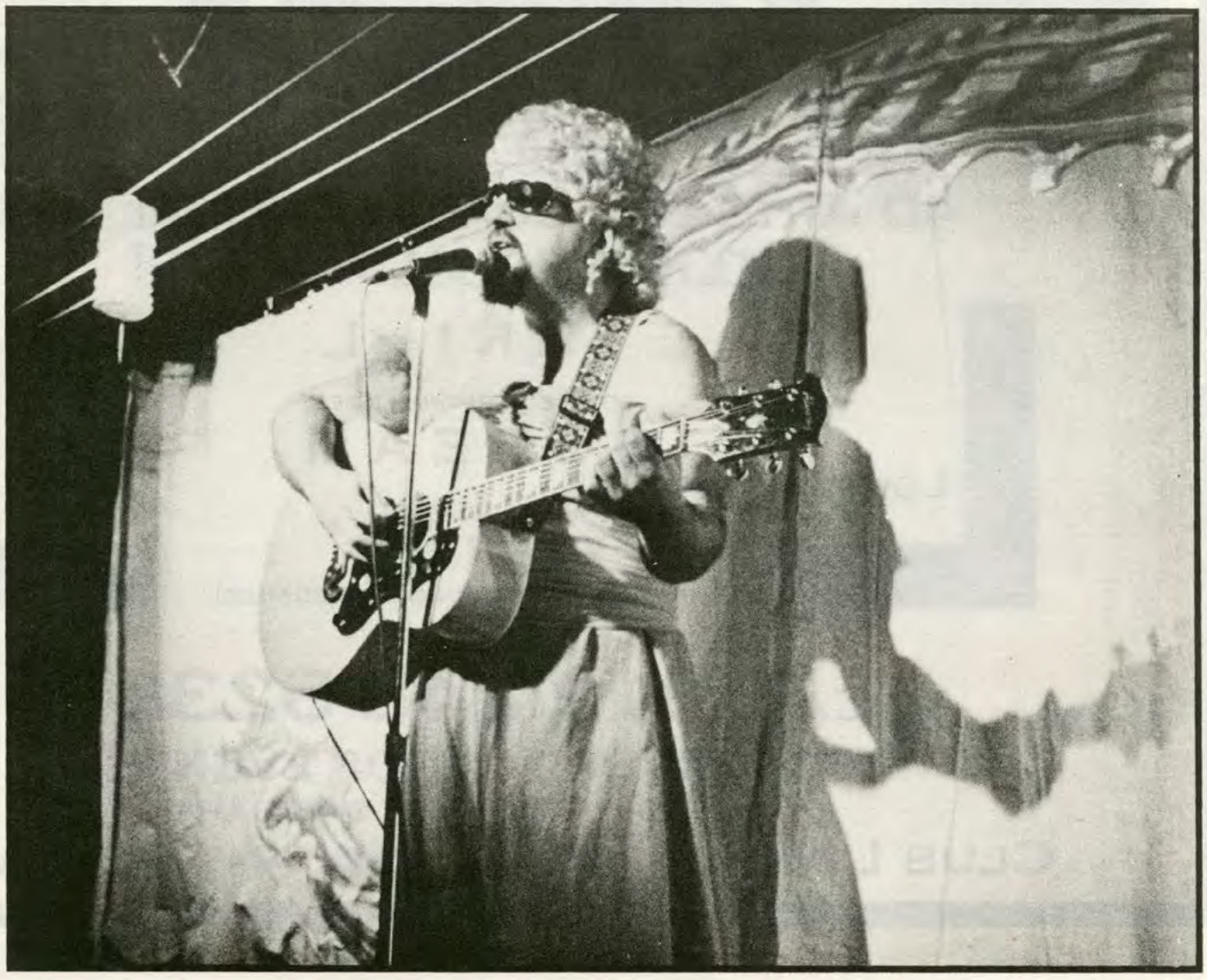
**Anna Brown**


*p.1* **patrick buchanan**
*p.5* **william dannemeyer**
*p.7* **sandra day o'connor**
*p.9* **ann-imelda radice**
*p.15* **george bush**


**vote!**

*a project for p-form by*
**THE X-GIRLFRIENDS**

# Michael Zerang



*Debra E. Levie*

## NEW ART EXAMINER

The Independent voice of the visual arts

$35 for 1 year
$62 for 2 years

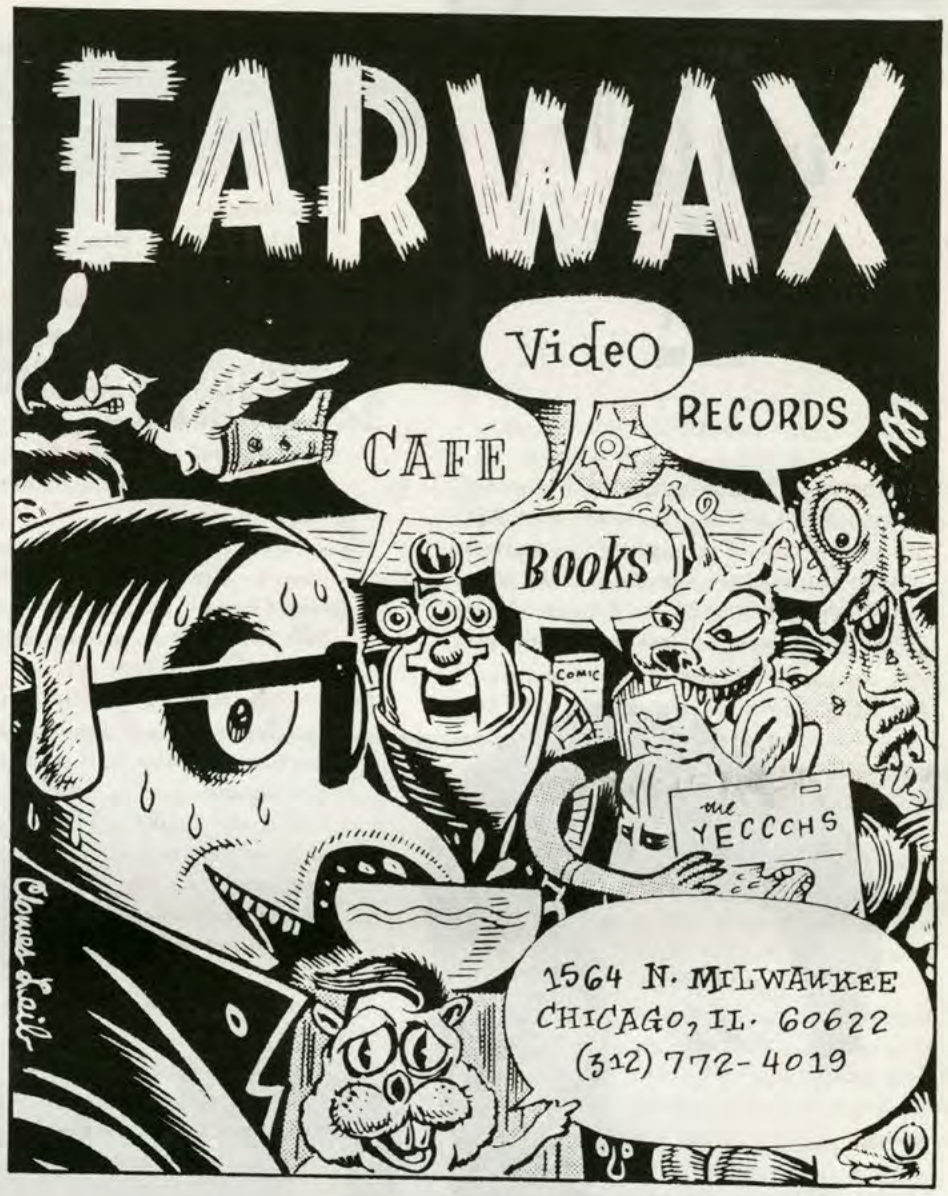
for information contact
1255 South Wabash 4th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60605
312.786.0200.

## 8-TRACK MIND
MAGAZINE

**journal of the analog movement**

If you are sick of digital technology "byteing" away at your life, here is a magazine you can't do without. Join artists like ***ERASURE, JAZZ BUTCHER and PET SHOP BOYS*** in saying "no!" to digital. Order our latest issue (#70) for $2.50 and become a trailblazer for the analog revolution!

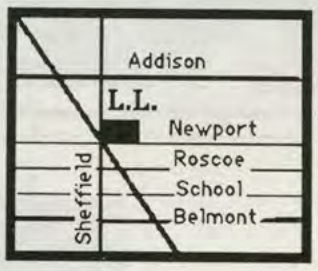
ISSUES #69 AND #70 AVAILABLE FOR $2.50 POSTPAID. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO RUSS FORSTER.
8-TM PUBLICATIONS, C/O RUSS FORSTER
13731 JENNY DR.
WARREN, MI 48093




## Video Rentals
FORIEGN, CULT, DOCUMENTARY, BIKER MOVIES, INDEPENDENT
11-11 M-Th / 11-12 F-Su

IT'S BACK!

## CLUB LOWER LINKS
954 W. NEWPORT
CHICAGO, IL. 60657
(312) 248-5238




PRESENTING THE FINEST IN PERFORMANCE ART, MUSIC, THEATER, FILMS, SPOKEN WORD - ALL THE 4D ARTS BY LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS!

THRILL
TO THE PERFORMANCES!
SCREAM
WITH DELIGHT!
SWILL
THE WIDE SELECTION OF BEVERAGES!

LOWER LINKS

CALL 312/248-5238
FOR AN UPDATE OF EVENTS
DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK!
CLUB LOWER LINKS - NOW AND FOREVER!

# CAFFÉ BACI

*Caffé Baci, an establishment which gracefully combines the pleasures of the palate with the pleasures of the eye.*
*Enter the ethereal atmosphere of elegant design and provocative art work.*
*Satisfy your appetite with an innovative selection of authentic and carefully prepared Italian cuisine.*
*If it's just carry-out or lunch with a friend, your experience with Caffé Baci is a full one.*
*Located in the Continental Center for breakfast, lunch and carry out.*

**Continental Center, 231 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604**
**312.629.1818**
**Hours: Monday-Friday 6:30am-6:30pm**

**CAFE ARMAGEDDON**
2008 OXFORD * AUSTIN * TEXAS * 78704

A PRODUCT OF
C 754
**no palace studio**

art supplies·gallery space·jams·
model referrals·prop service·
framing·multi-media bank·fre
workshops·fashion shows·sets·
poetry·graphicdesign·lectures·
canvas stretching·musicians·re
membership assistance·writers·
finding service·designed jewelry·
sculptors·film screenings·pottery
archival recording·photographers
designed clothing·painters·dance
performance space·housewares·c
free delivery free coffee·long hours

1821 WEST NORTH AVENUE 312·384·2007 11-12
CAFFE STRADA. BECAUSE ARTISTS DRINK COFFEE.

**WHITEWALLS**
**A Journal of Language and Art**

*To subscribe to WhiteWalls (three issues yearly), send a check for $15.00 payable to:*

*WhiteWalls*
*P.O. Box 8204*
*Chicago, IL 60680*

BLUE RYDER

Excerpts from Underground, Alternative, Small Press, & Micropress Publications, Plus Original Contributions

Send $2.25 for a sample copy, or subscribe, $15. for 6 issues; one every other month.

BLUE RYDER
Box 587
Olean, NY 14760

Send a self-addressed-stamped-envelope for submissions guidelines...

COFFEEHOUSE · BOOKSTORE
1934 W. NORTH AVE. · CHICAGO
312.252.4446



# Call for Artists

*TranceSister Productions* is a Feminist Performance Collective of New and Emerging Solo Artists.
We produce our monthly shows collectively, make solo work mostly, and hold critiques regularly.
We are looking for women who want to perform as well as produce, or learn to produce.

*Send your name and number to:*
***Julie Laffin***
*P.O. Box 4616*
*Chicago, Il*
*60680-4616*



# Open Call:

## Toward a History of Chicago Performance Art:
**(c. 1992)**

A.) Send letter, resume, a list of references (i.e. others who saw your work), Video tape, photos and press clippings if you performed in Chicago anytime between 1970 and now,

B.) Send letter and phone number if you know of someone you think we should contact.

Send to:
**C. Rago**
Non-Degree Faculty
The School of the Art Institute Institute of Chicago
Columbus at Jackson
Chicago, Illinois
60602

**Joyce Carson**
**Accountant**
**Chicago House Volunteer**

"We're all very busy. Even so, volunteering becomes a part of your life. Especially when you're making a difference for people with AIDS."

**CHICAGO HOUSE**

**Get Back What You Give.**
**Become a Volunteer**
**(312) 248-5200**

Chicago House & Social Service Agency, Inc.
Residences for People with HIV and AIDS



CAFFE STRADA

THE FINEST 100% ARABICA BEANS,

TRIPLE SCREENED

AND COMPUTER SORTED

FOR THE ULTIMATE IN

CONSISTENCY AND QUALITY

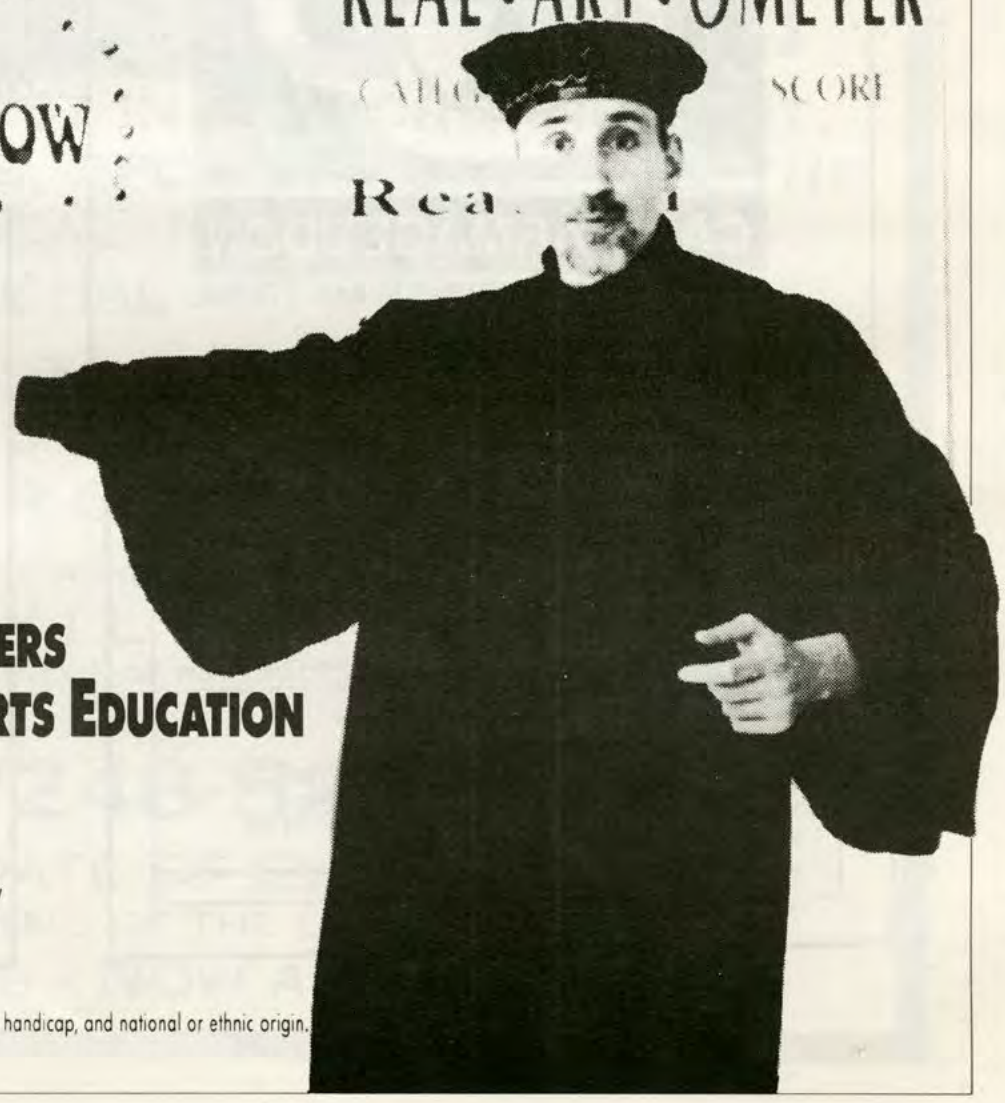
BECAUSE ARTISTS DRINK COFFEE.

C. S. COFFEES
1821 W. NORTH AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60622
312-384-2007
Call, write or stop by for more information.



# The Real Art Show

REAL•ART•OMETER



- Collaborate with artists, writers, and performers.
- Experiment with other art forms in the Midwest's oldest inter-arts program.
- Expand your career options.
- All classes held in the evening.

**COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO MASTERS PROGRAM IN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS EDUCATION**

For more information, call (312) 663-1600, Extension 670, or write:
The Graduate Division, Columbia College Chicago,
600 South Michigan Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois 60605-1996.

Columbia admits students without regard to age, race, color, sex, religion, physical handicap, and national or ethnic origin.

Tim Nowaryta in performance. Photo by Ted Donahue.

# POCKET THE DISCOUNT

## YOU SAVE

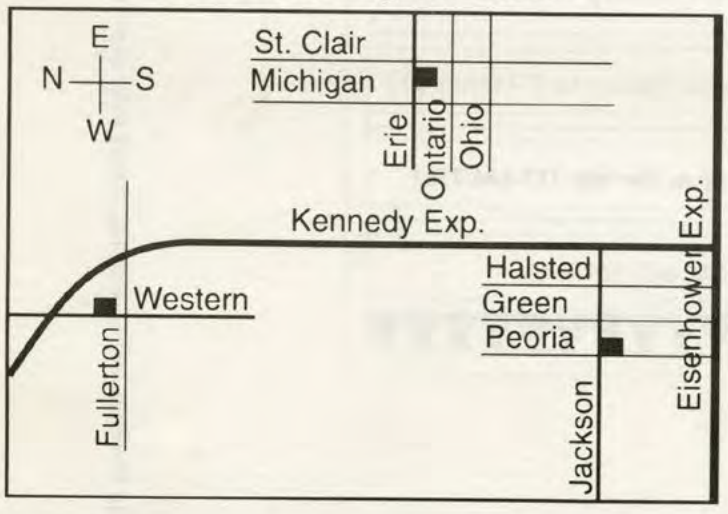
## 20-70% ON AN *ETERNAL* SELECTION OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL SUPPLIES

## WE'VE GOT

**Everything on your student supply list** PLUS furniture • book paks • posters • books • framing • lamps • portfolios • locks • environmentally conscious materials • recycled designer papers

## WE'RE AT

■ Three Chicago Locations



All major credit cards accepted.

**Three Chicago Locations:**
847 W. Jackson
2417 N. Western
161 E. Erie

**DIAL 9-CREATE or 312-927-3283**

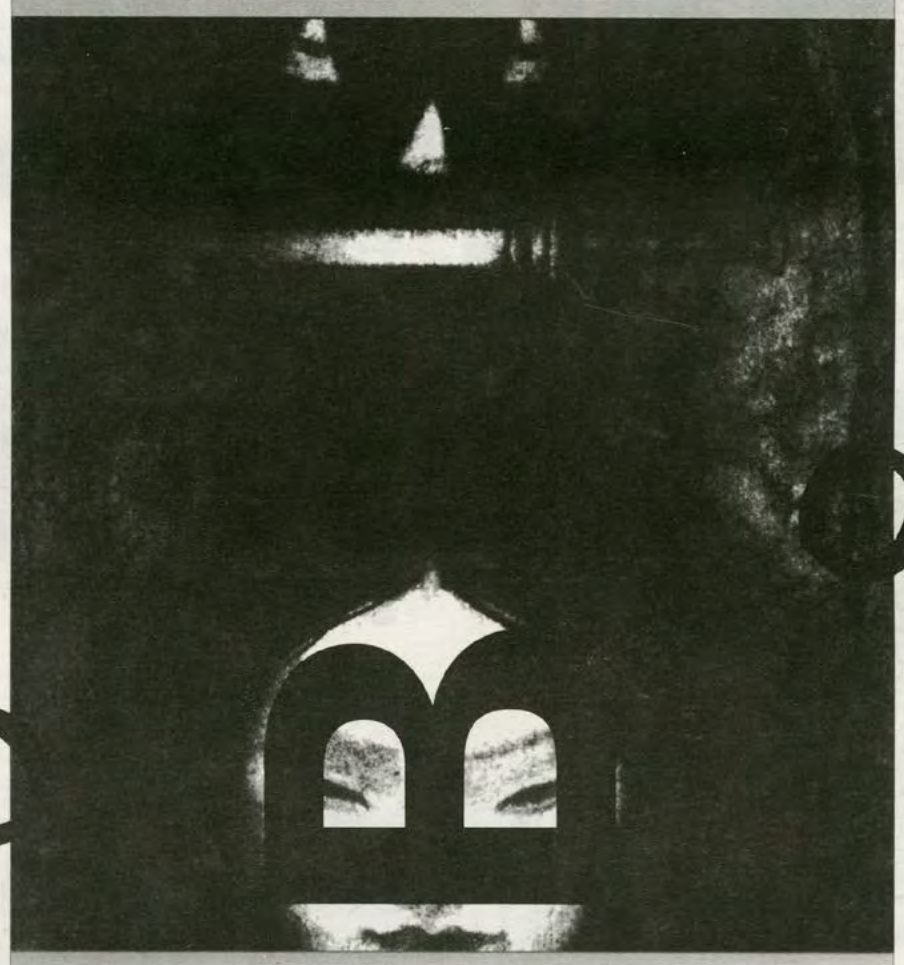
# WHY PAY MORE?

**Tell us "Kumar sent me" & save an extra 5%!**

Tom Pallazolo Jack Helbig Jacqui Disler Andy Soma John 'Sinatra' Conners Jon Schnepp Pat O'Donnell Joan Dickinson David Kotker Lola DeJong Joel Klaff X-GIRLFRIENDS Meg Houston Iris Moore Larry Steger Mary Zerkel Katherine Boyd David Jacobson Jay Batman Tracy Hudak Red Moon Theatre Jenny Magnus Flugi Measure Performing Co. Kapra Fleming Gurlene Hussey Gurlette Hussey Joan Jett Blakk Audrey Colby Mathew Wilson Robyn Orlin Casey Spooner The Incognito Performance Artist Marcia Wilke Arnie Aprill Suzie Silver Liz Britton John Woodruff Bob Eisen Mother Superior Nick Sistler Steve Barsotti Lester Brodzik

HALLOWEEN

# A PERFECTLY HAUNTED CIRCUS



## GET FREAKED FOR SIX BUCKS

**BENEFIT FOR P-FORM**

Saturday October 31, 1992

Three Thrilling Rings of Fun at **Randolph Street Gallery** 756 N. Milwaukee

General admission $6 / Admission and subscription to P-FORM $15

**Doors Open at 7p.m. Performances start at 8p.m. For info 312-666-7737**

**After Hours** Dance Party with D.J. DIZ and Mark Farina