

Backyard Wrestling

Subversion or Submission?
Indie Spectacle Examined

When Anarchism Meets Art:
Howl's Stefan Christoff

Terrorists or Activists? *International Forest Products* Chronicles "Lava Creek Illegal Actions"

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cover photo: Paul Fairweather (with thanks to Josh and everyone at the Backyard Wrestling League)

Writing for Broken Pencil: Broken Pencil encourages submissions of original fiction accompanied by a self addressed stamped envelope and/or email address. Please include a disc in PC format (when possible) and a bio. We also encourage submissions of original essays, columns, rants, interviews and features - anything related to the subject of independent culture in Canada. But before you write your opus, please send a proposal for your article (2-3 paragraphs), along with samples of your work and a self addressed stamped envelope. We are also interested in working with new photographers and illustrators. Send us samples (not originals) along with a self addressed stamped envelope.

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Broken Pencil is indexed by the Alternative Press Index.

Broken Pencil is completely made and manufactured in Canada.

Broken Pencil acknowledges the support of the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts. Broken Pencil acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the publications assistance program (PAP), toward our mailings costs. Canada Post Agreement Number 1377914

Broken Pencil accepts and encourages paid advertising. Our rate card is available through mail, fax, or email. Write or email us and we'll set you up.

email: editor@brokenpencil.com • website: www.brokenpencil.com
 mailing address: Broken Pencil, PO Box 203, Sin P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2S7 CANADA

\$4.95 per issue

\$12 for a one year subscription (three issues) • \$20 for a two year subscription (six issues)
 Cheques made out to Broken Pencil. Prices include postage.

ISSN 1201-8996 • Publications Mail Registration Number: 07414



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du Canada



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Using Broken Pencil

Organization:

Broken Pencil reviews independent publications published in Canada and the world, including ezines and recordings. All the listings in Broken Pencil are organized by province/region. International and US listings are after the Canadian publications. There is an index in the back that lists every publication and recording reviewed in Broken Pencil in alphabetical order.

Structure of listings:

Title — the name of the publication

Definition — the arbitrary classification we attribute to a publication

Name(s) of creators - the creators of the publication, the people who write and publish it.

\$ — the price that the publication is sold for individually and, if available, by subscription. These prices do not include postage, which is extra (see "how to order zines")

Address — every effort will be made to have the correct addresses for all publications, however errors do occur and address changes/tips/mysterious disappearances are always a hazard.

Review — the review of a publication represents the subjective opinion of the reviewer. Personal taste cannot be edited out of a review. Broken Pencil welcomes dissenting opinions while making every effort to offer a fair and true judgement.

What Is A Zine?

A zine is an independently published, not-for-profit publication. Although it usually represents the personal vision of a single creator, it can have many contributors. Although most zines are photocopied and hand stapled, some zines are professionally printed. What makes a zine a zine is its dedication to the independent transference of thought on a non-commercial basis. Variations on the zine include the comic zine (indie comics), the litzine (literary - poems, fiction, essays), the perzine (personal, autobiographical), and the ezine (zines published only on the internet). In addition to zines, we also review independent/alternative newspapers, journals, magazines, books and chapbooks, and recordings in LP, cassette and CD format.

How to Order Zines

Please Send Cash! If you are ordering anything under six bucks you should send well concealed money. Many zine publishers don't have a separate bank account for their zine and cannot use checks made out to their zine or to their pen name. In fact, many zine publishers do not have a bank account at all. So the best thing to do is to staple cash to a letter (or tape coins to a piece of paper and staple that to a letter), though for anything over the six dollar mark, you should probably send a check. We list a name in our ordering information, and you should make the check out to that name or the name of a publishing house if that information is available. The second big thing to remember is that you are also paying for postage. Figure on a including a dollar extra for postage on a standard zine (within Canada). If you are ordering Canadian zines from the U.S., pay in U.S. dollars and that should cover the postage. Ordering Canadian zines from overseas you should pay in U.S. and throw in a dollar extra, two if you want air mail. If you are ordering U.S. or overseas zines from Canada, you'll need to send U.S. dollars and a dollar or two extra for postage. Don't send Canadian dollars or checks to anyone overseas or in the U.S. as they won't know what to do with it most of the time. Some zines include postage in their price, most do not. If a zine indicates their price includes postage, we will note that in the ordering info, otherwise, figure that the price listed is the cost of the zine only, not the cost of getting it to you. If a zine is free, always include a dollar or two for postage. Keep in mind that ordering zines takes time as zine publishers are busy. You should plan on waiting several months before deciding that a zine isn't coming. Should that occur, send a postcard asking what happened. If you don't get a prompt reply, drop us a note and we can try to contact the publisher for you, and/or warn others not to waste their money. But be patient, because most of the time you'll get what you ordered, though it might take a while. And hey, zine publishers like to know how you heard of their zine so be sure and tell them we sent yeah.

Fish Piss Battle

from pablosanchez3@hotmail.com. Taken directly from issue 10's review section: "From the creator of Canada's best zine, Fish Piss, comes a series of gripping autobiographical stories." I have but one question for the lumpheads at Broken Pencil - how could you possibly think fish piss is Canada's best zine? I mean, come on... just come on... fish piss? no. no thank you. the captain (Winnipeg, MB)

from Bobby taphtap@hotmail.com. I believe that Fish Piss is still one of the best zine in Montreal. Best Supporting Zine in a bookstore. Maybe we should have a zine Olympic. Steroids optional. But what else can zines do? I think you are a lamo for wasting time complaining about praise for Fish Piss. You didn't even bother to leave a replacement for the zine in which you so adamantly loath. Shall we read BOP? Tiger Beat? Chatelaine is the best Canadian magazine according to Ruth Whitheringaway, 81, Scarborough. (Hades, ON)

from Melonie Fullick roughlines@hotmail.com. About those Fish Piss comments from way back when: sure, I like Fish Piss, it's a good zine, but I wish more zines were readily available in Montreal. I get tired of Fish Piss after a while; there's a definite style to it, and sometimes I wish they would print things that contrast with the usual stuff, if you know what I mean. Anyway, I buy it and read it, it's pretty good, especially as a local zine, basically just about Montreal. The comics are excellent. If anyone else in Montreal has a zine and they'd like to trade with me, please email me, I'd love to hear from you (my zine is Rough Lines, you can buy it at The Word on Milton Street). Cheers everyone. (Montreal, QC)

Zine Aid

from Jeremy Milks jeremymilks@hotmail.com. If anyone in the Montreal area has access to free photocopying and

wants to help out a writer... I have my new zine written but I'm busted flat, can't print it, nor in the foreseeable future. This must sound desperate... If you want to check out my last zine "budding at our fingertips", I still have about five copies. They're free to whomever wants them.... Holding out hope. (Montreal, QC)

Hi, Jason McLean here, here's a little on a zine I made I imagine it's heading straight for the ART section. On My Brain McLean #2 printing is a bit of mess. I tried to black & white laser print it to get the black dark. But lines blurred a bit...ouch. Sorry I haven't sent much lately though I've put a bit out. "Kurt Kobain" will be on its way soon. Marc Bell & I made "Stand Tall Guru" #1 & 3 also but I haven't been able to send many promo copies out maybe I'll print it up again and stop being so cheap. Hope Toronto is doing well and Canzine is a success. Out here we have Comix & Stories and Word Under the Street coming up. "Band Aid" art show is part of Swarm a fifteen gallery event of openings. I'll have to send you some thing on the "Bubble World Corporation Vending Machine" March Bell & I have been running for six months. Fun. O.K. Jason (Vancouver, BC)

Stories To Tell

from John quattboy@hotmail.com. My room-mate just bought a giant screen TV, a DVD player and a whack of DVD's. He keeps everything in his room, away from me and my other room-mate. When he's home, he waxes nostalgic for the High School Days by playing at top volume Black Sabbath, Led Zep, Blue Oyster Cult, ELO, etc. etc concert DVD's. He also has a grand piano (baby) in his room. Along with the Black Sabbath et al DVD's, played at top volume, my room-mate enjoys tickling the ivories. What's my point? I don't have one, other than that my room-mate, his giant screen TV, his DVD player and his DVD's, and his piano are all cramped into a room a little larger than a freight elevator. (Vancouver, BC)

from Fred A. Spider Esq. headspider@hotmail.com. Last night I was out walking near Spadina station when I noticed a large crowd pointing and staring at the sky. At first I thought a baby was about to fall out a window, but it turned out to be a racoon on the side of a building. It had fallen out of a hole in the roof and was now clinging to an ornamental piece of woodwork under said

hole. We stopped and looked with the crowd for a while, but Emma had to get home. I went back later that night and saw no racoon or racoon sized splat, so I figured all was well. When I returned home, my sister said "maybe someone just cleaned up the mess really well". This saddened me greatly and caused me to poke her, so I figure we're even. (Toronto, ON)

Letter of the Issue

from obfuscus@yahoo.com. This morning I went to the Art Gallery of Calgary with my backpack & flank steak, & met the woman w/ black shoulder length etc. flipping thru old catalogues. "Welcome! Admission is by donation!" I dropped a luni in the glass bin & made my way back to the staff snacking location (SSL, "kitchen" to some) where they have a public fridge. Oh yes, free fridge use for any worthless slumming Jon, that's their policy. It's a worthwhile effort on their behalf, as the preservation of food thru storage in low temp zones is more than a privilege, it's a right. Yay, many are the homeless with too much meat & not enough cold storage. For they have leapt bravely on the plentiful beasts etc. & they have struck them numerous times w/ found objects & etc. & they have skinned & gutted etc. & so on. As for a review of the Gallery itself: downstairs, steak, nope. Yep. HAND. I mean there is an ongoing collection/assemblage of ephemera, manwoman posters, old Calgary junkstuff & wordhorde. V. colourful FOOT. The room is pulling at you. LIMB. Shortly I went up & had a meal in the SSL, where stove use is by donation. I dropped 50c on a frypan & 12 mins of gas. A beautiful scene with a white rectangle way up high & a wood table, scratched, rented plate, & a knife with a bend in it: makes for an intimate meal w/ yrself. Donation is pay what you may, tho I wd guess the richer of us pay less than they ought too. Come on, next time you go with \$100.00, fry some sausages, it makes for a real nice time, bc there ain't nothing like getting intimate w/ yrself. Beautiful frightening mad little drawings by Marcel Dzama. For instance a woman getting out of a bear costume, or children watching a projected video, except some of them are wearing masks, & a cowboy in a shootout coming out the ass of a nekkid woman. They develop a lot of tension, floating small there on large white sheets of paper. They have the tension, too, those figures, for not ever coming near the edge of the page. I was terrified & laughing at once. Good steak too. Now for upstairs, sudden movement may disrupt digestion, shuttling the meal out the other end whole! You'd have to eat it again! Upstairs was Zine Scene, & I spent a lot of time ruminating there, & even napped for 1.5 hours on the brown leather. I dreamt of the woman w/ shoulderlength etc doing the interesting sport of pole vault. It's really catching on with the under 30 crowd. A product rep said it's very easy to get involved; one may buy a stick for just \$75.00. LIMB. But on w/ the event review! HAND. 4 long tables & an underpaid fellow mopping the floor. LIMB. Sometimes I have trouble distinguishing what's part of the actual show, & what's just everyday building maintenance. HAND. Anyway, great heaps of paper, bound & unbound, stitched or not, b&w, colour, O Everything. It really is massive, the output (sometimes the earnest struggling & smtms irony, smtms raw unadulterated rage) of Zines & artist's ephemera & again O Everything, & worthwhile to get it & have it & see it all in one place. As I left the man in his grey outfit swirled the grey mophead, & gave it one final plunge. As well, someone was operating a saw. OBF REFERENCING & CARD STOCK SUPPLIES (Calgary, AB)

Something to Say

from Rhett Nye harveyneon@hotmail.com. Hi I just wanted to make a few comments on CBC's 120seconds.com website. Not only was I denied as a 'Guide', but the section of the site I originally went to it for, (riding the rails - about being a hobo on a train) has not worked for the last 5 months. My first request was ignored and I've just had to send another request. I've even heard a repeat of the radio show, "riding the rails" mentioning 120seconds.com. Like gimme a break, as if I want to be a Guide, but still I shouldn't be denied by some degree-holding fartknocker for any reason, let alone my tendency to be alternative. peace. (Montreal, QC)

from David Widginton widge@cumluspress.com. Hi Hal, I've been meaning to send you an e-mail for the past while but haven't managed to do so until now. I picked up BP weeks back and read the "Running With Scissors" review. You're right there is no identifying element in the group of poems that "identifies all these writers as a member of a generation." But, then again, that is not the

purpose of the anthology. It is to present new talented writers to a larger readership and to give them some informal mentorship from the chapbook author, which you seem to have totally overlooked. Where else can novice writers be published in an anthology with early writing by award-winning and respected authors? I realize I forgot to send you the info-pak with the book. I must also thank you for continuing to support the emerging press. The advert inviting submissions for book two of the series looks great! See you at Canzine in September. Cheers! David. (Montreal, QC)

Just Getting in Touch

from: Geoffrey Fuzztone hugecorp@yahoo.com. Hi Everybody. The waste oil is full in our tanks and the engine is running smooth. The shower has been panned with old offset litho plates from small town, canadada. Yes we are departing for the island of Fogo then to work our way to Stephenville and Port aux Basques. We have an educator from the Art Gallery of Newfoundland &

The waste oil is full in our tanks and the engine is running smooth.

Labrador aboard. We will do workshops with children art artartatra Then on to other points on the continent ending up on Vancouver Island again. in a few weeks ??Thanks to everyone in St. John's who came out an boogied with us. The fun is always within reach. Love you all and save a car ride bicycle everywhere you will love what is gonna happen to your legs and lungs. www.hugecorp.net. (Newfoundland)

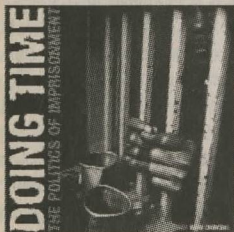
Hullo: Irregular submitron (and, finally, subscriber) Jules here - with my latest zine - which may look like a pornographic stream of consciousness transgender nudie comic... um yeah. It is. But it has a grand purpose. It is called CuntBoy. If that is not clear enuff, it is

NOT about chix with dix, it is about Cunt Boys (subgenre of Female to Male, FTM, Tranny) of which I am one. Thank you very much. Julian Gunn (Victoria, BC)

from Teresa Camara Pestana gambuzine@hotmail.com. Ola from Portugal. Hi I am a portugese comics artist and fanzine maker, and I would like to get in contact with other fanzine makers artist do you like to made a trade with me? you send me your fanzine and I send mine? I am always looking for other artists...gambuzine appears 4 times a year, and ist made of 100 grams paper..and is an international fanzine...but made in portugal in portugese language, that's all, hope to hear from you. Teresa (Portugal)

1. analysis

WARD CHURCHILL
'DOING TIME:
THE POLITICS OF
IMPRISONMENT'
G7020 CD
OUT NOW!



"We don't have to worry about whether we will have a political police either in the United States or Canada. We've had them for a long time ... It's not a question of how to prevent it, it's a question of how to deal with it since it is an existent reality." -- Ward Churchill, from the CD.

The U.S. government has used all means to subvert and neutralize movements for social change. This lecture focuses on the FBI's counter intelligence programs, their use in undermining dissent and the criminal justice system's role as an agent of social control.

Ward Churchill is co-director of the **American Indian Movement** of Colorado, Vice Chairperson of the **American Anti-Defamation Council**, and a National Spokesperson for the **Leonard Peltier Defense Committee**.

2. action

BAKUNIN'S BUM
'FIGHT TO WIN!'
G7021 CD
OUT OCTOBER 9TH
A Benefit for the Ontario
Coalition Against Poverty



This album takes a passionate, inspirational speech from two OCAP anti-poverty activists (Sean Brandt & Sue Collis) and edits it into 11 spoken word pieces with radical beats & strings by "Bakunin's Bum" -- 1 Speed Bike (from **godspeed you black emperor! & exhaust**) and Norman Nawrocki (from **Rhythm Activism & Da Zoque!**). The result: a powerful, 69 minute mix of music & ideas about how to step up local resistance to the effects of globalized misery.

The words from the OCAP activists offer a fresh perspective on how to combat growing poverty in the face of abundance; about how to confront & challenge an insensitive, uncaring, police-dependent, State apparatus; and about how to work with others, in community organizations, using "direct action" approaches, uncompromisingly, to "fight to win".

CDs are \$12 ppd. Write to **G7 Welcoming Committee Records** | P.O. Box 27006, C - 360 Main Street | Winnipeg, MB | R3C 4T3 | Canada
Full catalogue of radical music and spoken word and secure online ordering at <http://www.g7welcomingcommittee.com>





Alberta: Zine Art Shows Struggle With the Medium

Zine Scene, Calgary Art Gallery, July 20 to Sept. 5

Zines and Mail Art Expo, Edmonton Small Press Association, June 2001

One of the least charming aspects of zine culture — a concern also shared by the graphic novel and comic book industry — is constantly having to explain the form to the general public every time anyone initiates public discourse. While not insurmountable, this puts a tiring onus on potential popularizers, publicity-minded publishers and zines-as-visual-art curators, forcing them to carefully consider the best potential venue, the most appropriate presentation form, and even what audience to reach in efforts to spread the independent press gospel. It's a no-brainer to say approaches vary dramatically, for example the two radically different and contrasting approaches — visually and didactically — undertaken by recent art-house zine shows in Edmonton and Calgary.

In Alberta's capital city, the Edmonton Small Press Association (ESPA) organized two shows (a classic zine exhibit and a mail Art "Expo") which ran the last weeks of June 2001 in cooperation with the populist Works Visual Arts Festival. Meanwhile, in Alberta's wealthier and more southerly major city, the Calgary Art Gallery undertook a much more mainstream tact to its zine exhibi-

tion (Zine Scene — July 20 to Sept. 5).

The ESPA shows aligned themselves with a community-based art festival specializing in the widest possible array of work (super-traditional to hyper-experimental) in an equally diverse selection of venues (from the Edmonton Art Gallery to vacant retail space to the ESPA show which was housed in a multi-purpose room in the basement of the downtown public library). Befitting the festival's broad reach, the ESPA curated two 0-to-60 shows, programming for the extremes of attendees they'd be attracting, and creating their didactic message through the sheer barrage of examples they deployed to speak for the form. Usual suspects on display (wall-mounted, framed original artwork and final print-form copies on display racks) included Marc and Tim Bell, Donna Barr, Robert Pasternak, Peter Bagge, Mary Fleener, Warren Heise, Jeff Moss, Louis Remillard and Tim Brown for the zine show, representing the United States, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Spain, Australia and more.

The mail art show was even more internationalist in nature, featuring spectacular examples of both mailed-art books, heavily decorated envelopes, art postcards, small art works (collage, paintings, found-art projects), and loads and loads of super-slickly produced stamps (stick-on and of the rubber and wood-block variety). Of particular interest were wondrous examples of stamp art — many

with an art-show pedigree — produced by enthusiastic groups in Italy, France and Germany.

The Calgary show, on the other hand, came across very rinky-dinky in comparison, and far less adept in presenting the artistic merit of the form — ironic given its presenter and the resources at its disposal. The "exhibit" consisted of a half-dozen tables laden with a couple hundred copies (not publications or issues, there were many duplicates) with virtually no didactic support material and only a few lame examples of wall-mounted zine art. The little information they did make available was less than useful — leaving attendees to wander the room catching what they could from casual, out-of-context readings. What was even sadder than the lame presentation of the zines themselves, was that the CAG had two other shows that have a direct stylistic relationship to the zine show that the gallery made no effort to exploit: Shadowland, a showing of contemporary Dadaist-influenced alternative public commodity art; and "More Famous Drawings", the subversive, surreal and heavily pop-culture influenced fine-art cartoon works (many drawn for magazines) by Winnipeg artist and occasional zine contributor Marcel Dzama. A major didactic opportunity lost, leaving all three shows floating in a choking void of artistic and cultural context.

(Gilbert A. Bouchard)

Canada: Cross-Country Bus Trip Fueled by Fun and Used Veggie Oil

Hal Hewett is one of a growing group of people who are realizing the potential of alternative energy sources. To bring his message to the people, he has spent the summer driving across Canada in his S.U.B. (Sgrnge Utility Bus), a converted bus that uses vegetable oil as fuel. Just as he twists the word "bus" inside out, Hal turns the concept of public transportation on its ear with his unique "bio-vehicle." The mission of the S.U.B. is not only to highlight vegetable oil as an alternative energy source, but also to show people that taking care of well-built things can reduce waste.

Hal launched his vegetable oil propelled, cross-Canada mission in mid June of 2001. He is joined on the trip by his brother Geoffrey (mastermind behind the zine Whiskey Lollipop), their cousin, 76-year-old Anne Minard, and family friend Anita Singh. Hal converted the 1964 passenger bus' diesel engine so that it would run on discarded restaurant oil (the kind they use to cook chicken wings and french fries in your neighbourhood pub). The bus has primarily been filling up on waste oil stored behind diners around the country. "We ask when we can," says Hal. "Otherwise we take it. People are very receptive... incredulous, in fact."

In order to get across the message that people needn't be obsessed with sterile, shiny, glossy stuff, they are hand-

ing out stickers and dumpster diving acquisition forms which have been designed by Geoffrey, a printer and book artist. Hal launched the S.U.B. from Mile Zero on the Trans-Canada highway, and they are crisscrossing the country with their goal being to spend no money at all on food or fuel. Instead, they dumpster dive, busk (Hal plays trumpet, accordion and glockenspiel, while Geoffrey rocks out on the guitar and banjo), and otherwise scrounge for food.

Running a bus on oil requires a fair bit of mechanical knowledge, as well as the ability to fix an engine. Since it's running on restaurant oil, Hal has to change the filters often because they get clogged up with fish and chips. Hal traded a propane fueled milk truck for the 37-year-old bus, which was previously owned by both Greyhound and BC Transit. He spent the summer of 2000 researching the engineering side of using vegetable oil for fuel, reading a number of books on the subject, including an engineering text printed in the 1930s. "The older books were way more useful," says Hal.

In September of 2000, Hal set up shop in a warehouse on Vancouver Island, owned by a North Vietnamese family, who not only let him live and work there for free, but also helped him get the bus in order for the trip. While Hal had no formal training, he had "a lot

of experience" working in mechanics. As a tribute to the family, Hal posted "Hanoi" as the point of destination on the front of the bus. The S.U.B. has been put together mainly through scrounging for parts. The bus, which measures 40 feet on the outside, has a toilet, shower, couch, cooler, hot water heater, range and a wood stove – not a bad ride for a low-resource trip. Hal gleefully describes his S.U.B. as "stealthy."

The trip hasn't been all about education and work. In Montreal they were given \$400 by rave promoters to transport people to the rave site, and even got into the event for free. "We're trying to show people that by being resourceful you can have more fun," says Hal. This has involved a fair amount of drinking and at least one run-in with the police. As they wove across the country, the S.U.B. also participated in a critical mass rally in Winnipeg that included 2 bio-buses, the requisite bike riders, and a skateboarder. The S.U.B. also met up with the Climate Change Caravan, a group from Mount Allison University, in Carlisle, Saskatchewan.

Hal is taking both still pictures and video of the S.U.B. mission, which he hopes to assemble into "something." You can see some of the images, and read more about the adventures of the Hewett brothers at www.hugecorp.net.

(Alex Mlynek)

Alberta: Medicine Hat Zine Party 2001

Medicine Hat Zine Party 2001 happened on July 15th and 16th in Medicine Hat at the Treehouse Community Art Space. Medicine Hat Zine Party 2001 was the second annual zine party presented by the Treehouse Collective. The Treehouse Community Art Space is a warehouse space that we collectively administer. We put on events like the Zine Party, but also all-ages shows and other events including radical movie nights, critical mass meetings, feminist organising etc. The space also houses a radical library and a lot of artwork from community artists.

Medicine Hat Zine Party 2001 was a celebration of zines and zine culture. It featured two panel discussions: "Gender and Zines" and "Zines and the Politicization of All Ages Space." There



Radical Cheerleading in Medicine Hat

were workshops on feminist organising in the all ages scene, silk screening, creative activism and radical cheerleading, comic book making, vegetarian cooking for beginners, and studio photography. There was musical entertainment featuring Shelley K, Man With Sword, The Long Run, Hot Little Rocket, and Misdemeanour. Zine Party was preceded by Medicine Hat Art Party 2001, which was an art exhibit featuring the art of the Alberta Zine Scene at Café Marseille (453 3rd St SE).

Despite being the (self-proclaimed) party of the year, the zine fest didn't go off without a couple of hiccups. While everyone was outside checking out the radical cheerleading workshop happening in a park near the Treehouse, two plain-clothes police officers intimidated their way into the space and began taking pictures of the workshop. The cops told me they were also taking pictures of us in the park, but wouldn't say why. In the meantime the workshop participants had decided to not let themselves be intimidated and put on a little cheerleading show for the cops. When the police left and the workshop was over we debriefed for a while, but people were shaken up by the intrusion.

The zines and gender panel discussion was frustrating for a lot of people. It is difficult to address sexism and patriarchy, and the conversation was often heated. Not much was resolved in the end. However, the energetic debate was a vast improvement both over the relative silence of last year's discussion and the overall silence in the Alberta all ages scene when it comes to these issues. A big thanks to Rena who moderated the discussion.

Despite the awkward moments, the party was a success. Participants had a good time, zines were made, traded and bought, and new friends were made. The success of any zine gathering can be measured by the extent that it strengthens the Alberta zine community, inspires similar events, and gets people who make zines together. We shall see if Calgary, Edmonton, or Lethbridge come up with any zine events this year. The Treehouse Collective would like to thank all the zine people who came out for the party, all the workshop people, and the bands too. We still have lovely Medicine Hat Zine Party 2001 buttons available. Email uthar@hotmail.com for more details about upcoming events.

(Dave Glashan)



Dave Glashan makes an announcement

Toronto: Zine Pokes Fun at Pro Hockey

The authors of Last Row Grey (LRG), a satirical rag sold for a buck outside the Air Canada Centre prior to Leafs games, are on a mission: to help bring back the glory that has eluded Toronto's beloved hockey team for 34 years and counting.

LRG is to sports reporting what FRANK is to politics, media and big business: a bone-jarring check to the funny bone. Much like FRANK, LRG doesn't hesitate to take liberties with society figures, particularly opposing hockey clubs and those they believe to be anti-Leaf, or just plain annoying.

For instance NHL (National Hockey League) referee Kerry Fraser is repeatedly referred to as "Hairboy Fraser" and "the Asexual One". Another frequent target is Toronto Sun columnist Al Strachan, who is described in the zine as "a full-fledged member of the earthworm family. We mean no disrespect to these subterranean creatures."

Published by Bill Swail, 44, and Jeff Stanford, 49, two self-described, die-hard Leafs fans who double as clerks at separate brokerage firms during daylight hours, the two zinesters are moving in on their fifth season. Stanford said much of the thrust behind LRG comes from the need to voice honest criticism of pro

hockey that is sorely lacking in the mainstream media.

"It was Bill's idea," chirped Stanford with a chuckle. "He'd been thinking about it for years. One night back in 1994, we went to Chicago to see the Leafs play the Black Hawks and there was a guy selling his own magazine, The Blueine. We read it during the game and we decided, 'we can do this'. We've always wanted to reflect a different voice."

LRG's content is as free-wheeling as it is hilarious. The duo doesn't discriminate. They attack Leafs enemies, but also ridicule Leafs president Ken Dryden each issue via the "Secret Diaries of Ken Dryden."

"I don't know if Ken Dryden reads it," Stanford laughed. "But Richard Peddie [president and CEO of Maple Leafs Sports and Entertainment Inc.] has purchased a number of issues. We take a lot of shots at him, but he always buys one and asks if we've written anything nasty about him. We suspect we're being read in [the Leafs'] offices."

As the 2001-2002 hockey season approaches, Stanford said he's uncertain if LRG will live to once again ridicule the titans of pro hockey. Despite a circulation

of about 750 copies per issue, and a steady monthly schedule during the NHL season, LRG has no real advertising revenue to speak of and the duo is tiring of peddling their zine to T.O.'s humourless hockey masses.

"We go through this every summer and we get tired and a little discouraged after the season, kind of like the Leafs," he said. "We do have a die-hard group of fans and that is a motivating factor. We just need to get away from it for a little while and recharge the batteries."

If the zine does perish, it will be the hockey fans who suffer. LRG is a sports mag like no other, a photocopied leaflet with its own unique logic. Take the acquisition of defenceman Aki Berg from Los Angeles at the trading deadline last March. Most Toronto sports reporters were skeptical of the little-known player. But LRG had its own take on Berg's arrival in Hogtown: "Aki is the way Americans pronounce hockey, and Berg means town or city. This is the omen we've been waiting for. Welcome to Aki Berg."

(Liam Lahey)

Write the zine at lastrowgrey@ica.net, 300 Dufferin Street, Unit 605, Toronto, Ontario, M6K 1Z6.

Calls for Submissions

If you want to share your DIRTY CHILDHOOD SECRETS, please help contribute to a very special issue of my zine, **Retail Whore**. I'm currently accepting submissions for my upcoming issue entitled "Retail Whore's Juvenile Sex Romps (True Tales from a Time When 'We Didn't Know Any Better!')". I'm looking for true stories - in any form, poetry, essay, letter, comic - dealing with sexual experiences before puberty. You know, kissing cousins, playing "doctor," etc. These aren't supposed to be dirty stories - just memoirs! Anonymous submissions accepted. Please e-mail: Katherine Raz <retailwho_re@hotmail.com> Chicago, IL.

Shout-out for submissions for a **mass-media/film/technology (anti or otherwise)zine** in Saskatoon. Open topic, poetry and art work welcome. No Nazi's, homophobes or Freddie Prinze Jr fans. Contact grandskye@home.com, Saskatoon, SK.

Canadian Literary Awards (CBC/enRoute)
Entries: Open to permanent residents of Canada and to Canadian citizens in Canada or abroad. Three categories: short story (2000-3000 words), travel literature (2000-2500 words) and poetry (1500-2500 words), in either English or French. Fee: \$20 per entry payable to Canadian Literary Awards c/o CBC. Prizes: Twelve prizes, tba February 2002. \$6,000 for first prize and \$4,000 for second prize, in EACH category, in EACH language. Prizes cover CBC recording, translation and broadcast rights and publication rights in Air Canada's enRoute magazine. Information: Rules and (required) entry form: see <http://radio.cbc.ca/specials/literary/>. Send English language entries, each with entry form, to "Canadian Literary Awards," CBC-RADIO ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT, P.O. BOX 500, STATION "A" TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5W 1E6. Deadline: Oct. 1, 2001

THE RETURN OF FACTSHEET 5. After a 3 year hiatus, **FACTSHEET 5** is coming back! A new editorial collective has taken over and we hope to have the first issue out by the end of the year. Factsheet 5 is an authoritative guide to zines and alternative publications. Each large issue will be packed with hundreds of reviews of independent and unusual publications. Every issue of Factsheet 5 will catalogue and review an abundance of zines - complete with price, critical reviews, and ordering information. Additionally, it will include informative articles on zine culture, independent publishing, lively columns, interviews with self-publishers, and an extensive news section. **SENDING STUFF FOR REVIEW** We will review zines and alternative/independent publications. We suggest you enclose a separate card clearly stating the sample price and subscription price. Also print the ordering address, email address/web site, the check endorsement name, and if you regularly review zines, books, videos, comics, or records. **WHAT WE WILL REVIEW** Besides zines and independent publications, F5 will also review books, music and videos. Preference will be given to DIY/independent projects, although books from major publishers and music from major labels will not be automatically excluded. Music of all styles welcome! **WHERE TO SEND REVIEW MATERIALS:** Factsheet 5, PO Box 4660, Arlington, VA 22204, twbounds@pop.mail.rcn.net

AMETHYST REVIEW'S TENTH ANNUAL WRITING CONTEST. Entries must be original, unpublished

work not currently being considered elsewhere. Entries must be typed on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. The writer's name must not appear on manuscript. Use a pseudonym on a cover letter along with the author's real name. A pseudonym should appear on each page of the manuscript. Categories are: Fiction up to 5000 words (includes postcard stories) Poetry (to 200 lines per poem) An entry is one short story or up to 5 poems per fee. The \$14 Canadian entry fee includes a one-year subscription. Payable in Canadian funds. Cheques or money orders should be made payable to: The Amethyst Review. Entries should be postmarked no later than January 31/02. Submissions from outside of Canada must have Canadian postage or International Reply Coupons. Winners will be announced May, 2002. Winning entries and runners up will be published in The Amethyst Review (Vol.10 No. 1) in May, 2002. \$100.00 first prize for each category. Honorable mention for first two runners-up. Entries will be judged by The Amethyst Review editorial board. Entries, subscriptions and queries should be sent to: The Amethyst Review, 23 Riverside Ave., Truro, N. S., B2N 4G2

GLOBAL VISIONS FESTIVAL: Media Exhibit Call for Submissions (November 2001) DEADLINE: Oct.1, 2001 The ESPA & Global Visions festival are calling all activist-artists to submit their art and literature for presentation at the GV Media Exhibit Edmonton Room, Stanley Milner Library) during the festival (Nov.8-11, 2001). The Media Exhibit is about disseminating artists' works related to social change - we're looking for activists' photos, zines, music, posters, handbills, and anything else related to global social issues. Contact Lyn X at espa2001@home.com for more info or to submit.

ANOMALOUS SILENCER #5: Artists wanted for the next part compilation. Let the friends know, please! Noise/industrial/experimental CD-compilation series...Write to: NAPALMED c/o Radek Kopel, Lipova 1123, 434 01 Most, CZECH REPUBLIC Email: napalmed@volny.cz

Halfempty.com news update re: on-line articles, etc. needed for halfempty.com Hello. I'm in charge of the non-fiction or writing section of halfempty now so things are on their way to changing without the bob dylan song reference. Although if you want to get it out and cue the tape/cd then that is fine. anyhow, i am looking for interviews (with artists or imaginary) with URLS and these should be 1-2 pages long. non-fiction articles on culture, reviews, profiles (1000-2000 words) plus html links please. bio please leave your e-mail at the toe (like a death tag) of your writing. please plug something as well. each submission should be in arial font 10 point size or whatever in times new ancient roman and should be in word format. please leave a daytime number of someone you don't like for someone at halfempty to pester. (joke) thank you. for larger writing ideas please e-mail me personally. you now know the dentist drill. also, we may be considering fiction soon. magazine editors are encouraged to submit as they can better acquaint their periodicals with the mighty halfempty collective which gains weirdo plugs internationally for visual art, animation and over-all hipness. notho halfempty chimp.

Call for submissions about the recent events in Quebec City surrounding the FTAA and the Summit of the Americas. Fiction, essays, illustrations and poems, 500 words or less, send submissions to cumulus_press_ftaa@cumuluspress.com.

The Demise of Black Sheep Books

A fixture on the Vancouver small press scene for years, this summer Black Sheep Books announced it would close its doors. Owner George Koller circulated the following email:

It is with a heavy heart that I am forced to announce the demise of Black Sheep Books. My wife and I have tried everything to keep this wonderful little bookshop afloat for the past three years, but without some help from Heritage Canada, we are not able to continue. My family must take precedence. I lay the blame squarely at the feet of Sheila Copps (her e-mail address is min_copps@pch.gc.ca please write to her if you feel strongly that she should help us stay open) and all those who buy their books at Chapters, rather than supporting small independents like Black Sheep Books. I feel badly about Clive Holden (booked to read here September 7th) and the others who have been booked for readings. We are applying to the provincial government to have the reading series incorporated as a non-profit society - if that succeeds, we'll be looking around for a venue - and perhaps the Friday night readings will resume at that point. But we must have some funding for that to happen! Thanks to all of those who took part in our Bare Naked Poets marathon - it turned out to be our last hurrah! Ralph Alfonso was right - it was a historical weekend. We're grateful to all the writers who have ever read at Black Sheep Books. You truly gave a spirit to this little bookstore that was very special, indeed. Adieu, my friends, George Csaba Koller.

Got Something To Tell The World?

Post it on the BP Website at:

**WWW.
BROKENPENCIL
.COM**

Zines of the Month

June

Out of Service

litmag, #1, 54 pgs, Craig Carpenter, Dean Eyre, Rohan Quinby (eds.), \$8, 151 Dalton Trail, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 3G2

Rohan Quinby, one of the editors of this brand new literary journal out of Whitehorse, writes that the "imaginative universe of the Yukon is dominated by two features: nature and history." This may be true, but it hardly sums up the contents of what is an excellent and exciting new addition to the Canadian cultural landscape. In fact, if you continue to read Quinby's profound essay, you'll find that his is a much more complex understanding of the way history and nature blend into each other and disappear and reappear in all kinds of cultural incarnations. The truth, we find as we peruse the pages of this magazine, is that much of what we might perceive to be about nature or history is actually about community and individuality at a time when "real meaning and vitality" is something we have to struggle to find and then preserve. All this is to say that the editors of the inaugural issue of Out of Service have a sense of what they are trying to achieve, which makes their magazine not just the usual first issue hodge-podge of poems, stories and rants, but a calculated consideration of what it is to live and create in an isolated region like the Yukon. But that might make it all sound on the academic side, and I am delighted to be able to tell you that this is not an academic journal, this is fresh, fun writing. The opening story, "Fattening the Rabbit" by Liz Gontard, is a creepy ambiguous tale that would be at home in any pretentious Toronto journal, though it works better here because of how unexpectedly sublime it is. (This is condescension on my part, possibly because I've seen too many regional journals crammed with poetry about grandma's home-made quilt and stories about roughing it in the bush.) Anyway, "Rabbit" sets the tone, and Out of Service just keeps on delivering the goods. Particularly strong and welcome are there interviews painter and sculptor Alyx Jones talks powerfully about the landscape's impact on the individual. There's also a tribute to John Hatch, a self styled photographer and thinker who sounded like he was the kind of eccentric but valued figure you always imagine will be in communities like Whitehorse. All in all, this magazine's debut manages a rare thing: we are invited into the Out of Service world, but not made to feel like intruders; we are given a sense of community and possibility, but never talked down to. But, of course, the biggest bonus is in being presented with compelling fiction. Stories like Al Pope's Klondike Highway — tale of jaded Connie's seedy Northland adventure — conjure up the anxieties and disparities of rural life even as they articulate a universal resonance. (Hal Niedzviecki)

July

Three Stories

comic, \$4, 16 pages, Eyeball Hurt and the Medicine, c/o 31 Winter Bay, Brandon, MB, R7B 3H9, royalartlodge@hotmail.com

The latest gem to appear in the BP p.o. box is a fantastic little comic by Brandon, Manitoba artists Eyeball Hurt and the Medicine, a.k.a acclaimed comic artists Drue Langlois and Michael Dumontier. The three tiny stories in this humble collection are stark but inviting, crudely photocopied but sophisticated in content. Witness a girl whose head is filled with impossible visions, a boy who gets handed a baby by a bare-assed woman, and the priest who stops to listen when a boy's father dies. The strips are hand-drawn in a deceptively simple manner, with child-like captions pasted on top, almost as afterthoughts. Who needs words, anyway, when the art's this good? These guys are core members of Winnipeg's Royal Art Lodge (RAL) collective and also create music under their pseudonyms. I was tempted to buy everything listed in their back-page catalogue, but I couldn't decipher a single thing they were selling. What's that they say about genius often being unintelligible? (Emily Pohl-Weary)



by Heather Meek from Ache

August

Ache

zine, #3, \$3, Armen Svadjian, 167 Cortleigh Blvd., Toronto, ON, M5N 1P6, achemag@yahoo.ca

Ache is fast becoming one of Canada's top general interest zines. This zine's core is its interviews with interesting people involved in a variety of aspects of independent creation. Showing a wide range of knowledge and curiosity, Armen moves from Thomas Frank (of the Baffler), to Rumpshaker zine creator Eric Weiss and his battle with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, to an interview with Steven Joerg, proprietor of the AUM Fidelity New York City record company that issues what Joerg calls "avant-garde instrumental soul music", aka post-rock jazz skronk weirdness. I was particularly pleased with the in-depth knowledge that Armen brings to that interview, querying Joerg about his role as David S. Ware's manager, his relationship to the traditional jazz press and even asking the outrageously perfect question: "how free is free jazz?" Another great interview was with Dave Cooper, the Canadian cartoonist behind Fantagraphics title Weasel. Though Cooper is the only Canadian interviewed in this zine, Canada is not even mentioned in that interview or in the zine, which could

be symptomatic of the way indie culture is going (ie. not necessarily endowed with a local or regional sensibility) or it could be Armen's perspective, which definitely seems skewed to more obvious US hipster targets. What ache lacks in Canadian context it makes up for in Canadian content with Cooper doing a wonderfully strange cover, and cartoonist Heather Meek (living in Halifax, last I heard) providing several wonderful strange cartoons. There's also Vancouver/TO tall guy Ryan Bigge waxing philosophic about how hard it is to believe in anything except being irreverent about believing in anything. Ache doesn't purport to be about Canada and zines aren't subject to Canadian content rules - thank god - so we'll let Armen get away with it this time. But if he had replaced his own terrible cartoons, and the familiar essay on those California based fundamentalist Christian Chick mini-comics (a zine-land perennial subject), with more home-grown content, this zine would be even stronger than it already is. (Hal Niedzviecki)

Report on Goldstein

A Guest Columnist Finds Pathos and Passion in Hot Chicago

by Heather O'Neill

my daughter Zuuzuu and I come from Montreal to live with Goldstein in Chicago. We sleep on a second-hand water-bed, and Goldstein keeps asking if the bed is depressing me. The neighbours bring their television set out to their porch and the family sits around and watches it. Goldstein says it's the most beautiful thing he's ever seen. Goldstein and I have a fight about The Beatles one night and in the morning he takes my passport to work so I can't leave.

Zuuzuu and I buy a bottle of luck potion at the Virgin Mary store around the corner. Goldstein says he doesn't need it. Suit yourself, I say, rubbing it up and down my legs in the shower. The bugs in the shower look like big tangles of hair that are walking.

We wait for the bus on the lawn of the juvenile detention centre. A van that looks like it's been beaten with a baseball bat, and has eight kids wearing golden chains around their necks packed in the back, drives into the parking lot. Goldstein starts flailing his arms in the air for a cab. The big city makes Goldstein nervous. Goldstein gets hysterical once in a while and starts yelling things. When Zuuzuu and I go to the park, Goldstein warns that junkies congregate by the water fountain and that they stab you in the leg with infected needles.

Goldstein tells us everyday before he goes to work not to go to the swimming pool. There's no diving board at the pool so the teenagers jump off each other's heads. The boys smoke pot with their skinny bare legs folded. They don't need towels

Goldstein throws money around all the time now that he has a job in America. He says it isn't showy though, and that men like Jay-Z rap about this kind of thing all the time.

because they are too stoned to shiver. My new friend is 27 too. She has seven kids. She brings them to the pool in their pyjamas. They spread their sheet out with little pink flowers and lie in the sun. Half the kids come to swim in the pool in their underwear. The man in the ice cream truck beside the pool says I have a face like a rose.

Goldstein wakes me up at one o'clock to go drinking. He laughs because I'm wearing a plastic flower in my lapel and walking down the street with one eye closed. A man is reading his phone bill at the back of the bar and agonizing over it. Goldstein says it isn't a phone bill, it's an application to the mental institution.

Don't grow up and do drugs, I tell Zuuzuu every time we see a bum with white lips and a winter hat. We watch the people singing or playing their synthesizers or break-dancing with umbrellas on the corners. We think we could do that for a dollar too. We could have brought our guitars and my ukulele, but we only brought a little bag of clothes each.

We buy an instamatic camera. Zuuzuu runs up to people and asks if she can take photographs of their dogs. She says she's going to take the photographs of her half-brother in Montreal out of her album to make room for all the dogs.

When I start crying because the baby-sitter doesn't show up, Goldstein buys me a new outfit at the store across the street. That's what money's for, he says. Goldstein throws money around all the time now that he has a job in America. He says it isn't showy though, and that men like Jay-Z rap about this kind of thing all the time.

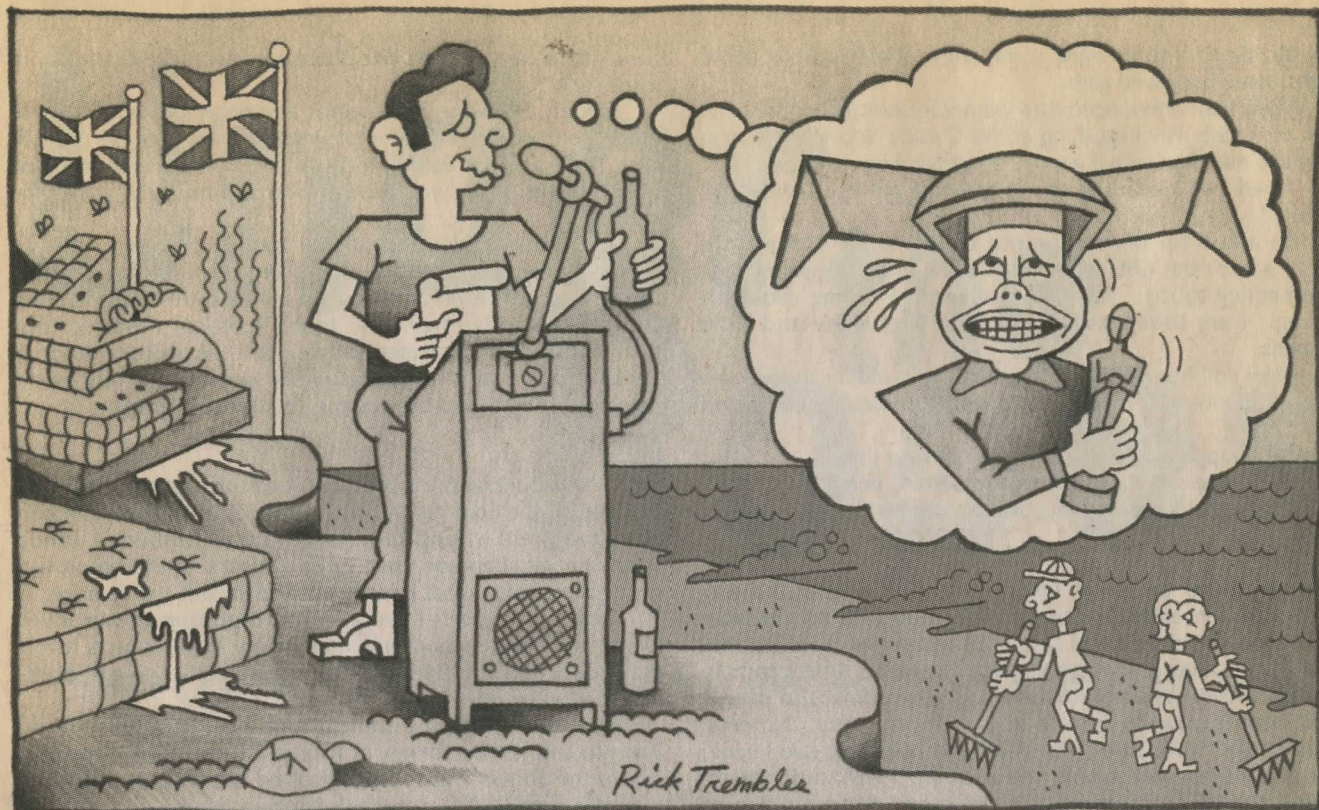
Everyone in Chicago drives their car as if they just spilled coffee on their lap. Every time Zuuzuu and I see a wrecked car that's missing windows and is hand-painted blue coming down the street, we beg Goldstein to buy us one just like it. Zuuzuu and I go to a used car lot to see what they have for under two hundred dollars. Each car is more lovely than the next with stickers of super-heroes on the dashboard. You just need to put a little tape around the steering wheel, the man who owns the lot says. The ladies in his office have tattoos all over their legs and red hair dye that pours down the back of their necks in the heat.

We all go to the flea market together and it puts us in a good mood. We see three kids sitting happily in a grocery cart as if it's a play-pen. A van backs into Goldstein going about 0.00001 miles per hour and he stands there blushing. He's bewildered as to why no one is reacting. "I was just hit by a van!" he says. Goldstein buys a bottle of orange juice imported from Mexico. He asks the woman for a bottle opener and she hands him a machete. He puts the orange juice back and buys a diet Pepsi with a twist off. Goldstein buys me a yellow hat with black butterflies. The man who sells it to him has a hairdo that looks like cigarette smoke. Goldstein squeezes fifteen squirts of syrup into Zuuzuu's slush. He keeps taking it from her to have a sip. He says the slush gives him a feeling of euphoria. Goldstein says that when he gets to work on Monday, he's going to tell everyone he was hit by a van, because he was.

Goldstein says if it was the nineteen-forties, he would have a job waking the strippers up from their naps back stage. We pretend that Goldstein has a wife named Tata and seven children from a previous marriage all named after tropical islands. We leave messages from her on the pad beside the telephone.

The only answering messages on my machine in Montreal are from the fire inspector. Goldstein and Zuuzuu pretend that they are backstage yelling at each other while the audience hollers for them to come out. They can play this game for hours. Goldstein says now that he is in America, maybe he should get some tattoos.

Heather O'Neill is a Montreal writer, and author of the book of poems Two Eyes Are You Sleeping.



art by Rick Trembles

Rant

Confined To Dildo

A ReLit Winner Looks Back on the Inaugural Small Press Book Award

by Mark Anthony Jarman

unclean! Unclean! Paul is a saint and a pal and he meets me at the St. John's Completely Genuinely International Airport, but he keeps coughing on me as we talk, even coughing on a bagel as he hands it to me in his kitchen (Lifting jaysus will ye not stop!). In my paranoia about catching his terrible head cold, I become like Howard Hughes trying to avoid germs.

I'm in Newfoundland for the first ever ReLit Awards, brain-child of the ever-sweet Kenneth J. Harvey and Janet Power and our car trunks are full of dark foaming beer and free books. Fun to drink from bottles with different labels than what you're used to, like spending wads of different coloured money in some

tropical port.

After the beer load-up we have to follow Ken and Janet and National Post writer Noah Richler to the beach party at Middle Cove, since Paul and I don't know the way. They put an ad in the paper so I'm half expecting biker gangs to arrive, but also worried no one will show. Janet drives fast, passes everyone on the road, and then we get stopped by a red light and their car sails out of sight.

On the highway they notice our car is not behind them and they wait for us in the ditch, revving the engine like greasers.

I got off the plane wearing shorts and a thin shirt. Was 38 above when I left Fredericton, people keeling over in puddles of human tallow. In Newfoundland it's 5 above, foggy, and drizzling.

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It's good to work carrying wood to the huge pyre and it's good that the work only lasts about three seconds. Farms sit above the sea, and a steep road careers down to the sand and stone beach. The spot Ken and Janet have chosen is spectacular, a natural outdoor amphitheatre, giant cliff walls forming a horseshoe bay, clouds scudding and mist-wracked waves booming noisily into the gravel's rattle.

My old shoes are letting in sand.

Lisa Moore, Libby Creelman, Larry Mathews, Ramona Dearing. These and other fine writers are there at the roaring bonfire. I trek to the trunk, grab another beer. Someone from The Post takes pictures.

People read poems and stories, trying to compete with the wind and crackling fire and ocean's non-stop pistons. There is something fitting about the scene: not highly organised, no power, little light, tiny people flinging feeble words out. Perhaps a bit like the indie Canlit scene. Is it futile? Can anyone hear? Yet some words get out there somehow, hang in the streaming



busy air, there is some light, some angst, some warmth, some laughs, some borrowed garb.

When I am announced as a winner in short fiction all I can think of is Sally Fields gushing at the Oscars: You like me, you really like me. Not sure if anyone gets my joke or can even hear me. I yell out a reading of my Atwood piece, "Love Is All Around."

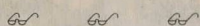
I'm asked for an impromptu CBC interview down the beach, admire the CBC woman for doing this, struggle to think of something to say. Better at writing than talking about my writing. I am broadcast on the local arts show and As It Happens.

At the end Ken and Janet are visibly relieved it's over. Some of us head downtown to bars; I love the local accents and dialect.

"A kidnapping'd be deadly, I'd be all over that."

"I hates me job, Paul, I hates it something fierce."

"That girl's looser than pile of soot on a windy day."

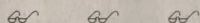


Hotel tax, tourist tax, bikini tax, curry tax, hallway tax, halfway tax. An oil convention in town and no rooms left (luckily Janet booked me one early just in case I could make it). I am reminded of a Vancouver reading years back. It was an American holiday, plus Jimmy Page and Robert Plant were reuniting so people could hear Stairway to Heaven for the zillionth time. No hotel rooms in all of Vancouver, except for one place that said I could have a room that was coming free at 2 a.m. I walked the streets and ate toast at Denny's and at 6 a.m. caught a bus and ferry to Victoria, groggy but saving \$225 plus tax. My brilliant career. To be a rock and not to roll, sings plaintive Robert under the arena's white bedsheet. Everyone should have to walk the streets all night, get a taste of what it's like to be made homeless by Led Zeppelin.

In the Newfoundland hotel I stay up until after 3 a.m and the bedside alarm clock goes off at 6:45 — I didn't set it, hence I am pissed off. I try to go back to sleep, but people in the hall are yelling: WE CAN GAMBLE ALL DAY!

Or are they saying gambol? Like little sheep?

Either way, fuck off.



Up the peninsula, driving all the way around the big bay, it's still Newfoundland, but a very different world than the city of St John's. Summer is late this year, leaves just coming out green in July.

Drive and drive the old slow roads, not the new inland highway. Ryan's Hill, Grave Hill, Lobster Factory Lane, Upper Gullies, Dildo, Holyrood, Come By Chance, and Massive Skull, where we stop at the famous Michael Winter log cabin birthplace. A great drive, outports from 1610, British flags flapping in the ceaseless wind, and men searching the surf with rakes.

"My wife smokes, God bless her," one man says, "and my daughter sneaking it now. Now why do they do that?"

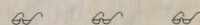
Today seems to be Discarded Mattress Day in Nfld, dozens of mattresses piled along the narrow road. IS EVERYONE IN NEWFOUNDLAND THROWING OUT THEIR BED AT THE SAME TIME?? Did all the beds give up their souls at the same time or did this many locals all find their husband or wife was slipping around on them and want to make some symbolic statement knowing the ReLits were in town and that us sensitive writer types would understand their bold homespun metaphors?

ATVs for sale in many driveways and Jigg's Dinner advertised on signs, a mid-day Sunday meal of corned beef boiled in salt, potatoes boiled in salt and vegetables boiled in salt, and perhaps some salt for good measure (oh aye it's some wicked).

A local says, "Don't like those townies, Jayz boys they're some rude."

Rude? Everyone here seems amazingly polite, townie or not. There are divisions. People in one village hate the next village. There are bars Paul won't set foot in. And everyone knows your business. "Saw you driving; who was that with you in the car?"

Just before dusk we stroll out from Paul's cabin, walk his dog along the rocky highland cliffs over sea, rushing to get there before dark so we don't fall over a cliff into the sea. Stunning stone headlands, they look Irish, Scottish, otherworldly. Beautiful views of the water, yet we don't see another person in the landscape that is his de facto front yard. Cheap rent on the little house and a yard big as some countries in Europe.

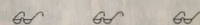


I love Newfoundland, cloudberries, cod tongues and hard tack, drinking at The Ship Inn. I buy new shoes at a factory discount store, they were waiting for me and no mall involved. I wander town one last afternoon, then catch a fast taxi to the airport with my ceramic plaque that Janet made and my one loonie prize.

The state of arts coverage and reporting in our lovely Dominion is not encouraging, no memory in arts now, a revolving door of rookie writers and editors and cost-cutting directives and reviews off the wire

The ReLits are an excellent idea but the ReLits are not Toronto and not big money or glitz so it's easy for the media to ignore the writers and presses involved (which is exactly Ken's Harvey's point, exactly what he's bitching about).

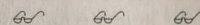
Disposable movies gets ton of free coverage, even the worst Hollywood dreck that is crapped upon us by coke-addled strangers and hauled away quickly like dogshit on the front lawn. Fashion gets pages and glossy mags, entire cable channels to show ridiculous dresses that no human will wear. Why? Boring celeb divorce and endless Stones reunions: pages and pages each time. Why?



Back in Fredericton I harass the local paper and stamp columnist Michael Nowlan does a good article, and neighbours read of the awards, see my picture. Someone else hears of the ReLits several times on CBC; supposedly there was a photo spread in the Ottawa paper, and something by Gordon Morash in The Edmonton Journal, though my family there don't mention anything.

I got chapters in Ottawa and Fredericton to place 19 Knives on a table of award winners. That's about it. And arts coverage is only going to get worse with the concentration of powers, information into fewer and fewer hands, blah blah blah. Everyone in the arts world is familiar with this complaint.

Anyway, it was not high profile, not the lit event of the year for the world at large, but it was a great time and it was different and I'd love to do it again and I was honoured to be involved. Ken and Janet may not want to do it again. Hope they do. I like the spirit of the event.



Michael Winter, a novelist who earlier had won the \$5000 Winterset Award for excellence in Newfoundland writing, sends me an email: Congrats, skipper. Together we, the Anansi Boys, have hauled \$5001 out of Nfld.

*Mark Jarman teaches in Fredericton and is the author, most recently, of the ReLit award winning short-story collection 19 Knives.*



# Under the Ropes

## Searching for the Soul of a Wrestling Subculture

by Phill Feltham with Victor Penney

**F**lamboyant spandex outfits. Larger than life personalities. Outrageous interviews. Scripted manoeuvres. Fixed outcomes. These are the trademarks of professional wrestling, a spectacle somewhere between sport and entertainment with a fan base as enthusiastic as it is scorned.

Pro-wrestlers and their enthusiasts have long been criticized by the rest of society for the passion and enthusiasm they devote to an obviously rigged contest. For some, pro wrestling mocks a legitimate sport. For others, professional wrestling is the Spam of athletics, with the spectacle of millions willingly worshipping an obvious sham the best example of the damage pop culture inflicts on good sense.

And yet, many of these same critics have no problem passionately extolling a scripted television show set in an unlikely leftie White House, drooling over a computer generated retro talking ape, or watching steroid ridden football players earning \$1000-a-minute to pace the sidelines. Still, mainstream society shows nothing but complete disdain for wrestling and its trappings. New York Post sports columnist Phil Mushnick sums it up, writing in a 1998 column that, "Pro wrestling isn't good-guy-versus-bad-guy theater anymore. It's bad guy versus worse guy, and both are instructed to attract and sustain an audience through shock appeal. On any given night kids are 'entertained' by warfare between racially

segregated gangs, ethnic stereotyping, degradation of women and wrestlers who wave toward their crotches – a signal to kids in the live audience to chant vulgarities and hoist signs bearing profane messages."

But the myriad legions of wrestling fans have their own perspective.

Paul J. MacArthur co-editor and co-publisher of the website [www.wrestlingperspective.com](http://www.wrestlingperspective.com) responds to the many naysayers in the media vs. wrestling war. In *Fake This Wrestling Perspective* #74, he writes, "You'd think these media mavens would at least express a journalistic interest in how this programming – for which they express only complete disdain – manages to be such a consistent money-maker on the tube. Instead, they take long, rambling drives through irrelevant side issues like 'real vs. fake' and never come within hailing distance of comprehending wrestling's new found crossover-demographic appeal."

What MacArthur knows and mainstream critics refuse to realize is that fans of wrestling have never cared about its so-called fakery. In fact, the opposite is the case: it is wrestling's blatant mockery of the entertainment illusion that makes it so accessible and appealing to so many. What the mainstream media – and even mainstream wrestling organizations like theWWF – don't realize is that the fans' love for the fake spectacle of wrestling is not about the violence, the personalities, or the bottom line. Devotion goes far beyond the televised spectacle of arena

cage matches and bad 70s rock. The true appeal of wrestling lies in its simplicity: it is an entertainment easily imitated and contorted. Its simple plots and cheap aesthetic make it the ultimate in interactive culture. To be a fan of wrestling is to be part of something that can be endlessly replicated and referenced in everything from suburban backyards to websites to high-art videos.

Pro wrestling goes in and out of style. The ratings drop, the kids turn to extreme skateboarding over broken glass, but the restless core remains dedicated, forever enacting the primaeval comic book battle between good and bad that gives wrestling both its popular appeal and its subculture longevity. Like punk rock and kung-fu, wrestling is an idea, a lifestyle, a way to be, as much as it is entertainment or sport. It is a spectacle whose paradigms have permeated our culture, infiltrating other subcultures and spawning their own bastard traditions. From comics to art to music to videos, wrestling's aesthetic provides style, inspiration, and devotion.

## E-Wrestling

For the last three years, I've built up and elaborated my own Internet-based fantasy-wrestling league called Royal Canadian Wrestling ([www.geocities.com/Phill\\_Feltham](http://www.geocities.com/Phill_Feltham)). I have invented my own characters and written weekly scripts. Some characters are fictional, others are based





**Phill Feltham's childhood alter ego as a backyard wrestling star**

on real-life people whose personalities are copied, reshaped and melded into an rCw character. At times when my friends or I get into fights, have problems in school or at work, I arrange a wrestling match in the rCw to solve the problem. Real life conflicts and stories are transcribed into a world of wrestling fiction. The scripts of the rCw are a twisted journal of lumps, bumps and body slams. The weekly scripts are published on the rCw website (and referred to as the "weekly television show"). Though the matches are complete fantasy, I often rely on everyday life to provide me with minor inspiration for major mayhem. For example, I turned my brother Mark into the character Jamie Malcolm. Jamie's character traits are similar to Mark's except that

## Like punk rock and kung-fu, wrestling is an idea, a lifestyle, a way to be.

they're blown way out of proportion. Mark is sometimes egotistical with a touch of charisma, so Jamie becomes a widely exaggerated version of my brother. My brother became engaged a year ago. Two months later, in the rCw, Jamie became engaged to a brand new character introduced as Angie Dylan, loosely based on his fiancée.

The climax of these weekly shows is one big event to end old stories and begin new ones. This show is called a "Pay-Per-View." Whereas WWF fans end up paying thirty dollars a month to watch three hours of wrestling, visitors to my site are able to read detailed descriptions of the matches for free.

But beyond providing what I hope is cheap entertainment, for me, the rCw is an escape. It's an escape from the bland world of professional wrestling, but also a way to turn the seemingly uncontrollable trials and tribulations of everyday life into something I have just a tiny bit of power over. In the end, I write the rCw primarily for myself. There is no audience with a three second attention span to lose interest in my work. The rCw allows me to explore options in a way mainstream wrestling can't. For me the experience is equivalent to the many who seek to reclaim the terms of pop culture by making their own rap album, shooting their own documentary, producing their own zine. Though wrestling is my particular oeuvre, I consider my endeavors to be on par with others who explore the limits of pop culture through independent action.

The rCw is similar to many other fantasy wrestling leagues found on the Internet. One of the better-known e-leagues is the Internet Wrestling Federation (IWF/WOW). Founder Chris Jurkschat has run the IWF/WOW since 1996 and currently has 25 members actively participating. Jurkschat started out roleplaying in e-leagues, but then turned to co-owning his own league with Chad Ishikawa. The way the IWF/WOW works is the more you roleplay, the more your wrestler has a chance at winning. Role-playing is done by creating interviews for your wrestler. These interviews are compiled together and sent through email. Jurkschat calls this "Trashtalk." "Trashtalk" is a forum for e-wrestlers to bash each other and are inserted into storylines. IWF/WOW has one weekly event known as Monday Night Mayhem. The

"weekly show" is a series of scripted matches written in detail by the e-fed owner and its members. The matches are usually scheduled when other members challenge each other. These scripts can average between 30 to 75 pages for an entire card.

Jurkschat's desire to run the IWF/WOW was similar to mine. Sick of watching wrestling on television, he decided to start an E-wrestling league to try out his own ideas, as well as help others with theirs. On Monday nights, Jurkschat will have wrestling on TV, but it primarily acts as background noise while he works on the IWF/WOW. Jurkschat says that "it's a good hobby and a good way to get creative."

Role-players in the IWF/WOW share common views and a dedication to e-wrestling.

"Everybody loves to participate and it's so easy to get involved. If you dish out an open challenge in some feds, you're likely to get completely ignored, but the handlers in the IWF are so eager to strut their stuff that somebody is always watching your moves the moment you join. It's not hard at all to find angles," says one of its members in a recent IWF/WOW poll.

"E-wrestling," says Jurkschat, "is here to stay. Just like 'real' wrestling, it will have its up and down periods (like right now, with 'real' wrestling in a down period, e-wrestling is in a bit of a down period). But it will be here for a long time to come."

## Backyard Wrestling

Backyard wrestling is another facet of wrestling subculture. As in the e-leagues, people will create an entire wrestling league to appease their wrestling cravings. Only unlike Internet wrestling leagues, in backyard wrestling, people actually physically grapple. Some leagues simply stage the matches and go home, while others videotape the matches and put them up on websites in episodes, effectively attempting to create their own indie wrestling channels. Some backyard wrestling owners will buy their own wrestling rings, others will wrestle on old mattresses, on the grass or even on con-



crete. Backyard wrestling is a way for the fan to become an integral part of the action.

WWF superstar Mick Foley is revered in backyard wrestling circles, since he got his start as, essentially, a backyard wrestler. As the story goes, one night, Foley attended a wrestling event at New York's Madison Square Garden. Foley had skipped a day of college just to see his favorite wrestler, Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka. A cage match at this event between Snuka and The Magnificent Muraco was one of the defining moments that influenced Foley to choose a career in professional wrestling. In the match, Snuka dove 15 feet off the top of the cage and landed on a vulnerable Muraco sprawled out in the ring below. This move influenced Foley to shoot a wrestling video called *The Legend of Frank Foley*. In this video, Foley jumped off a neighbour's house and landed on a mattress below.

Of course, not all backyard wrestlers take things as seriously as Foley. (And most will never become WWF stars.) Nevertheless, backyard wrestling is still highly controversial. As backyard wrestling has increased in popularity and become a very active part of the North American wrestling subculture, it has been increasingly vilified, with injuries and even fatalities attributed to the pastime. A well known incident involving backyard wrestling was the death of 19-month-old William Sweet in Yakima, Washington. Sweet was killed when his 12-year-old cousin performed a wrestling move on him known as the Jackknife Powerbomb: you put the person's head between your legs, lock your hands around their lower stomach, pull them up onto your shoulders and slam them onto their back really hard.

Despite its bad reputation in the media, the backyard wrestling community is generally very careful to decry violence. One website, the Backyard Wrestling Spotlight (<http://byws.cjb.net/>), is totally dedicated to individuals interested in becoming backyard wrestlers. The site answers questions and concerns ranging from performing moves correctly to creating a good wrestling character. This site also discusses "garbage wrestling" which is defined as mere fighting. Instead of applying regular wrestling moves, teenagers will hit each other with baseball bats wrapped with barbed wire and other weapons.

The site's operator, Psyko Dreamer, states on the site that garbage wrestling is frowned upon by others in the backyard wrestling subculture because its main objective is to hurt, not to have fun. Dreamer writes that "it's all about hitting



**Dylan Foxxx punishes La Cabra with "the Mexican surfboard."**

your opponent(s) over the head with a plastic wiffle bat, or hitting your opponent(s) with a trash can lid while wrestling on top of a car or something."

The "real backyard wrestling", according to Dreamer, is the traditional wrestling match with storylines and protocols to make sure things don't get out of hand. "The objective is to have a good match, not to kill one another."

Though most backyard wrestlers wrestle for fun, not money, there have been instances where backyard wrestling has been profitable. In August 1999, 17-year-old Andre Verdun, who ran his Real Wrestling Federation from Ventura, California, signed a deal with Dead Alive Productions to produce 36 hours of wrestling for eight videos which are sold across the US in stores and on the web. The Mississauga, Ontario-based Backyard Wrestling Federation (BYWF) has received a lot of media attention, including articles in the *National Post* and *USA Today*. (Ed's note: See the adjacent story on the BYWF this issue.) But despite the boom, they keep their federation a non-profit venture. In the end, Dreamer and the folks at the BYWF operate their websites and federations solely for the love of wrestling.

Still, no one can deny that, of all the wrestling subcultures, backyard wrestling is the one most likely to turn parody into amateur mayhem. People do get hurt, particularly in leagues where the emphasis is placed less on style and story and more on violent manoeuvres. At the same time, the appeal of actually wrestling is undeniable. Once upon a time I was just another backyard wrestling hopeful,

inspired by the glory and glamour of my WWF heroes. As a kid, my brother, our pals and I would gather around and knuckle it up in the backyard on the grass. Soon it turned serious. We would schedule matches that would last no longer than 60 seconds. My dad even made championship belts for us. The belts were made from black rubber and the face of the belt was made from thick bits of ply wood. The fronts were spray painted — yellow for the World title and silver for the Intercontinental title. No different from the kids who played endless games of shinny hockey or pick-up basketball all while dreaming of the big leagues, I still remember our innocent optimism, the sun setting on the makeshift ring as Mom called us into dinner.

## Apartment Wrestling

Perhaps the seediest and strangest of all the counter-culture wrestling phenomena is "apartment wrestling." Traditionally involving two buxom women battling it out in a domestic setting, the scenario is irretrievably linked to porn and perversion. One can't help but picture a threadbare apartment where a group of perverted men huddle around two barely clothed women who are trying to claw out each other's eyes. In fact, that is the very scene depicted in the many apartment wrestling stories found across the Internet, where, in these digital days, most apartment wrestling fans go to get





**The Tijuana Bibles**

their fix.

One such site, Apartment House Wrestling Gallery, run by an individual who calls himself DrChin, collects the old apartment wrestling magazines, at once providing lurid images for fetishists and giving the curious spectator a look into one of the longer running underground wrestling traditions. DrChin's site has been on-line since November 1999, but his passion for apartment wrestling subculture goes way back.

"I stumbled across apartment wrestling in 1975," he says, "when I saw the May '75 issue of Sports Review Wrestling on the local newsstand." He created the site when he noticed there was a number of people constantly trying to get a hold of the old Apartment House Wrestling images on newsgroups. His website was designed to share his collection with those people. "My attraction," explains DrChin, "is the style, the presentation; from the overwrought, overly dramatic text to the look and composition of the pictures."

DrChin also says that he understands there are negative stereotypes that surround fans of apartment wrestling. But, he says, people who are usually attracted to what his site has to offer are those who remember the apartment wrestling magazines from their youth and appreciate them for their nostalgic value. Though many would consider the content on his and similar sites to be, at the very least, sexist and offensive, DrChin defends old-style apartment wrestling – its black and white grainy newsprint pictures and excessive prose – as just another facet of a b-movie era we look back on with nos-

talgia and a fair degree of irony. He also notes, correctly, that wrestling has always been used as an excuse to put women — and to a lesser extent men — in compromising poses. "If you search around the web," he says, "I think you'll find many other female fighting sites that use wrestling as an excuse to put women in sexual situations."

The attraction of apartment wrestling is a combination of comic-book like scenarios and lewd in-your-face action. Despite DrChin's rationalizations, apartment wrestling mixes old-style stereotypes with the worst kind of sexism. Here's an excerpt from one of DrChin's 70s mags, called Apartment House Wrestling: Battling Girls: "Their bodies move with a sensual fury which can only be suggested beneath bikinis and halters. The women exude an electric excitement when they realize the last vestige of civilized restraint has been eliminated. Without clothing, women revert to their basic craving for sensation. They are wild, magnificent, jungle beasts, desiring only the satisfaction of ego and seeing their wonder reflected in the gazes of admiring men."

## The Parkdale Wrestler

Stacey Case and his Toronto-based band, the Tijuana Bibles formed in 1997 and use Mexican wrestling, known as Lucha Libre, as the inspiration for their band's antics. In Lucha Libre, the wrestlers have secret identities and never remove their

masks. The five members of the Tijuana Bibles each have their own Lucha character and wear Lucha Libre masks.

On stage, the Tijuana Bibles look like a cross between axe-murderers and superheroes. This is appropriate, as wrestling has always occupied a territory somewhere between the comic and the menacing. Lucha Libre-style wrestling, in particular, has its own corny protocol and aesthetic, and its merging with North-American pop culture lends an air of exoticism to what many see as strictly trailer park fare. Certainly, Lucha wrestling makes the parallels between wrestling and comic book/superhero culture undeniable. Like superheroes, the legend and protocol of Lucha is a mixture of pop cliché and indie pathos.

One of the earliest masked Mexican Lucha wrestlers was Rudolfo Guzman, who, influenced by a masked American wrestler named Cyclone, donned a silver mask and adopted ring names El Santo (The Saint) and El Mascarado de Plata (The Man In The Iron Mask). When Guzman died in 1984, he was buried in his mask. Losing a mask destroys a Luchadore's career. When the mask comes off, the wrestler is revealed as a normal human being, not a superhero. The mask can be lost in a "mask versus mask" retirement match which involves the loser "unmasking." When the mask is removed, the wrestler is not able to ever fight again. Many of the song titles in The Tijuana Bibles' music are influenced by the all-or-nothing notion of unmasking, with songs like "Mexican Courage" and "Las Momias de Gt" (The Mummies of Guanajuato) chronicling a bygone era when wrestling stood for something more than just action figures and pay-per-view.

Stacey Case is something of a subculture wrestling guru. He not only performs as part of the Tijuana Bibles, but he has also made a series of Super-8 movies chronicling the exploits of "Arriba the Parkdale Wrestler", for which the band did the soundtracks. The short Charlie Chaplin-style three minute films show an overweight wrestler in a mask fighting and losing in almost all the videos. In Terror In the Park the Parkdale Wrestler (played by Case's friend Carlos Cabellero) arrives in a park on his motorcycle only to see an evil character named The Feeler feeding pigeons exploding food. The Parkdale Wrestler sees this cruel injustice and attacks The Feeler. The Feeler retaliates and beats down on our hero. The Feeler leaves the Parkdale Wrestler practically unconscious and begins an orgasmic pigeon stomping frenzy. Being the hero, the Parkdale Wrestler saves the day and finishes off the Feeler with a steel chair.



Case has also put together a comic book in which different cartoonists chronicle the often blood thirsty antics of Arriba as he battles against his arch-enemy Chupacabra. Well known talents as diverse as Fiona Smyth and Christopher Hutsul contributed drawings to the book.

Not surprisingly, Case's love for wrestling dates back to when he was a kid. He recalls watching NWA wrestling Sunday afternoons when he was younger. He also recalls ordering a role-playing wrestling game from the back of a comic book. The game became addictive to Case when he replaced the stock wrestlers included with his own characters. "In a week we made up our own wrestlers and played this game. There were six of us, we played every day after school, from September to June, creating our own wrestlers. It's like being someone different. It never got boring."

## The Art of Wrestling

With its mixture of nostalgia and drama, the art world has always been drawn toward wrestling. This is hardly surprising. At its best, wrestling seems like a cross between performance art and b-movies; and wrestling's worst aspects – violence and sensationalism – are attributes the art world desperately aspires to.

Wrestling fan and Toronto artist Germaine Koh has hosted several wrestling-inspired fundraisers for the art community. "I once organized a now-quite-legendary wrestling party in my studio," she tells me, "so people seem to think that I'm the queen of wrestling."

Curious, I attended Koh's second wrestling fundraiser, held April 6th in a warehouse in Toronto's west end. The first thing I saw walking inside was an art gallery showcasing wrestling-inspired art. One display featured a series of wooden blocks that were constructed by Carolyn Rowney. They were no more than three to four inches tall, with words associated with wrestling on them like, "victory", "no love lost", "score and points."

Toward the back of the warehouse, a makeshift wrestling ring was constructed between four poles. It was made out of a series of futons and mattresses covered by a blue tarp that was duct-taped together. The four poles were wrapped in thick foam. The artists had a dressing room separate from all of this. Behind the curtain and through a dark room, the wannabe wrestlers could be found in an industrial-sized closet. Here, they prepared for their matches. Crowded close together, everyone was sweating, but rev-



The scene at the Toronto wrestling/art fund-raiser

eling in the night's festivities.

The wrestling part of the event, from a technical standpoint, was far from spectacular, but that was hardly the point. The melee of gangly artists on the blue tarp tried out simple arm drags, hip tosses, and awkward grappling holds. Some matches had a serious feel to them, but mostly they were just about having fun. In between the matches, two janitors, The Germinator and "Phil'er up Klygo", would come out onto the mats and try to clean it up for the next match. They would bump into each other and fall over, getting the crowd going.

One of the participants, Steve Kaklumanos, a writer for Spill Magazine, wrestled that night as The Canadian Wolfman – a character that he also inhabits during Rawkin' Ray's Radio Therapy program on the community radio station CKLN.

Kaklumanos described the Wolfman as a beast and an animal who knows what he wants and how to get a wrestling belt. "I'm a mean, crude asshole, who's filled with rage and hate and jealousy." Kaklumanos likes how flexible wrestling is because he is able to adapt his Wolfman persona any way he pleases. "It's the ultimate creative outlet."

"Think about any art form – fashion, makeup, music, audio/video, comedy, drama, oratory, pyrotechnic art, visual art, purely physical expression – no matter what it is, it can be (and always is) utilized in wrestling. So, it's really an all-encompassing art form that you can do anything creative with."

To Kaklumanos, wrestling is "modern mythology." "Just like people always liked

to hear stories about Hercules or Isis or Thor or whoever...wrestlers are the modern equivalent of legendary heroes," he explains. "And the stories they tell are the epics of today."

Kaklumanos says wrestling has "colourful pageantry" and a carnival atmosphere. "It subverts the sometimes sad state of the world and gives power to the people. In wrestling, all the kings and aristocrats and mean, rich assholes can be turned into a joke, and a charismatic common man can make fools of them and beat their asses, while everyone cheers."

That night at the fundraiser, you could clearly see the way wrestling's populist charm drew a usually fractious group of artists together. Organizer Koh described the event as "a bunch of artists, who might normally think of themselves as pretty cerebral, getting down and dirty." A communal appreciation of wrestling as a pop culture platform for make believe aggression allowed the artists and audience to move in and out of wrestling's conventions, reinventing and parodying as they went along. Koh wasn't concerned that the artists would shirk from all the attention: "The art crowd is always ready to act out, so I knew we could pull together a good show, even with our all being rank amateurs."

## Kaiju Big Battel

While most forms of subculture-wrestling, surprisingly, stick pretty close to the TV formula we know and love, the merging





### Kaiju Big Battel

of art and wrestling can lead to much stranger fare. Take the performances of the Boston based Kaiju Big Battel. Kaiju's video-tapes and live shows are closer to Godzilla in a wrestling ring than professional wrestling. Kaiju Big Battel is a concoction of Japanese monster movies and pop-advertising cultural ephemera spiced with a dash of pro wrestling. Founded in 1995 with the simple desire to make a video of monsters fighting, in Kaiju the characters are larger than life and range from foam monsters to giant sandwiches. A match, or battle, consists of two characters throwing each other around the ring that is scattered with cardboard buildings about five feet in height.

The main connection between professional wrestling and Kaiju Big Battel is that scheduled bouts occur in a ring, and some basic manoeuvres are implemented by the performers. But that's where the comparisons with professional wrestling stop.

"Very few people see Kaiju Big Battel as wrestling per se, I think they enjoy it for the mayhem and spectacle of the Battels, not tight wrestling moves," says David Borden, who handles sales of merchandise from the website, [www.kaiju.com](http://www.kaiju.com). Randy Borden, one of the original co-founders of Kaiju Big Battel, doesn't consider Kaiju to be on the same level as professional wrestling, "We don't look down on wrestling but do see it as funny. We think we are a joke and I think it shows. The WWF is like a soap opera/action show. We try to be more like an action/comedy. We take it seriously but not completely. We make fun of everything including ourselves."

Since its conception, Kaiju has accumulated a passionate audience which doesn't just consist of people who are fans of professional wrestling. There are fans from the anime crowd, Godzilla fans, rock and rollers, little kids and 60-year-old grandmothers. About one month ago, they did a free show at Northeastern University and 1,000 people came out on a Monday at noon. They have sold out their last three shows, drawing crowds from 600 to 800 people. At one show, they had to turn away 150 people to comply with fire codes, but most waited at the doors in case someone inside left. To explain Kaiju's popularity, Randy Borden cites the now familiar explanation of nostalgia, saying that fans seem to respond to the act as a way of reliving their childhoods. "It's different and strange but familiar at the same time. A lot of people tell me they have a sense of nostalgia. Different people see it from a different angle depending on what they grew up watching on TV as a kid on Saturday, be it wrestling, Japanese monster movies or even Pokemon. It takes them back."

## Conclusion: Under the Ropes

Kaiju Big Battel's popularity has attracted the attention of management companies, publicists, television executives, and independent comic companies who wish to, as David Borden puts it, "make Kaiju a star." Without going into details, David admits that while he's unsure of how

things will work out with all of these new offers, one thing is for sure, "We're prepared to brave it alone. We've made it this far on our own, and we're prepared to go all the way by ourselves if need be."

The corporate courting of Kaiju Big Battel, like the courting of backyard wrestling and even wrestling bands – New York Lucha-inspired band Los Straitjackets have been on Conan O'Brien four times! – suggests that subculture wrestling, as it is with so much indie activity, percolates just under the surface of the mainstream. At the same time, the innocence and, strangely enough, purity that much indie wrestling evokes would not likely survive extended mainstream exposure. These various subculture wrestling phenomena play on irony and nostalgia, on our desire to reclaim pop culture's creative spirit without being undermined by its reliance on dehumanizing mega-stars and ad dollars.

Standing near enough to the flame to feel the heat but not get burnt, wrestling subculture communities use obscurity, shock value, and amateurish enthusiasm to inspire their alternative wrestling worlds. The ringside fans in these worlds are the creators themselves. Neither ignored nor famous, the protagonists of the wrestling subculture crouch barely noticed under the ropes, only occasionally running onto the canvas to perform the cultural equivalent of the pile driver.

Phil Feltham is an indie wrestling enthusiast living in the suburbs of Toronto. He created and operates the Royal Canadian Wrestling League which can be seen at [www.geocities.com/Phil\\_Feltham](http://www.geocities.com/Phil_Feltham).



# Backyard Wrestling for Fun and Glory, Not Cash or Gore

by Christopher Read

For \$29.90 US – plus shipping and handling – you can purchase *The Best of Backyard Wrestling I and II*, compiled amateur footage of real-life teenaged lunatics wrestling in their backyards. The website set up to sell the *Best of Backyard* tapes ([www.backyard-wrestling.com](http://www.backyard-wrestling.com)) depicts bloodied youths with pain-stricken, contorted faces – and “backyard babe” Tylene Buck looking into the camera with pornographic allure, apparently about to remove her cut-off t-shirt. “Imagine seeing two crazed wrestlers beating each other senseless while engulfed in scorching flames!” the copy reads.

But members of the Mississauga-based Backyard Wrestling Federation [BYWF] won’t admit to having seen the tape, and aren’t impressed by its grotesque sensationalism.

In contrast with [backyardwrestling.com](http://backyardwrestling.com), [bywf.com](http://bywf.com) seems almost puritanical. It is a crisp and neat affair containing the expected components: a list of league members, a brief history of the league, and a message board. But its main and most compelling purpose is to deliver the free BYWF weekly video netcast: “Friday Massacre” – a scripted series of matches and out-of-ring encounters involving the BYWF’s current roster of 15 active wrestlers and personalities.

Though you won’t confuse “Friday Massacre” with “WWF Raw”, Massacre does have a certain underdog charm.

“There are things they do...that rival, at least in terms of thought and comedy, what you’ll watch on TV,” says Omar Mills, an American fan. “I’ve never seen anything that’s underground that takes itself this seriously.”

However, the BYWFers’ devotion to their art should not be misunderstood as a failure to identify the line where artifice and reality intersect.

“Wrestling isn’t real, we know that,” insists Kris Verri, 19, who portrays BYWF star Dylan Foxxx.

Verri, who runs the BYWF with Tony Rogers [Nexus], and Josh Atkinson [Bambino/Inferno], regularly receives email from kids who brag about the latest wrestling injuries they’ve incurred after subjecting themselves to various hellish manoeuvres. Often their foolishness arises from a belief that professional wrestling has little to do with stagecraft and plenty to do with genuine excruciation, so Verri does his best to

set them straight.

“I emailed him back,” Verri says of one such attempt to correct a misguided boy, “and said ‘wrestling isn’t real, you know, don’t be an idiot.’”

Tall and good-looking, Verri’s Dylan Foxxx usually has a cigarette hanging off his lip and was described as “a James Dean-like character” in a recent *National Post* article. His theme song, which gets played every time he enters a scene, is a brash swing tune that evokes his party-boy reputation. Verri and the other BYWFers clearly enjoy playing their characters. The escapist pleasure they derive from producing the BYWF must be contagious because “Friday Massacre” continues to attract four to five thousand viewers per week, admittedly down from the high of ten to fifteen thousand they enjoyed after a 1999 *USA Today* feature put the BYWF and backyard wrestling on the map. Despite all the media attention and fan interest, Verri and the other BYWFers insist that they have little desire to turn their hobby into a money-making enterprise.

“I do it just because it’s fun,” says Verri. But he admits, when pressed, that “every single one of us has had or has dreams of maybe one day becoming a WWF superstar.” Still, Verri prefers the idea of a regular job to the strain of being a pro-wrestler. As he puts it: “Some of those wrestlers can’t even get out of bed in the morning because they’re so hurt.”

Currently in his first year at Brock University, Verri lives with his parents in Brampton, Ontario, and wants to do a Philosophy major and Sociology minor and then go into Law. He manages to juggle school, the BYWF, a job installing sprinkler systems three or four days a week, and occasionally working at his own business distributing Japanese magnetic beds.

“I don’t care,” says Kris’s mom Loraine, “I’d rather have them involved in something like this than drugs and bars – one day he’ll grow out of it.”

On a recent “Friday Massacre” shoot, as the BYWFers gather at Mrs. Verri’s home in the brick hinterland of Brampton’s suburbs, she holds up well under the boisterous presence of her son “Dylan Foxxx” and his gang of temporary tough guys. She is jovial, but maintains unchallenged authority over the proceedings. “Someone left their shoes by the front door!” she thunders. It’s me, the new guy, and she graciously accepts my

apology. “Kris should have told you,” she says.

Meanwhile, the warriors are filing in. Inferno is there, and Bambino, Nexus, Bobo Confused, La Cabra, Aries, Mex, and Jerod the ref – but where is BYWF champion Comrade Vladimir? He has failed to show up, making it necessary for Atkinson, Rogers, and Verri to revise the script.

“You’ve got to give up smoking,” says Loraine to Adam Crane, 19 [Bobo Confused], who’s parked himself in front of an ashtray on the kitchen counter, “It’s gonna stunt your growth.” He’s about 6’2” tall, 250 pounds and tells her he’s “done growing.”

We head out into the cold. Kris’ Mom asks him for the third time if everyone has signed their liability forms. “We did that months ago,” he says impatiently.

The 90 minutes worth of matches keep a frenetic pace as the cold afternoon wears into dusk. I snap pictures and try to follow the action, aided by Bambino’s goofball commentary, his mock-pubescent voice breaking into a near squeal when a match reaches its peak.

The names of moves seem to have been coined with a delightfully brutal and sadistic sense of humour. Despite his excitability, Bambino calls out cannon of cruelty with casual familiarity. God help you if you have the “guerilla press” inflicted on you, or the humiliating “Mexican surf-board,” and who could face the public again after being put through the “Boston crab”?

Compared to the impossible gymnastics of the WWF, the BYWF’s moves are relatively safe and simple to execute. But, by keeping it simple, the BYWF manages to produce fast-paced, realistic shows. Back in the house, the exhausted warriors remove their snow-soaked outer layers and prepare to leave. It’s the first time a BYWF match has been filmed in the Verri’s yard. To date, the BYWF has been banned from three yards after fences in all three were destroyed. The BYWFers like to use fences in the same manner WWF stars use the ropes surrounding the ring: they bounce off them. When I ask Verri if his mom knows about the ruined fences, he chuckles nervously. “We’re not going to tell my Mom that,” he says, “because she’ll freak.”

Chris Read is a Toronto based freelance writer and contributor to CBC Radio.



# ActivArt

## Montreal's Stefan Christoff Wants to Turn Art and Anarchism Into a HOWL

by Kaie Kellough

Eight a.m. CKUT radio station, Montreal. Crazy free jazz discordantly squawks out of the studio speakers. Stefan Christoff's lanky, six-foot three-inch frame sits folded like a pretzel behind the soundboard. Headphones over tousled hair, he leans into the microphone and announces, in a smoke-smooth voice: "Up next is a piece called 'm's and n's' by sound-poet Paul Dutton, and following that, we'll get into an interview with Montreal writer and spoken word performer –"

Every Tuesday morning you can hear Stefan interviewing one of the many Montreal wordsmiths. One Sunday a month, you will likely pay your cover to Stefan on your way in to a Wired on Words poetry event. You may see him on stage later, slouched over a piano or a guitar, working a melody. You may unwittingly catch one of his art showings at a plateau café or bar, and if you don't, you will surely catch him pasting a poster to the wall of a St. Laurent business. If you stop to read the poster, he will turn to you, hand you a flyer, and explain: "This Saturday there'll be a rally in St. Louis Square to protest the arrest of several peaceful visitors to the park. The rally starts at two-thirty. There'll be a few speeches, and then we'll march down St. Denis..."

Radio host, writer, artist, musician, and activist, Stefan Christoff is the link between the various community scenes at the heart of his attempts to merge culture and community, anarchy and art.

### HOWL?

Two years ago, working in a Montreal café by day, by night accompanying his partner (poet/performer Mia Brooks) on piano, and in his spare time trying to secure art showings for his work, Christoff hit on the idea of organizing a festival. As festivals are not new to Montreal, whose summer months are busy with music,

comedy and art events, Christoff decided that his idea needed a novel spin if it were to catch on. "I started asking myself: What does the local arts scene need?" Only after experiencing the IMF/World Bank protests in Washington did Christoff find an answer to his question. The energy, intensity, and spirit of unity Christoff experienced in Washington moved him. He understood that a common cause could rally people in a way that a simple arts festival could not. Montreal's major festivals present art as leisurely entertainment, and audiences respond in kind. The more avant-garde "highbrow" shows, where audiences take their pretensions seriously, present art as something superior to the everyday. In both cases, art and politics are divorced. Art is cut off from relations with the world. Audiences are limited to relating to art as leisure and entertainment, or pure concept.

"On my coffee break, staring out the window into the street, watching cars and people hustle past, and looking over a Lawrence Ferlinghetti poem, the lines: '...on freeways fifty lanes wide/on a concrete continent/spaced with bland billboards...' struck me as lines that every city dweller must have thought or said at least once. This was art that was part and parcel of the everyday. It occurred to me that people would approach art as an active force in everyday life if it were presented that way."

Christoff had his idea, but how was he going to put it into action? He started pitching his idea to local artists. "Everybody I talked to was interested." Though Christoff was only 19 at the time, his smoky voice, polite firmness, and worldly knowledge got him taken seriously. The first HOWL, held in Montreal last year, quickly assembled a list of performers and tentative venues. Christoff received support from Wired on Words founder Ian Ferrier and CKUT radio's Dexter X. "The festival wouldn't have been possible without them," he

acknowledges. The pair helped him to stay on top of a whirlwind of meetings, emails, telephone calls, dates, details, and financial uncertainties. When questioned on the subject, Christoff grudgingly admits that "HOWL nearly folded. I even thought of packing it in, but I managed to salvage the festival, and it went on as planned. Performers throughout Canada gathered in Montreal to stress the importance of the G-20 protests. HOWL 2000 ran for four nights filled with hope, song, and resistance."

The festival, funded by Christoff's coffeehouse salary, was a success. Local activist groups (CLAC, CFS-Q), set up a HOWL welcoming committee. As the festival involved both activists and artists, a significant audience came out. "People responded warmly," Christoff remembers, "It was great to see a group of drunk poets and spoken word performers listening to an anarchist analysis of the G-20." Another memorable event featured a six-piece jazz ensemble called NOMA. NOMA played L'X, a Montreal punk co-op. "I didn't know what to expect," admits Christoff, "but it went over really well. That kind of clash between different elements of underground or counter culture made HOWL."

Following the success of the first HOWL festival, this year's festival will run in three cities. With the support of OCAP (Ontario Coalition Against Poverty), and the Canzine Festival put on by Broken Pencil, HOWL will entertain and provoke Toronto audiences for three evenings. The Toronto festival will: "Support plans to shut down the financial district to protest the neo-liberal economics of the Harris government." The festival will also run for three nights in Montreal and two nights in New York city. HOWL will feature evening spoken word performances by Debbie Young, Katherine Kidd, Ian Ferrier, music from Godspeed you Black Emperor! and Do Make Say Think, art showings, and afternoon teach-ins. The



teach-ins will be conducted by local activists and will centre on such subjects as: art and revolution, local effects of globalization, indie media, food practices, and eco initiatives.

## Community and Anarchism

Christoff was first introduced to the idea of politics as spectacle while growing up in Kelowna, B.C. At the time, he was fourteen years old. His budding interest in social change was nurtured by an older acquaintance, a studded, spiky-haired university student. The student decided to run for mayor. Stefan became involved in the campaign, in which said candidate proposed countless logical and absurd changes to the city. The candidate was predictably defeated, but Christoff was impressed: "It was like a performance art piece," he recalls, "a satire. It highlighted all of the absurd, complacent, and bigoted aspects of local politics, and it did so in a humorous way. It was obvious that the guy wouldn't win, and everybody knew that. For that reason he had more freedom to speak his mind than any other candidate did. He was able to be politically entertaining."

Inspired by that early example of how creativity can also be politics, Christoff has been a veritable force determined to take his vision to the community. This is manifested not just in the Howl Festival, but in Stefan's participation as one of the founders of the Montreal Anarchist Book Fair.

In one of Stefan's rare moments of ease, lounging on a tatami mat on the roof of his St. Laurent loft, he talks about the second annual book fair, which took place in Montreal this past summer: "It was incredible to see over 1000 people take part in the anarchist book fair, a grassroots event with little budget other than the hope and dedication of a few committed people. We worked hard, slept little, but this is the nature of solid organizing. Getting things done takes drive, hope, dedication."

Stefan's gaze takes in apartment balconies and kitchen windows. Uptown's clutter and activity punctuate his words. The Anarchist book fair was held at the CSCS (Comite Social du Centre Sud) space in downtown Montreal. A gymnasium-sized room was filled with the merchandise of Montreal, Toronto, and Quebec small presses and zine publishers. Local activist organizations set up info tables. Throughout the day, workshops on various facets of Anarchism were conducted. The fair and its workshops were

free and open to the public. When asked whether Montreal is particularly open to grass roots community organizing, Christoff shrugs and lights a Gauloise: "Every city or community is what one makes of it. One looks for the things that one wants to become involved in, and works with the people who are doing them."

## Free Verse of the Americas

Drive, hope, and dedication motivated Stefan to organise an event called Free Verse of the Americas. The event, scheduled for Quebec City during the FTAA protests, was to feature Canadian and American activists/poets. As event organisers and participants were dispersed around Canada and the U.S., all planning was done through email. A single email, complete with replies, comments, additions and suggestions, would circulate among the group for an entire week. On the day of the event, Christoff was struck in the leg by a tear gas canister. He had been at the main CLAC protests helping to tear down sections of the wall. His right leg was bruised from ankle to knee. Though restricted to a slow limp, he went to the venue whose owners, cowed by the afternoon's violence, had locked their doors. Some poets and audience members gathered outside and improvised an event, while others went on their way. Christoff, however, did not brood over his misfortune. A week later he was back to working on the Anarchist book fair, dedicated to keeping up pre-FTAA momentum.

Christoff has managed to maintain his personal momentum through a determination to fuse art and activism. "It is hard to see a separation between social activism and art," he explains. "Art is social activism. We are creating our realities as we go. Art is an extension of this – taking hold of life and living on our own terms, defining our existence. I see the destruction of capitalism as necessary to our existence – disruption of a system that attempts to define how individuals and groups of people should exist."

But not all of the artists who work with Stefan share his anti-capitalist views. This can lead to conflict, as artists' views as expressed in their work are often lost amidst the powerful anarchist ethos of HOWL. In response, Christoff argues that: "Art in its essence possesses the spirit of anarchism. Total freedom of expression is manifested in a song, in a poem." Politics has never been absent from art. Dante's Inferno was populated with many



**Stefan Christoff's HOWL is founded on the belief that art is action**

of the Italian politicians of his time. Chaucer's social criticism was structured into story lines, barbed with humour, and spoken by characters ostensibly to entertain their fellows. Trinidad's early calypsonians used humour and up-tempo beats to make biting criticisms palatable. Nevertheless, many aesthetes cringe at the idea of a socially aware, or political art. Their discomfort is often justified. The political art that we experience at spoken word events can be rhetorical, often dismissing formal innovation in favour of clichés and slogans. Much political art is self righteous and preachy, as its creators assume that they have a higher awareness that must be imparted unto the audience.

Volubility, facts, certainty, and rhetoric among activists regularly replace formal skills, intelligence, and the powerful silence at the heart of great art. If HOWL is to succeed as a festival of art and revolution (i.e. creative change), the art cannot be overwhelmed by the ideology. For Christoff, however, the ambiguities of activist art are not nearly as pressing as what is happening on the streets around the world. This year's HOWL is meant to be not only an artistic celebration, but also a mobilization fund raiser for those planning to travel to Qatar, where the next round of global trade talks will be held. Says Christoff: "HOWL is founded on the belief that art is action. Today, taking an active role to counter capitalism is the art form, whether it comes in the form of blockades, music, or words."

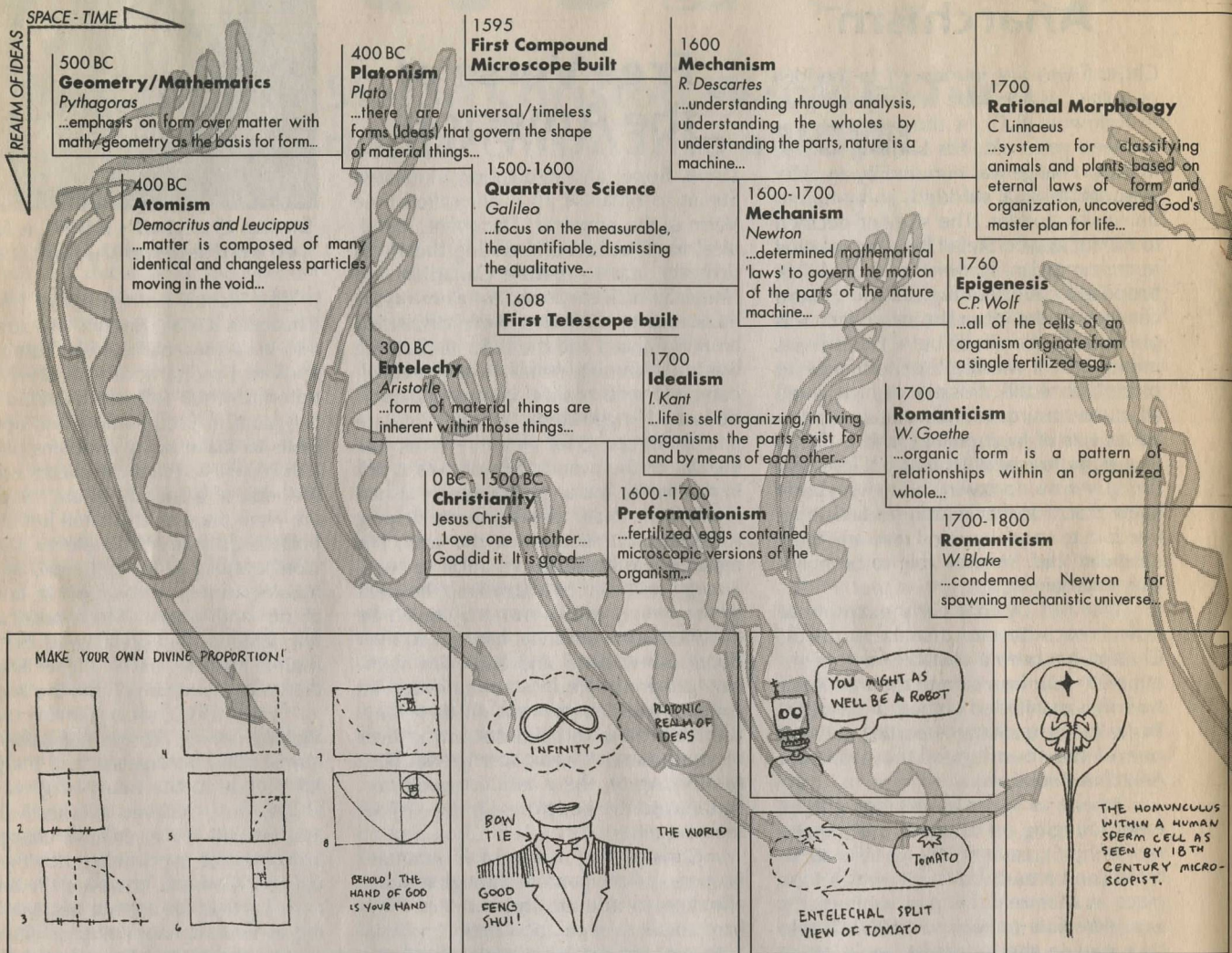
**HOWL Festival Dates**  
(For detailed listings, visit:  
[www.howlfestival.org](http://www.howlfestival.org))  
Toronto September 22nd to 24th  
Montreal October 11th to 13th  
New York October 19th and 20th



# MORPHOGENESIS:

A SELECTIVE AND BLATANTLY WESTERN ORIENTED HISTORY OF THE MYSTERY OF THE ORIGIN OF ORGANIC FORM USING THE LATEST LAY-PERSON LOVING TECHNIQUES OF SOUND-BITE SCIENCE AND SOME GOOD OLD FASHIONED GAME BOARD LOCOMOTION

BUMBLEBUT PICTURE ARCHIVES : REF# MF001A



## Appendix A. FIELDS

Modern physics recognizes several types of physical fields including electromagnetic, gravitational and various quantum matter fields. Fields are more fundamental entities that cannot be explained in terms of matter. Matter is explained in terms of energy within fields. Fields are perhaps best described using the eternal laws of mathematics. Take for example electro-magnetic fields.

The Maxwell equations are the set of four fundamental equations governing electromagnetism (i.e., the behaviour of electric and magnetic fields). They were first written down in complete form by physicist James Clerk Maxwell, who added the so-called displacement current term to the final equation, although steady-state forms were known earlier.

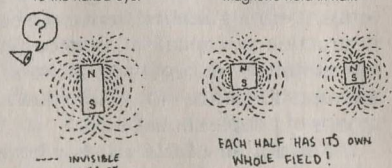
For time-varying fields, the differential form of these equations in MKS is:

$$\begin{aligned} 1. \nabla \cdot \mathbf{E} &= \frac{\rho}{\epsilon_0} & 3. \nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} &= 0 \\ 2. \nabla \times \mathbf{E} &= -\frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t} & 4. \nabla \times \mathbf{B} &= \mu_0 \mathbf{j} + \epsilon_0 \mu_0 \frac{\partial \mathbf{E}}{\partial t} \end{aligned}$$

Where:  $\nabla \cdot$  is the divergence  $\rho$  is the charge density  
 $\nabla \times$  is the curl  $\mathbf{j}$  is the vector current density  
 $\mathbf{E}$  is the electric field  $\epsilon_0$  is the permittivity of free space  
 $\mathbf{B}$  is the magnetic field  $\mu_0$  is the permeability of free space

Some properties of Magnetic fields (and fields in general):

1. They are invisible to the naked eye.
2. You cannot cut a magnetic field in half.



## APPENDIX B: PAUL WEISS' PRINCIPLE PROPERTIES OF MORPHOGENETIC FIELDS AND SCOTT F. GILBERT'S REASONS FOR THEIR DECLINE IN EMBRYOLOGICAL STUDIES

Weiss' principle Properties of Morphogenetic fields

1. Field activity is invariably bound to a material substratum
2. A field is an entity not a mosaic
3. The structure of a field varies in three dimensions, and there is usually an axis to the field's effect.
4. Like the poles of a magnet, none of the component elements

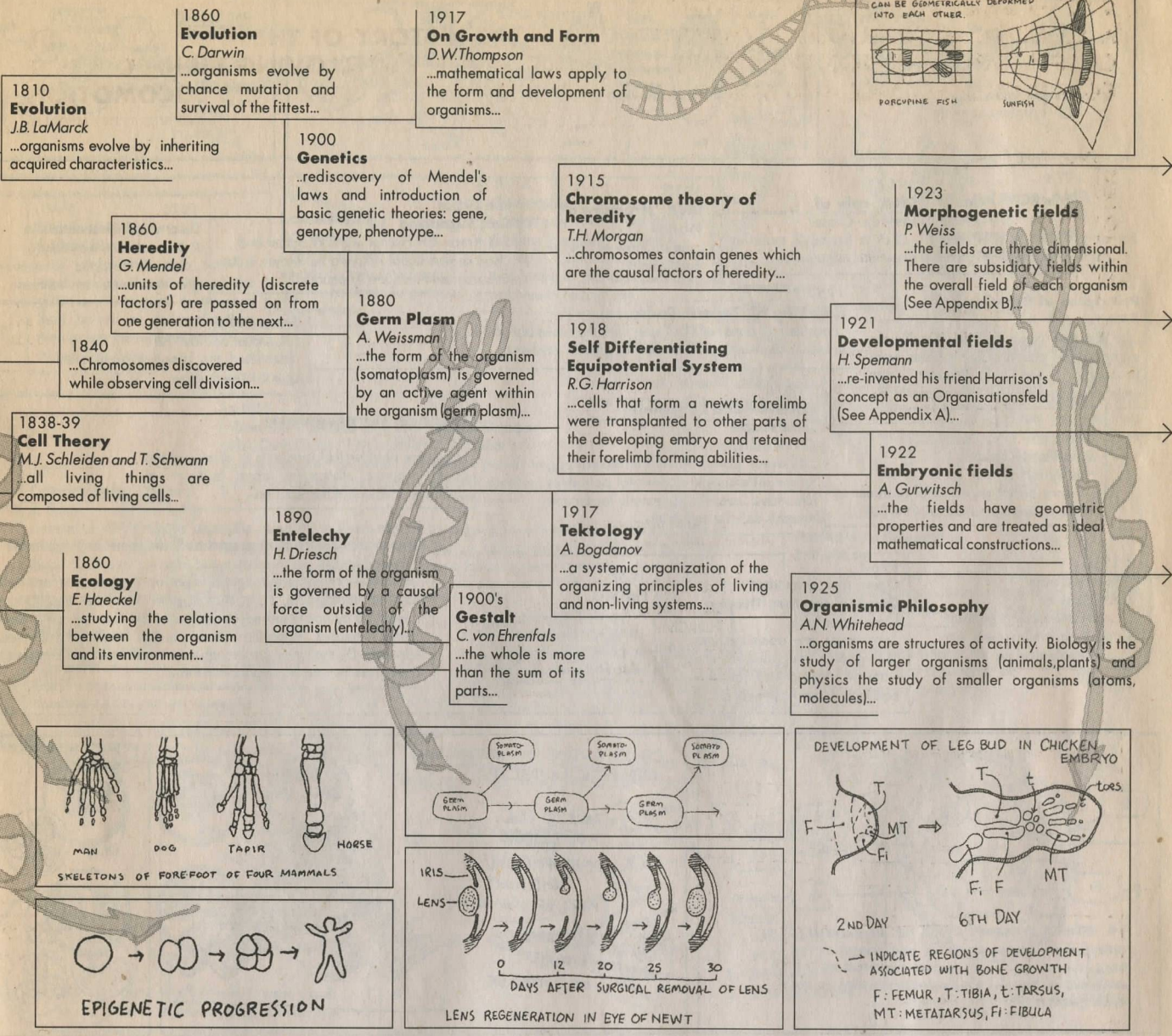
of a field district can be identified with any particular component of the field.

5. When the mass of a field district is reduced, the structure of the field is not affected
6. The splitting of the field district leaves each half in possession of a complete proportionate field, equivalent in structure to the original single field.
7. The fusion of two field districts can produce results based on the orientation of their axes.

Gilbert's reasons why they declined in importance

1. Biochemical techniques were not sophisticated enough to prove their existence. Their conception as wholistic entities restricted scientists from studying their components making it nearly impossible to determine the biological infrastructure of the field.
2. The biological sciences suffered major funding cuts in Europe, particularly in Germany, which had been the centre of embryology.
3. The science of Genetics was captivating the imagination of scientists. The field of embryology was redefined around the concept of gene expression. Fields were no longer necessary models for development.





#### Appendix C: ATTRACTORS

An attractor represents the trajectory of a system in flux, in an abstract mathematical space known as phase space (in order to visualize this it may be easier to consider the system in flux as a single particle in motion). The axes of phase space do not represent the axes of two or three dimensional space that we usually expect from our Cartesian grids, rather they represent certain properties which describe the motion of the system/particle in question. For example, these properties could be the Velocity and Angle possessed by the system/particle. A single point on this grid describes the state of the system/particle (its angle and velocity) at a given point in time.

A system may be mapped onto a very high dimensional phase space with many properties describing its state. Using this mapping technique, complex/non-linear/dynamic/chaotic systems that never repeat themselves in three dimensional space can be seen to form highly organized patterns in phase space. The patterns created by these systems are known as strange attractors.

Type of attractor - Type of system they represent

|          |                                              |
|----------|----------------------------------------------|
| Point    | - Stable system where equilibrium is reached |
| Periodic | - Systems with periodic oscillations         |
| Strange  | - Chaotic systems                            |

Non-linear systems may have more than one attractor of the various types. Each attractor has its own 'basin of attraction'

The 'basin of attraction' refers to the region in phase space which will lead to a particular attractor. Think of it the watershed in a river system.

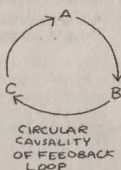
The topological classification of a system's 'basins of attraction' form a qualitative description of that system known as a phase portrait.

Here is a picture of a cloud.



#### Appendix D: FEEDBACK EXPLAINED

Feedback occurs when the effect effects the cause in a cause and effect relationship. There may be several steps between the initial cause and final effect (which is actually the initial cause).



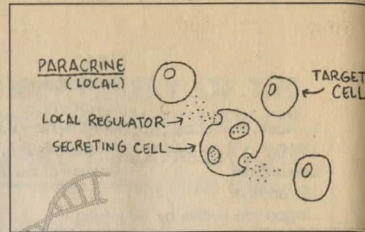
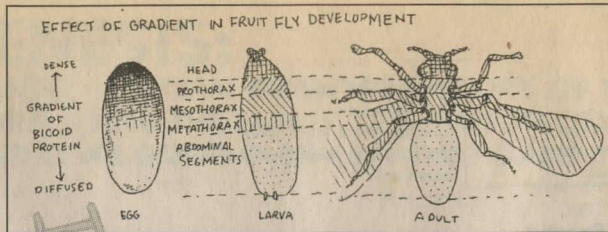
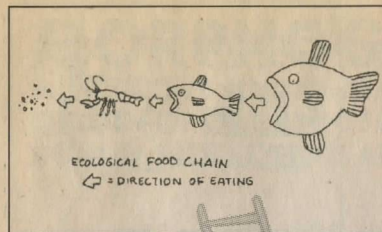
#### Appendix E: WHAT TWO REALLY SMART PEOPLE HAVE TO SAY ABOUT SYSTEMS THEORY

First, nothing in biology contradicts the laws of physics and chemistry; any adequate biology must be consonant with the 'basic' sciences. Second, the principles of physics and chemistry are not sufficient to explain complex biological objects because new properties emerge as a result of organization and interaction. These properties can only be understood by the direct study of whole, living systems in their normal state. Third, the insufficiency of physics and chemistry to encompass life records no mystical addition, no contradiction to the basic sciences, but only reflects the hierarchy of natural objects and the principle of emergent properties at higher levels of organization.

Stephen Jay Gould 1984

The great shock of twentieth-century science has been that systems cannot be understood by analysis. The properties of the parts are not intrinsic properties but can be understood only within the context of a larger whole. Thus the relationship between the parts and the whole has been reversed. In the systems approach the properties of the parts can be understood only from the organization of the whole. Accordingly, systems thinking concentrates not on basic building blocks, but on basic





1928  
**DNA, need for Griffith**  
...there is a transforming factor in the gene...

1952  
**DNA, role of Hershey - Chase**  
...DNA is the basic material of genetic information...

1953  
**DNA, structure of Watson - Crick**  
...the structure of DNA is a double helix...

late 1950s  
**Cell Signaling**  
EG. Krebs - E.H. Fischer and E.W. Sutherland  
...first known signal relaying molecules in the cell are identified (See Appendix G)

1972  
**Bacterial Chemotaxis**  
R. Macnab - D.E. Koshland jr  
...bacteria respond to chemical gradients in their environment...

1939  
**Principles of Development**  
P. Weiss  
...in this text book the seven principle properties of morphogenetic fields were presented and illustrated with embryological examples: see appendix B...

1953-1967  
**Breaking of Genetic Code**  
...how the four bases of DNA specified the assembly of 20 amino acids into a myriad variety of specific proteins...

1961  
**Stem Cells**  
EA. McCulloch - J.E. Till  
...identified the blood forming stem cells in bone marrow...

1934  
**Gradient-field**  
Huxley and de Beer  
...theory based on an axial gradient to the regenerative potential of the field...

1950's  
**Chreode and Epigenetic Landscape**  
CH Waddington  
...different parts of the fertilised egg follow different developmental pathways (chreodes) over the epigenetic landscape towards definite end points...

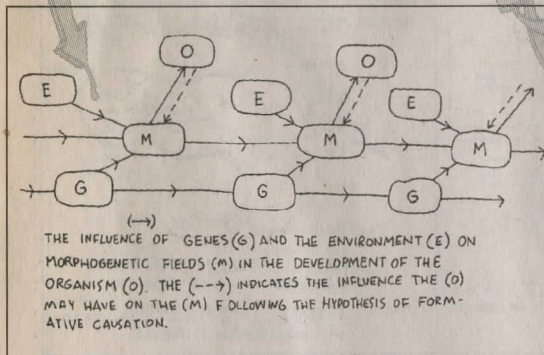
1952  
**Chemical Morphogenesis**  
A.M. Turing  
...complex biochemical reactions in open systems could produce stationary wave patterns of chemicals involved in the reaction...

1930's  
**Ecosystems**  
A.G. Tansley  
...communities of organisms and their environment act as an ecological unit...

1940  
**Open systems and General System Theory**  
L. von Bertalanffy  
...organisms are open systems (stuff goes in, stuff goes out) in a state of constant flux far from equilibrium (see Appendix E)...

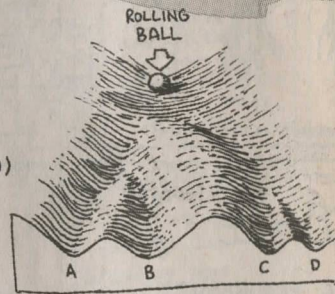
1967  
**Holons**  
A. Koestler  
...wholes (holons) are made up of parts (also holons) in a nested hierarchy (holarchy)...

1967  
**Dissipative Structures and self-organising systems**  
I. Prigogine  
...in complex chemical reactions dissipative structures can form and maintain themselves in a stable state far from equilibrium (described by non-linear equations), when the flow of matter and energy increases, triggering internal positive feedback loops (see Appendix D), they may go through new instabilities and transform themselves into more complex structures...

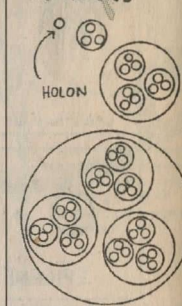


CROSS-SECTION OF WADDINGTON'S EPIGENETIC LANDSCAPE.

○ = PART OF EGG DEVELOPING  
A, B, C, D = DEVELOPMENTAL END POINT (PART OF ORGANISM)  
A = DEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAY OR CHREODE



NESTED HIERARCHY OF HOLONS



is the opposite of analytical thinking. Analysis means taking something apart in order to understand it; systems thinking means putting it into the context of a larger whole.

Frijol Capra 1996

#### Appendix F: DR. RUPERT SHELDRAKE'S BIG WHAT IF? THE HYPOTHESIS OF FORMATIVE CAUSATION

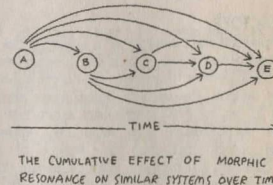
The following is excerpted from Appendix C of Dr. Sheldrake's 1999 book *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home*

##### Key features of the Hypothesis of Formative Causation

1. Morphogenetic fields are a new kind of field, so far unrecognized by physicists
2. Like the organisms they shape, these fields evolve. They have a history and contain and inherent memory given by a process I call morphic resonance.
3. They are part of a larger family of fields called morphic fields.

A summary of the hypothetical properties of morphic fields

1. They are self organizing wholes
2. They have both a spatial and a temporal aspect, and they organize spatiotemporal patterns of vibratory or rhythmic activity
3. They attract the systems under their influence toward characteristic forms and patterns of activity, whose coming-into-being they organize and whose integrity they maintain. The ends or goal toward which morphic fields attract the systems under their influence are called attractors.
4. They interrelate and coordinate the morphic units, or holons, that lie within them and which in turn are organized by morphic fields. Morphic fields contain other morphic fields within them in a nested hierarchy or holarchy.
5. They are structures of probability, and their organizing activity is probabilistic.
6. They contain a built in memory given by self resonance with a morphic unit's own past and by morphic resonance with all previous similar systems. This memory is cumulative. The more often particular patterns of activity are repeated, the more habitual they become.



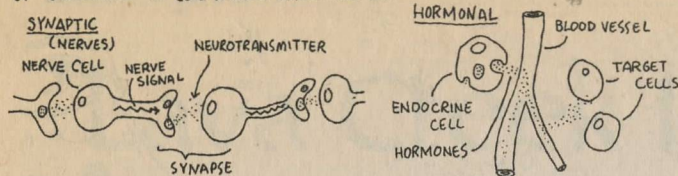
In 1994 Dr. Sheldrake published a book entitled *Seven Experiments That Could Change the World: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Revolutionary Science* a DIY guide for the home roge-scientist. Here is some promotional copy for this book.

Lay researchers and armchair scientists can now actively participate in the process of discovery with the help of *Seven Experiments That Could Change the World: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Revolutionary Science* by Dr. Rupert Sheldrake. This former Research Fellow of the Royal Society at Cambridge University proposes a grassroots revolution in scientific inquiry, where amateurs everywhere can undertake for themselves the activity that is at the heart of the scientific method: the experiment.

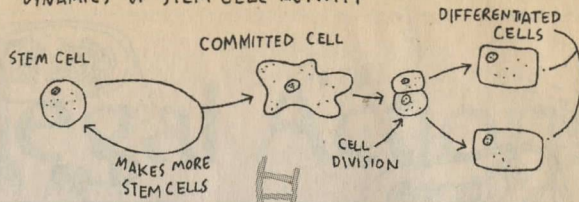
In the spirit of Darwin, who recorded many of his observations in



## TYPES OF SIGNALING IN CELL TO CELL COMMUNICATION



## DYNAMICS OF STEM CELL ACTIVITY



1976

### Replicators

Richard Dawkins

...all organisms are survival machines developed through the process of evolution by genes in their pursuit of self-replication. Memes are the replicating units of culture and ideas...

1978

### Sociobiology

E.O. Wilson

...practically all aspects of animal behavior and social life can be linked to genetic determinants...

1994

### Genomics

...Small pox virus is the first genome (complete sequence of an organism's genetic information) mapped with automated technology...

1999

### Human Proteomics Initiative

...the study of the structure and behavior of proteins begins...

2000

### Genomics

...human genome is mapped...

1997

### Sporelike cells

C. Vacanti - M. Vacanti

...hardy, miniscule repair cells that can be used to grow same type tissue from which they were harvested...

1998

### Embryonic Stem Cells

J. Thomson and J. Gearhart

...controversial isolation of pluripotent (means they can differentiate into any kind of cell) stem cells from human embryos...

1972

### Catastrophy Theory

R. Thom

...modeled Waddington's 'chreodes' using the mathematics of complexity/dynamic systems theory, came up with a Platonic model of the way forms change into one each other. A 'catastrophe' (aka bifurcation in chaos theory) refers to the point where the form changes, moving from one attractor (see Appendix C) to another...

1991

### Gradient fields and Homeobox Genes

E.A. De Robertis - E.M. Morita - K.W.Y. Cho

...emphasized the roles homeobox genes may play initiating and organising morphogenetic gradient fields...

1981

### Formative Causation

R. Sheldrake

...the structure of morphogenetic fields are determined by the shape of previous similar organisms through the process of morphic resonance (see Appendix F)...

1972

### Gaia

J. Lovelock

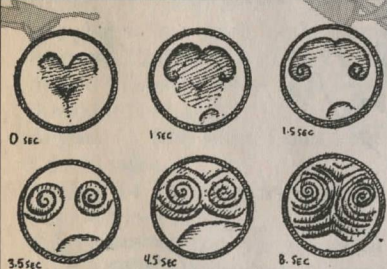
...the earth as a planet is a living organism and life on earth creates and regulates the conditions of its own existence...

1972

### Autopoiesis

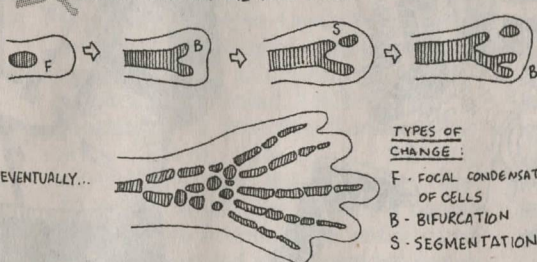
H. Maturana and F. Varela

...the general pattern of organisation common to all living systems is independent of the nature of the components (the structure) of those systems. It is a network of production processes in which the function of each component is to assist in the production and transformation of other components...



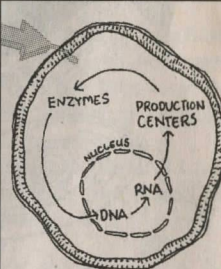
THE FORMATION OF A DISSIPATIVE STRUCTURE IN THE CLASSIC BELOUSOV-ZHABOTINSKII REACTION

LIMB MORPHOGENESIS OF A SALAMANDER INDICATING THE TYPE OF CHANGE AFFECTING THE BONE TISSUE.



### TYPES OF CHANGE:

- F - FOCAL CONDENSATION OF CELLS
- B - BIFURCATION
- S - SEGMENTATION



COMPONENTS OF THE AUTOPOIETIC NETWORK INVOLVED IN THE REPAIR OF DNA MATERIAL

the simplicity of his garden and never held an institutional post, Dr. Sheldrake encourages enthusiasts of the paranormal to explore even of the world's most enigmatic common occurrences by using simple resources of their own. The areas of study focus on phenomenon including

1. A pet's ability to anticipate its owner's return home
2. The direction-finding instincts of homing pigeons
3. The highly organized structure of termite communities
4. Our own tendency to know when we are being stared at from behind
5. Sensations felt in phantom limbs after amputation
6. The validity of the Universal Gravitational constant as a true constant
7. The effect scientists' biases may have on experimentation

The following are natural phenomena that Dr. Sheldrake suggests may be influenced Morphic fields

1. The ability for certain animals to navigate their way to a specific locations along previously unknown routes (ie. homing pigeons).
2. Animals prescient response to death and disaster
3. The ability of animals in herds/schools/flocks to move in unison and turn abruptly without colliding.
4. The complex social order and dynamics of hive insects

(ants, termites, bees, etc)

5. Animal to animal and animal to human and human to human telepathy.
6. Carl Jung's theory of the Collective Unconscious.
7. The general rise in IQ scores
8. Protein folding
9. Cultural phenomena such as myths, rituals
10. Collective behavior / mob mentality
11. The formation of molecules
12. Brain Damage and Loss of Memory
13. Evolution and Evolutionary diffusion
14. Heredity
15. Learning
16. Forgetting
17. Why most mammal, birds and reptiles scratch themselves with a hind limb crossed over a forelimb
18. The evolution of the physical laws of the universe



THE SCRATCHING BEHAVIOUR OF A DOG AND A EUROPEAN BULLFINCH. (NOT TO SCALE)

## Appendix F: A TRIP TO THE STEM CELL LAB

A few days before this project is due I am privileged with a tour of a local stem cell lab. S., my host, is doing her PhD on the workings of embryonic stem cells taken from mice. I tell her about this project and ask about the current state of morphogenetic theory. She begins by describing an inconceivably complex network of internal and external cellular communication involving the transfer of an equally mindbogglingly large variety of compounds and molecules. This communication is known as cell signaling.

In a developing embryo chemical gradients can be identified. These gradients are created by washes of signals sent out from one cell and gradually diffuse as they move through the embryo. Cells in other parts of the embryo then react to the different densities of the gradient. This complex and continuous network of chemical communication could be what accounts for the phenomena of morphogenetic fields. This type of cellular communication also takes place between the embryo and the cells of its mother.

"How many of these signals and reactions are there at any one time?" I ask. "I don't think anyone has calculated that as yet," she says, "It would be like counting the stars in the universe."

BUMBLEBUT PICTURE ARCHIVES : REF# MF001B





art by Chris Hutsul



# Lava Creek Illegal Actions 1999-2000

from Elaho Valley Anarchist Horde - A Journal of Sasquatchology  
(Box 539, 185-911 Yates St., Victoria, BC, V8V 4Y9)

**Disclaimer:** The following text has been supplied by the multinational scum-sucking parasites at International Forest Products Limited (Interfor). Words pertaining to vandalism would be best referred to as forms of creative artistic reconstruction in the passion of rage. All work stoppages are because of people's fierce determination regardless of what is noted otherwise.

## Lava Creek Illegal Actions 1999-2000

### 1999

**August 09** Protest camp established. Tree sitter. Work shut down for fire hazard.

**August 10** Tree sitter. Shut down for fire hazard.

**August 11** Camp around drill rig. Three tree sitters. Shut down for fire hazard.

**August 12** Court order read. Camp moved to south side of Lava Creek. Shut down for fire hazard.

**August 13** Tree sitter. Court order read. Cannot work.

**August 14** Road blocks removed. Tree sitter. Cannot work.

**August 15 - 16** Tree sitters. Cannot work.

**August 17** Two tree sitters. Cannot work. 22 RCMP/6 vehicles/helicopter/2 dogs/2 ambulance/3 Search and Rescue. Sam Kelly arrested.

**August 18** Tree sitter. Cannot Work. 20 RCMP (2 tactical squad)/6 vehicles/1 dog/1 ambulance/ 3 Search and Rescue. J.P. Ragland arrested.

**August 19** Work by drill delayed half day. Seven defy court order. About 6 RCMP. Five arrested. One tree sitter remained.

**August 20** Work on Br. E 1081 stopped by tree sitter. Rick McCallion arrested. Two RCMP, one dog. Interfor climber and ambulance. Tree sitter remained.

**August 21** Blasting delayed three hours due to whistling in trees. 2 RCMP, 1 dog.

**August 23** Drill rig vandalized overnight. Batteries ruined, grind wheel broken, grease in cab. Cayenne pepper spread around. Drilled hole filled. Right-of-way flagging removed, fallers cannot work.

Two RCMP. Tree sitter stays overnight.

**August 24** Drill still inoperable. Replacement tree sitter, Payne is arrested. 6 RCMP/1 dog/2 Search and Rescue/2 Ambulance.

**August 27** Quarter day lost due to "Mr. Gumshee" tree sitter, who came down on his own.

**August 30** Drill rig vandalized. High-pressure hose cut. Tree sitter, "Gumshee", prevents excavator from operating. Cannot work.

**August 31** Tree sitter disappeared. Seven RCMP/1 dog/ 2 vehicles/helicopter.

**September 05** Bridge blocked. Driller cannot get to work. Three RCMP/1 dog. Three arrested (1 for assault on RCMP - charges recently stayed before trial).

**September 12** Arrestee J.P. Ragland left voice message, "Beat you up in front of your children".

**September 14** Lava Creek Bridge abutment dug up. Bridge blocked by boulders and logs. Grader and Elaho Logging Crew required to open road. 2 RCMP.

**September 15** Tree sitter Kunsler arrested. Cannot work. 7 RCMP/2 vehicles/helicopter. [Editor's Note: Over 70 Interfor employees attacked 8 people sending 3 to hospital. The entire camp was destroyed and all personal belongings were burned with gas. The attack was organized and approved by the hierarchy of the corporation. Tree-sitter Kunsler was nearly killed when a logger cut half way through his tree. The logger was stopped, then proceeded to try to fall other trees towards the tree-sit, only to fail and send a tree on top of an Interfor pick-up truck. 4 loggers were charged with mischief and 1 with assault. RCMP were complacent with the attack and are currently under investigation.]

**September 16** Road culvert blocked-up with rocks; locks placed on explosive magazine.

**September 26** Volvo gravel truck windshield smashed, instruments destroyed and spray painted. Gravel truck - 1 flat tire. Shop truck 4 flat tires. Compressor destroyed. Court order sign stolen.

Blasting sign removed. Lava Creek bridge approach dug up. Feces in drill cab. Rock and log debris on road.

**September 28** Road blocked at gate. All road construction, yarding, loading, falling, silviculture, engineering crews from Interfor and Elaho Logging are unemployed. Cannot work.

**September 29** Road blocked at gate. Cannot work.

**September 30** Blockade removed by 6 RCMP. Betty Krawczyk arrested. Work delayed.

**October 2** Interfor Employees' pledge banner stolen from trees at 22.5 mile.

### 2000

**February 17** "The Lorax" claims to have spiked hundreds of trees in the Elaho Valley Blocks.

**May 04** Elaho Logging chain-saws vandalized in 101-86; RCMP Investigation.

**May 15** Gate Blockade at 20 mile - 2 arrested, including Betty Krawczyk. Loss of 2 hours - all crew.

**June 05** Blockade at 38 mile: barb-wired log and rock tripod and barriers. All day loss of work. Tim Dobbyn arrested. 10+ RCMP

**June 13** Protesters (including McCallion) in Block 102-51 disrupting falling and causing fallers to stop early.

**June 14** McCallion in Block 102-51 disrupting one faller for 40 minutes.

**June 15 - 16** Protesters in 102-51. Stopped falling.

**June 19** Trench across Lava Bridge, protesters in 102-51. Stopped falling.

**June 20** Protesters in 102-51. Stopped falling. McCallion and Wolfe arrested for breaching undertakings.

**July 10** Blocked at 102-51, block boundary markings painted over or removed.

**July 25 - 28** Barb wire, log, rock and old truck barricade on Lava Creek bridge. Loss of work. [Editor's Note: RCMP nearly killed tree-sitters when they cut the support lines to their sits. Over 35 RCMP on scene and members of the Emergency Response Team dressed in full camouflage fatigues and sniper rifles. A woman was arrested for allegedly inter-



fering with RCMP operations.]

**July 29 - August 1** Bridge blockade; numerous RCMP attend. Delay in work.

**August 2** Arrest of Jonah Fertig, D. Zarelli, R. Avrett, T. Schatz for mischief and intimidation and 3 counts of obstructing a police officer.

**August 28** Blockade at 38 mile, tripod on road. Loss of work all day. Jason Pyper arrested (mischief and intimidation).

**August 29** Vandalism: Door locks jammed on yarder and loader, grapple yarder tail-block undone (high-tension wire set loose - extremely dangerous). Graffiti on Deminger Trail sign.

**September 15** No. 2 Bridge: 220 spikes driven into surface. 75% have heads cut off. Crew delayed an hour.

**October 03** Powerhouse Bridge spiked, (spike heads cut off) and debris. High Falls Bridge spiked and debris. Chuck Bridge spiked and debris. Grader smashed, glass put in fuel tank. Water tank pulled onto road. Shovelnose Bridge spiked and filled with debris. Log Loader severely vandalized - all hoses and fittings cut, all instruments destroyed, gravel put into hydraulics, radio stolen. No. 2 Bridge spiked and filled with debris. Approx. cost of vandalism over \$30,000.00. Crew delayed 2.5 hours.

**October 23** Prosec Security Patrol came upon protesters (at) 1:00am, protesters attacked and "tarped" Prosec truck, and jumped on truck. Eleven protesters masked - bandannas and balaclavas.

Refuse to provide names. Tripod set up (at) 36 mile. Pick up trucks able to pass, log trucks delayed 2 hours until RCMP removed protester. 1 arrested (Tripod Todd) - charged with mischief and intimidation.

**October 24** [Editor's Note: The RCMP falsely arrest Jason Pyper for skipping his court date, turns out the RCMP had the wrong court date.]

**November 28** Twenty-five new mileage markers removed over 24-mile stretch of road.

**November 30** Elaho Earth First claim sabotage to generator. Generator not working and believed to be tampered with. Material put into crankcase. Press Release: they plan more sabotage.

# Why Does It Have To Be So Boring? A Dialogue on Public Readings

by Victoria Stanton and Vincent Tinguely from *Impure: Reinventing the Word* (Conundrum Press, 266 Fairmount W., Montreal, Quebec, H2V 2G3) an examination of the theory and practice of what has come to be known as "spoken word" featuring interviews with over 70 French and English artists.

**Michel Garneau:** It's hugely presumptuous to put oneself in front of people and say "What I'm about to say is interesting enough to make you stay seated, quiet, for a half hour, maybe hours. A personal morality of mine makes it necessary to try to supply some content. We must give our audience pleasure, something to remember in order to justify what we're offering. I prepare accordingly, and try to give the best performance possible. I just suffered too much, all through that era when it was understood that you were going to be bored. I saw poets stand stock-still behind a microphone with a bunch of papers and read for periods of time that were downright inhuman (laughs). In fact it wasn't really all that long. For example, I saw Margaret Atwood reading. Just standing there in front of the microphone, she had darkish glasses and a big hat, you couldn't see her. And she went through - with her horrible voice - like an hour of bitchy bullshit. I wanted to shoot her, I wanted to kill her! Her droning voice. Forever (laughs).

**John Giorno:** I forget the year exactly, but it might have been 1963 that John

Ashbery, who lived in Paris, moved back to New York. And Frank O'Hara gave a poetry reading at some gallery in the 70s on the East Side. I went with Andy Warhol. It was a hot June night, really hot, and it was packed, because John was famous at that point, in his little quote 'world'. It was packed, a hundred some odd people at this gallery, and they had no sound system! Microphones, which we take for granted, didn't really exist before. There were such things as PA systems if you were a politician. It sounded like a foghorn to a large audience, but in a small situation like that, it was not even possible to rent a sound system, I think. Maybe in Saint Mark's, for the poetry, they had a little primitive PA system that was not much better. Two speakers on the side that echoed, the quality was horrible. So there were 125 people, and John and Frank up at the front there, we couldn't hear a word. Andy kept saying over and over again, "It's so boring. It's so boring," (laughs) and, "Why does it have to be so boring?" And it was true. So I think that was one of those things that one remembered. Why does it have to be so boring?

**Michel Garneau:** In the 60s, there were readings. Then it was recitals, but because I've always worked around theatre I'd think: "No, I want to organize shows. I'm a showman. I love it and I refuse to be ashamed of it." Spectacle is basic to human beings, that's how storytelling was born, there was a born showman somewhere - we mustn't turn our backs on this. And the moment you say yes to spectacle, things can get very very free. For example, Raoul Duguay with L'Infonie, wearing a world globe on his head, with horns and all. This guy went all the way. With Raoul and just one musician, I gave shows that were completely wild. We had tons of texts, some we knew by heart, others we'd written the night before. We'd ask people in the audience to give us a sentence and we'd write about that. That was during the Seventies. But we weren't about readings and recitals anymore, we were presenting shows now. This notion is specific and very important. It leads to performance, where there are various ways to give shows and say things. The minute you do this, you start working from memory. Meaning that you work poems to know

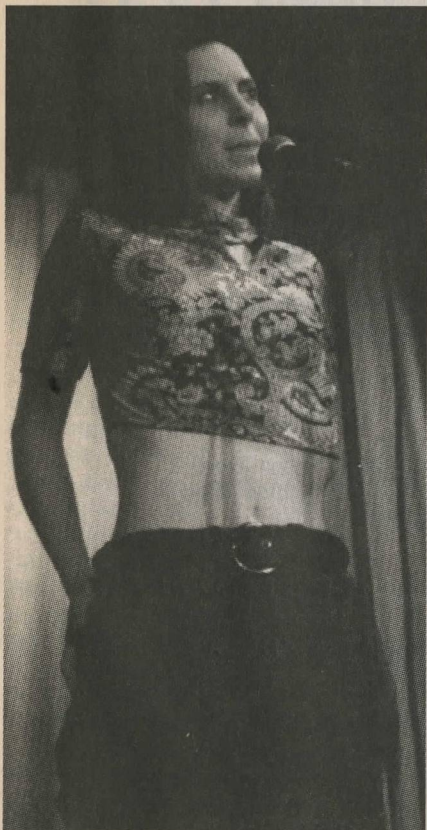


them enough to be able to move, to give them a beat, music, you rap them, whatever – I think that because of the various influences, when performers get in front of an audience nowadays, they're thinking about getting pleasure from that and providing pleasure for their audience. I think this is moral progress. And from then on the show obviously connects with oral tradition, much more than with literature, because when you give a reading, you're stuck with the piece of paper.

**Hélène Monette:** I wonder if the screen created by the poet's piece of paper doesn't create a distance, a wall between audience and reader. Maybe the emotions can still come through, I don't know. I've been pondering this question for ten years. When you're onstage reading, you forget yourself, and at the same time you're taking possession of a physical space. So you're physically involved but at the same time, you get into an altered state where you're not always aware of your gestures, of how the audience is perceiving you. I can't compare myself to poets who are too shy, nor to the more daring performers; I'm neither. But I'm bothered by this sheet of paper which gives the impression that when you read with it, you're more static than in movement.

**Anne Stone**

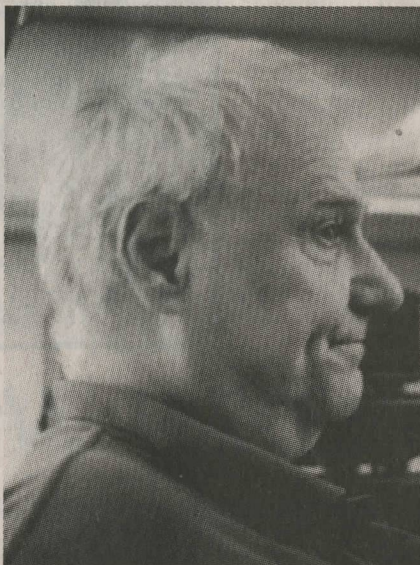
photo by Andréé Lemelin



**Todd Swift:** I don't accept the division between 'reading' and 'performing'. My concern is that we can lose sight of the source and intent of a delivery of poetry by concentrating too much on the vehicle – mode, let's say. If someone passionately reads their work to a live audience, celebrating the oral/aural community of poetry, that is far better than a piss-poor actor dully reciting cold, banal verse from memory. This is why I employ the concept of fusion poetry, where page and stage, reading and performing, are some-

**Hélène Monette**  
(courtesy of the artist)

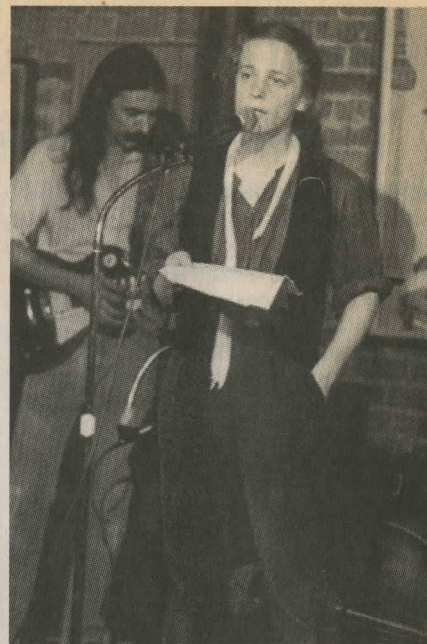
**Michel Garneau**  
photo by Victoria Stanton



times indistinguishable. What matters is connecting, reaching, moving, touching – or alienating, if that's your motive.

**David Gossage:** If someone's up reading a very long poem and a very complex poem that people spend lifetimes studying and learning, then sometimes in a live context it just goes past people... It's better to keep the shorter jewels, so they can just digest a moment and get enough of the poem... In a live context with someone reading, the accompanying music's nice, because if it's done well it could try to capture the mood of the poem in another way that you might lose as it's zipping by you. Because they do zip by, they're gone. When you sit and watch poetry, you start going, "Ah" and then it's gone, and you ask the person next to you, "What was it about again?" (laughs) People often, when you do a poetry show, either buy the book or go find the poem.

**Anne Stone:** I find that, having done this book tour – where I moved between



doing readings and doing spoken word pieces that laid up against the novel, and doing other things – some people were really into it and accepting and open, and they were pretty sophisticated. Because they had an experience of spoken word, they had an experience of all sorts of different ways of bringing the work in. I found that in Vancouver, at Bukowski's, they were obviously from a community that's very vibrant and alive. But in other places people were like, "Wow, if you hadn't read it I really wouldn't have got the inflections." So suddenly the book is stripped because I've done something with my voice, and the sense that I'm going to do the same thing every time with my voice. No, I was in a particular mood today, it came out this way.

**Michel Garneau:** What I like about spoken word is that the poets who present their texts have decided they want to do it. Because there's a terrifying tradition of poets who don't enjoy reading in public but they do it anyway. There are people I respect a lot who discourage me in this respect. You go somewhere to present your poetry and next to you there's a poet sighing and saying he hates giving readings. So why choose to take part in the show? When poets feel uncomfortable reading on stage, they should refrain. Because they're going to send the audience a message of non-enjoyment as well. If you recite poems looking like someone who doesn't enjoy it, you're asking the audience to do some strange mental exercise where they have to overlook the fact that you look miserable. You're going to read your poems with a kind of absence and so you undermine the whole phenomenon.



# Childhood in Burnaby

by Doretta Lau from *Chow Yun Fat Poems*  
(4649 Darwin Avenue, Burnaby, BC, V5G 3E7)

Flat roofs. Yellow lawns. Colleco  
pools. No sidewalks. Dead ends. My house

on the corner of the main street  
and the crescent, next to the park.

I walk in the park, in the woods.  
In Cantonese my mother warns against

the trails leading past the ravine,  
warns of peeping toms, perverts

and other girls' fathers. Walking  
next to the ravine, my friends

itch to get their feet wet, so we jump  
in, looking for crayfish. We hunt

for change and lost bracelets, hold up  
other people's rings. At home,

shoes on the radiator, socks  
in the dryer, ring on my finger, I dream of lakes

I might never see. I lie in bed and listen  
for the fridge, humming along

with my father's snores. One day  
the fridge breaks down, but luckily my

father continues to snore. Linda's father  
dies. At school we trade stories about his mystery

illness, thinking the whole time about our own  
fathers. I lie in bed and listen for the

old fridge, but it's no longer there. The new  
fridge is quiet and my father's snores are not enough

to drown out the house next door. There it's always  
a party or sex or a beating. I lie awake,  
try to solve the mystery of next door.  
My mother's slippers travel across

the hardwood floor and all night the hall  
light seeps into my room, tries to sing

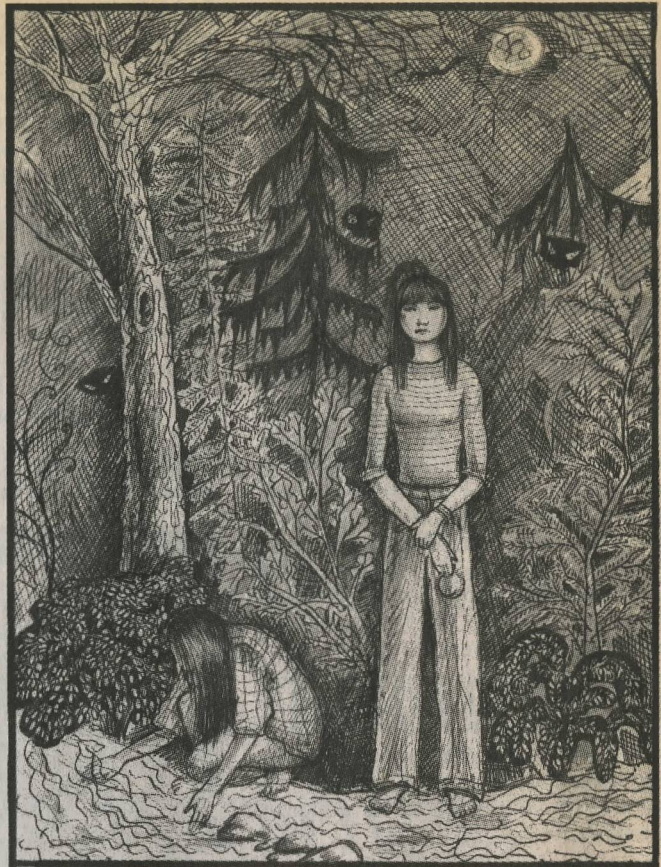
me to sleep. I'm afraid: of the dark,  
of vampires, of death and dying.

Next door the party or sex or beating ends. I hear only  
my father's snores and my mother's slippers.

I think of the families who live on my street,  
of everyone's parents being alive and together,

of rings staying on fingers, of avoiding  
strange men in the park and I say to myself

yeah, the new fridge is great,  
and I like my father just the way he is.



## That Night

by Anthony Gerace from *Man With A Broken Leg*  
(806 Barclay Rd., London, ON, N6K 3H6)

somebody who was not really anybody  
gave me a kiss last night on the cheek  
which I guess means friendship  
and when I wanted to reciprocate I wasn't allowed  
there was a knock on the door, which interrupted us  
but when I went out to answer it  
there wasn't anyone there.

the next day  
it was grey out  
and in the alley behind my apartment  
there was a cat  
who'd died  
probably during the night –  
he still looked like he was maybe sleeping –  
and maybe he was.  
maybe I was wrong.  
but I don't think so.



# Twelve

by Joanne Huffa from Quixotica (2-1048 College St., Toronto, ON, M6H 1A9)

The other Joanne was squeamish. She was the younger of two sisters with whom I stayed the summer I turned twelve.

She was the first to get her period and had felt a boy's tongue squish around her mouth, but anything remotely oozy, goopy or blechy grossed her out. When she was grossed out, everyone knew about it and all the boys rushed to rescue her.

I was the pragmatic Joanne. Worms, maggot-ridden baby birds fallen out of the nest, bloody noses: momentarily nauseating, but ultimately nothing more than something to be ignored, thrown away or cleaned-up, as the situation required.

Until the day of the underwear. (Cue the thudding heart-beat, the squealing violins, the plonking piano.)

As we did every other day, a bunch of kids aged 10-14 were hanging out in the clubhouse (read: shed) behind Joanne and Helen's house. We were waiting for the kid who made us laugh; his name is

unimportant. Even during the hottest days of August, he wore a long-sleeved hockey jersey. He had a bit of a belly, so I guess this was his way of hiding it. He sang "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" until we'd almost pee our pants. Then he'd try to stick his hand under Helen's bra.

We heard him before we saw him; his slightly raspy voice yelling for us to join him in the yard.

We trailed out, one after the other, squinting in the sunshine, drunk from being a bunch of adolescents alone in a small, dark room.

"What's going on?" Gary drawled. He had a vaguely southern accent, even though he had never ventured beyond Newmarket.

The funny kid stood there, poking at something caught on the wire mesh fence that divided Joanne's yard from Gary's.

"Look at that..." whispered the funny kid. "Just look what I almost put my hand on while I was hopping the fence."

By that time, his poking and prodding unlodged the soft object. It silently dropped to the ground.

"Ohhhhhh Gooooooooooooood..." Joanne groaned and put her hand up to her mouth. She clamped her fingers down so hard that she cut her lip on her braces.

"Fuck!"

The rest of us ignored her, still staring at the thing we now recognized as a pair of faded pink underpants. The funny kid flipped them over, using the stick to aid his task. A stench rose. This tiny polyester undergarment was smeared, no laden, with a combination of shit and blood.

Gary turned and gagged a little before regaining his composure and running to get a plastic bag to dispose of the offending underwear.

Joanne (the squeamish) began crying a little, then ran inside the clubhouse. I mean shed.

## IWF/WOW WRESTLEFEST V

(from the e-wrestling league IWF/WOW, <http://members.home.com/iwfwow/>)

**FRANCINE:** Hailing from Santa Fe, New Mexico! He stands six feet tall, and weighs in at 219 pounds...

[As the smoke dissipates, the form of a man carrying a walking cane is revealed where the cloud was. The man is Suicidal Tendency. "Baby, I'm a survivor! Baby, I'm on fire! Baby I'm about to creep up inside ya'!" The lyrics to "Killing Time" continue, and Suicidal Tendency begins walking to the ring. A spotlight focuses on him, making no hesitations in his slow gait. His ear-length, dark brown hair is parted down the centre, with the bangs hanging in his face. The purple and red streaks in the wet hair give him a cold, calculating look.]

**FRANCINE:** Ladies and gentlemen... here is... SUICIDAL... TENDENCY!!!

[The crowd responds to the introduction with a huge heel pop, as Suicidal Tendency steps in between the top and middle ropes into the ring. He holds the walking cane in his left hand to his neck, drawing attention to the tattoo of a dagger that runs across his throat...Suicidal Tendency runs the cane along the dagger,

then points it at each of his wrists displaying matching daggers on each. As the lights turn on, the audience now sees his ring attire, consisting of red elbow pads, purple wrist tape, black pant-length wrestling tights, and black boots. The tights have red and purple spiralling designs on them. He places the cane in the corner of the ring, and as he bends down, his well-defined body stretches, but he simply stands erect once again, revealing the same scowl on his face that has been there since he entered the arena. The music fades out...]

**Jim Robson:** Suicidal Tendency is one of the most accomplished high flyers to grace a ring ANYWHERE. It'll be interesting to see how he fares in the ring against the likes of November, who's extremely talented in his own right.

**Jack Anderson:** Bah! Good ol' S.T. will mop the mat with Novy, no doubt about it. He's taken aerial wrestling to a new level. That poor fool is no match for him.

**Jim Robson:** I wouldn't underestimate November if I were you. He may surprise you.

**Jack Anderson:** Yeah... and Carl Lumski may miss a rerun of "Diff'rent Strokes" in order to do a few sit-ups...and Hightower may enter into rehab...and —

**Jim Robson:** Okay okay! I get the point, Jack.

**Jack Anderson:** The fat lady is in the back, tuning up. It'll only be a matter of minutes before she's out there, singing her chunky little heart out as Novy gets carted out of the arena on a stretcher. ["Expendable Youth" by Slayer hits over the arena's Pa system to a big pop...]

**Jim Robson:** Speaking of November, here he comes.

**Jack Anderson:** Like a retarded lamb cheerfully walking into a slaughterhouse...

**Jim Robson:** Oh shut up!

**FRANCINE:** About to enter the ring, from Seattle, Washington standing five feet eleven inches and weighing 220 pounds, here is ... NOVEMMMBEER-RRRRRRRRRRRR!!!

[The arena lights dim as blue strobe lights flash through the arena. Grey, acrid smoke fills the entranceway and obscuring all vision. From this haze emerges



November, a young raven haired, somewhat pale, man...]

**Jim Robson:** November looks determined. I'm sure he's going to take whatever risks he needs to in order to defeat Suicidal Tendency tonight. He knows what a high profile win like that could do for him. It'll put him in high standing with the championship committee immediately.

**Jack Anderson:** "November" and "Champion" are two words that should never be used in the same sentence. Now, "November" and "7-11 employee"...that's a totally different story. I'm sure Novy will have a nice, long career serving up Slushies after tonight.

**Jim Robson:** November on his way to the ring... oh my God! What's this? The Franchise Players have hopped the guardrail and attacked November!

**Jack Anderson:** Ha ha! Arcola, Spades, and St. Clair are beating the holy hell out of him! Novy didn't even see it coming! I love it!

**Jim Robson:** All three Franchise Players are working over November's knee. Can't we get someone out here to stop this? I can't believe the referee isn't even doing anything!

**Jack Anderson:** Stop your complaining! This is sports entertainment at its finest. Three of the I/W's top superstars are wishing Novy luck for his match with Suicidal Tendency.

**Jim Robson:** Wishing him luck, my foot. They're destroying his knee. Dammit! The referee should be disqualifying Suicidal Tendency!

**Jack Anderson:** The match hasn't even started yet. The referee has no reason to disqualify him. The bell hasn't even rung...but Novy sure is getting HIS bell rung! HA HA HA!

**Jim Robson:** Here comes security...and

Commissioner Halston! They chase the Players away from November!

**Jack Anderson:** Party poopers!

**Jim Robson:** The Franchise Players are retreating to the back! But I don't think that'll be the last we see of them tonight.

**Jack Anderson:** Did you hear that, Jimmy? Did you hear what Johnny Spades said before they left? Spades just said that tonight will be their night. I don't doubt it. I see the Franchise Players causing all sorts of damage tonight. Gotta love them! They keep things interesting!

**Jim Robson:** They should be fined and suspended for what they just did. It looks like they robbed us all from seeing what could've been the match of the night. Officials are tending to November. He looks like he's hurt badly.

**Jack Anderson:** Of course he is! The Franchise Players kicked the crap out of his knee! I wouldn't be surprised if his knee is shot now. Suicidal Tendency has won this one without even breaking a sweat! Way to go, S.T.! HA HA!

**Jim Robson:** I'm afraid that may be true. It looks like Halston and the other officials are going to escort November to the back. What a shame. Despite the match not happening, the fans are showing their support for November. Listen to that "Novy! Novy!" chant, Jack!

**Jack Anderson:** It shows that these dolts have no taste whatsoever. They should just face it. Novy is a lame duck.

**Jim Robson:** Halston and the officials have helped November up and are taking him to the back. Wait a second. What the hell? November is turning around! He's pushed the officials away! He's heading to the ring! I can't believe it!

**Jack Anderson:** What an idiot! His knee is banged up! He can't compete!

**Jim Robson:** I don't think November knows the meaning of the word "quit."

He slides into the ring and the referee signals for the bell! This match is going to happen after all! Incredible!

**Jack Anderson:** This is the biggest mistake Novy could ever make. I can't believe this goof. His knee is banged up. We don't even know how badly it's injured. This unwise decision could very well lead to the end of his career.

**Jim Robson:** You're talking out of your backside, Jack. November isn't going anywhere anytime soon. He's here to stay!

**Jack Anderson:** Bah.

**Jim Robson:** This one is underway, folks! Both men are circling the ring. They lock up! November whips Suicidal Tendency into the ropes. S.T. with a leapfrog! November goes down and S.T. leaps over him. Suicidal Tendency returns with a dropkick to November who was just getting up!

**Jack Anderson:** Excellent move by S.T.! Novy is back to his feet! S.T. charges with a clothesline but Novy ducks it. Damn!

**Jim Robson:** November spins S.T. around and nails a clothesline of his own. Watts gets right back up but is brought right back down with a dropkick. Suicidal Tendency rolls out of the ring!

**Jack Anderson:** That's a VERY smart thing to do!

**Jim Robson:** S.T. needs to regroup from that flurry of moves. I don't think he expected November to have that much life in him. Suicidal Tendency is back in! They lock up...oh no! S.T. clips November in the knee!

**Jack Anderson:** It serves Novy right for entering into a match with such a serious injury.

**Jim Robson:** S.T. picks November up off the mat and whips him into the ropes. He drops November with a spinning heel kick...and he follows that up by dropping an elbow. Suicidal Tendency covers him!

## Summer Jobs (3 haiku)

by Mark from A Soft Degrade  
(63 Taylor Blvd. SE, Medicine Hat, AB, T1B 4A5)

1995  
delivering newspapers  
ink-smudged bag rubs against me  
gives me a hard-on

1997  
a pepper greenhouse  
my boss calls me cocksucker  
aphids bite my neck

1999  
pro shop supervisor  
wore blue and green the day I quit  
forgot to say fuck you

## The Desert of Spilt Milk

by Matt Rader from Minus Tides  
(Box 47 Denman Island, BC, V0R 1T0)

a woman who did  
not want to cry  
planted a garden  
on her cheek.  
In it grew only  
cacti & creosote:  
those plants that  
need little water

& soon one could  
hear the song of  
the coyote upon  
her brow, spot  
circle of vulture  
around her eye.  
The garden stolid  
& littered with  
carrion, slouching  
toward desert.



# Vancouver

## Morning Glory

litzine, make out club #11, 44 pages, \$2 or a mixed tape, Trish Kelly, 33-345 E. Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V5T 1W5, trishkellyex@yahoo.com

The first one was arresting - I had to stop and read it over twice - but in the end their shameless narcissistic self-promotion left a bad taste in my mouth. They all feature characters named Trish Kelly, or characters who are vixens with a thing for older men and a history of illness. The hazy hypnotic oscillation between fiction and autobiography is nice, though. If you flip the zine open to the middle, the first thing you see is the following promising passage: "I am mostly gay", he reminds himself. He clears his throat and pulls the pant leg down over the mother's atrophied leg." You've got to like that. But the uneasy balance struck between starfucking and contempt for stardom left me a little cold. (If you hate it so much, why do you bother?) In the end, good writing about being a semi-celebrity vixen on the literary scene is a lot like good writing about stock car racing or gardening: by no means a total waste of time, but of real interest only to hobbyists. (Wendy Banks)

## The Long Hall

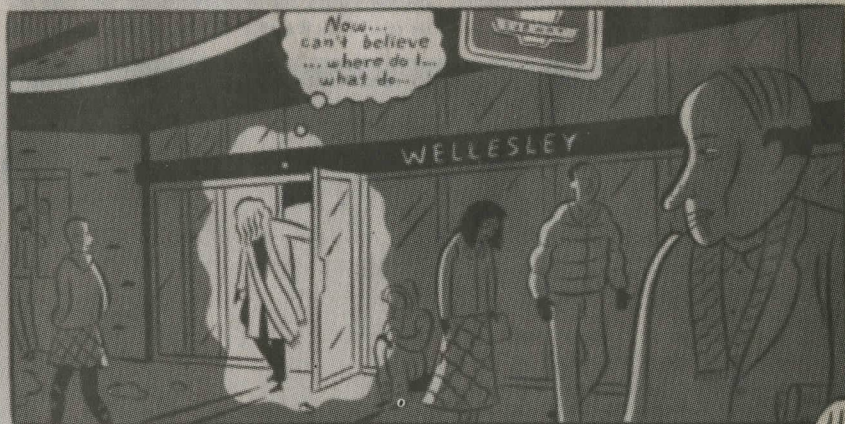
newspaper, vol. IX, #2, 12 pages, free/donation, c/o End Legislative Poverty, #211 - 456 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, elp@vcn.bc.ca

This is not a particularly radical publication, but it does try to provide a grassroots perspective on economic justice in B.C. This particular issue was produced just before the election of far right Liberals and contained some interesting debate on the NDP vs. Liberals similar to debate about the NDP in Ontario just before the election of Mike Harris. A great deal of effort was focused on encouraging people to vote. Like almost every other progressive publication, there were first hand reports from the Quebec City protests. Overall, the tone is optimistic and liberal with an underlying view that lobbying and petitions are effective tools for social change. (Brian Burch)

## The Nerve

magazine, volume 2, number 3, Bradley C. Damsgaard (Editor), 2.50\$, Box 88042, Chinatown PO, Vancouver, BC, V6A 4A4

"A mag for freedom's sake!" That sets the BC-style tone of this newsprint publication. This is not Nerve, the glossy magazine about sex, even though this is the Dirty issue, aka the Sex and Politics issue. We could very well have done without the Stockwell Day analysis article (dude, who doesn't know he's dumb?), but the articles on the Rhino Party and Bobus the Clown (where we are shown what a paranoid person he is, so different from how the mainstream media portrayed him) are pretty funny. Then there is some erotic fiction. Porn, record and shows reviews are thrown into the mix. The main feature is about All You Can Eat, a burlesque troupe that sounds (and looks) pretty cool and sexy. The last feature, about how the Internet (and BBSs before that) is a huge porn index for geeks was kind of boring, if rather head on.



You might want to pick this up in the Vancouver and Victoria areas (where it is free), in between issues of the superior Terminal City. (Frandroid Atreides)

## Off Kilter

comic, #6, Tim Grant, \$5, Box 355 1917 West 4th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6J 1M7

Your mother is calling you for lamb chops but you haven't finished probing Jimmy and the Reluctant Hillbilly! Tithead and Panties are hot on your trail as you make your way through the woods. Don't forget the giant tapeworms that live inside Panties and Scrotes (rectums) and eventually do battle outside of the space ship. Oh no! They've run out of space lube! Can Jimmy the Spitter save the day? Nice art, commentary on dumb

by Seth from Palookaville

male sex, not for kids (as the cover warns) and in general, a horribly depraved mind suffers at will. Recommended. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

## Pop Boffin

zine, 28 pages, \$3, Lara Jenny and friends, pop-boffin@canada.com

Who ever said a cutie can't be smart, too? Pop Boffin is at heart a pop media/music zine, but she wears the names, faces and words of all-star philosophers, and references to their ideas, like fabulous pieces of thrift-store jewellery. It makes me imagine, to change the analogy, a form-fitting summer dress that sports a pattern of the faces of the said 21 philosophers, rather than flowers.



Even though the writers and editors seem to grasp, more or less, the ideas they're throwing about, they choose to say "Whoa, Julia Kristeva is like fuckin' rad'!" rather than make an earnest, considered defence, because it would ruin their cuteness. I'd probably choose cute over earnest if given the choice, anyway. Pop Boffin makes me imagine a philosophy program run entirely in valley-girl (or riot grrrl) speak. It might not work in practice, but here it does, precisely because they don't try too hard. And because great philosophers' faces do look bloody cute in a zine, and because Saint Etienne actually granted Pop Boffin an interview (read: Pop Boffin is Approved by the anointed Cool), it really is fun. (Donato Mancini)

## Stephen Moron Presents: Two Stories

**litzine, issue 1, 48 pages, Stephen Moron, \$5, 2594 Triumph St, Vancouver, BC, V5K 1S8, [stephenmoron@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenmoron@hotmail.com)**

This Moron introduces his overpriced story collection by telling us that it's a gothic horror, a genre that influenced greats like Dickens, Poe, Shelly and Kafka. Apparently, it also influenced lesser writers. Castle of the Robots is the story of a man who had his middle finger bitten off by his father at birth, and it just gets more ridiculous from there - robots and a sadistic doctor get involved. Apparently this is only an excerpt from a longer story, but I'll be just fine without the rest of it, thanks. The second story had more potential. People casually discuss whether a man was right in hitting another one, as his dead victim lies in front of them.

However, the story goes nowhere and the end is disappointing. (Frandroid Atreides)

## Pony

**litzine, #1, Doretta Lau, Jeremy Balden, Sarah Lebo, Robyn Marshall (editors), \$4, 4649 Darwin Ave., Burnaby, BC, V5G 3E7**

An irreverent fun kinda lit-thingy with a nautical theme and a captain fetish. There are lists of captains - captain blackadder, captain beefheart - there are ruminations on captain related snacks - the fish stick, the square pizza from captain's pizzeria - and even a story by Doretta Lau entitled "Captain! My Captain!" The story is okay, there's a big party and Zoey is unhappy, but the constant captain/sea references are really annoying. Another story, Robyn Marshall's "Heal the World" was about a girl who helps a hippy commune find itself by stealing the house's stereo and replacing it with a variety of used musical instruments. Only one captain reference. Well, I didn't find any great writing in this, but I enjoyed its fun sensibility. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Chow Yun Fat Is My Tom Cruise: Poems

**poetry chapbook, \$5, Doretta Lau, 4649 Darwin Avenue, Burnaby, BC, V5G 3E7.**

This one starts out almost solemn, half yearning for the days of suburban childhood, half trying to reinvent them somehow. Somewhere along the way, a poem switches the book's gears, and we're in LaLa land. Who's the better actor? Does it matter? But then Doretta slowly pulls

us back. We're still in that childhood world somewhere, but just like a child's imagination, that world changes so much from minute to minute that you're never sure where you really are. As Doretta grows up in the book, she shares the hardships and some of the joys experienced by using the suburbs and city of Burnaby as a backdrop. An interesting glimpse into the mind of a young woman reminiscing and trying to move on. (Michelle Emmanuel)

## Notebook Comix

**zine, #4, Kyla Sweet, \$2, PO Box 19146, Vancouver, BC, V6J 4R6**

Such an apt title for this zine, which is basically journal-like ruminations accompanied by scratchy pics that add way more in charm than they do in explication. Kyla warns of "clubhouse sandwich mouth," discusses the horror of the "guaranteed panty remover" annual pap smear examination and dreams of kissing the necks of boys she doesn't know. There's also a cool Len Lye Memorial Package featuring trading cards and a booklet on how to make your own hand drawn film. This element of the zine comes complete with a long strip of the aforementioned hand-drawn film that tells us who Len is. A top-notch zine with something for everyone. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Superstar

**comic, 25 pages, \$2, James Lloyd, 302-336 E 7th Ave, Vancouver, B.C., V5T 1M8**

A rock and roll singer/American poet, James Douglas Morrison, has faked his death and retired to "a low rent

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palm tree scene at the end of a string of volcanoes in the south pacific." It's amazing what happens to him. He tries to write, finds that his muse has abandoned him, meets the natives, befriends them by showing them his harmonica, gets married to the chief's daughter, starts fooling around with all the suitable village women, starts fronting a new band called "Char-Yar", becomes a local star, turns to drink, and ends up being almost chased off a cliff because he insults the entire tribe while on stage. What a story! Is it enough to base a movie on? Sure, if you don't expect much from the movies. For a 25-page black and white independently produced comic, it's just fine, and Lloyd's drawing style is both sharper, and more visually rich than I've ever seen it. I can't necessarily judge how good Superstar is — comics aren't really my bag — but I read it five times on the day I bought it and still peruse it whenever I'm on the can. (Donato Mancini)

## Public Works

#2, 9 pages, free or \$1, various, Vancouver, publicworks@disinfo.net

It has a friggin index! Otherwise, I'm a bit uncomfortable with the way its producers seem to make the battle "to break the market's grip on our lives" a fashion statement. Those who choose active resistance, for example, are called "jammers," as in "culture-jammers," and the page right before the index has a list of the bands jammers should/could listen to — a whole menu for a night of anti-capitalist rock and roll that includes Noam Chomsky and Fela Anikulapo Kuti lectures. Jammers never rest! "Getting arrested for the first time was like losing my

virginity," says jiggy legs. The crew at Public Works may also have been responsible for a sudden plummet in Placer Dome (a mining company) stocks, they say, and perhaps much more mayhem. Wow! How can I join the jammer's club, and what should I wear to the parties? (Donato Mancini)

## Victoria

### Elaho Valley Anarchist Horde: A Journal of Sasquatchalogy

zine, \$??, box 539, 185-911 Yates St., Victoria, BC, CST, V8V 4Y9

A veritable plethora, no, a smorgasbord on the tree cutting going down in the Elaho Valley in BC by a company known as InterFor. Treesitters have united somewhere in the forests of our most western province and have put together a journal. At times it reads more like an instruction manual, extolling the virtues of the different kinds of herbs you can pick (only as much as you need, never more) to aid any ailments on those long days of raging against the machines of the tree trade. You can even learn the proper and safe way to shit in the woods! It's not all how-to's. There's an interesting article on security culture, "a culture where people know their rights and, more importantly, know how to assert them." There's quite a bit here on the many uses of actual and implied monkey wrenches, but a warning on the inside

cover deems the material to be used only for entertainment value. Well, you can be the judge of that. (Michelle Emmanuel)

## Cuntboy

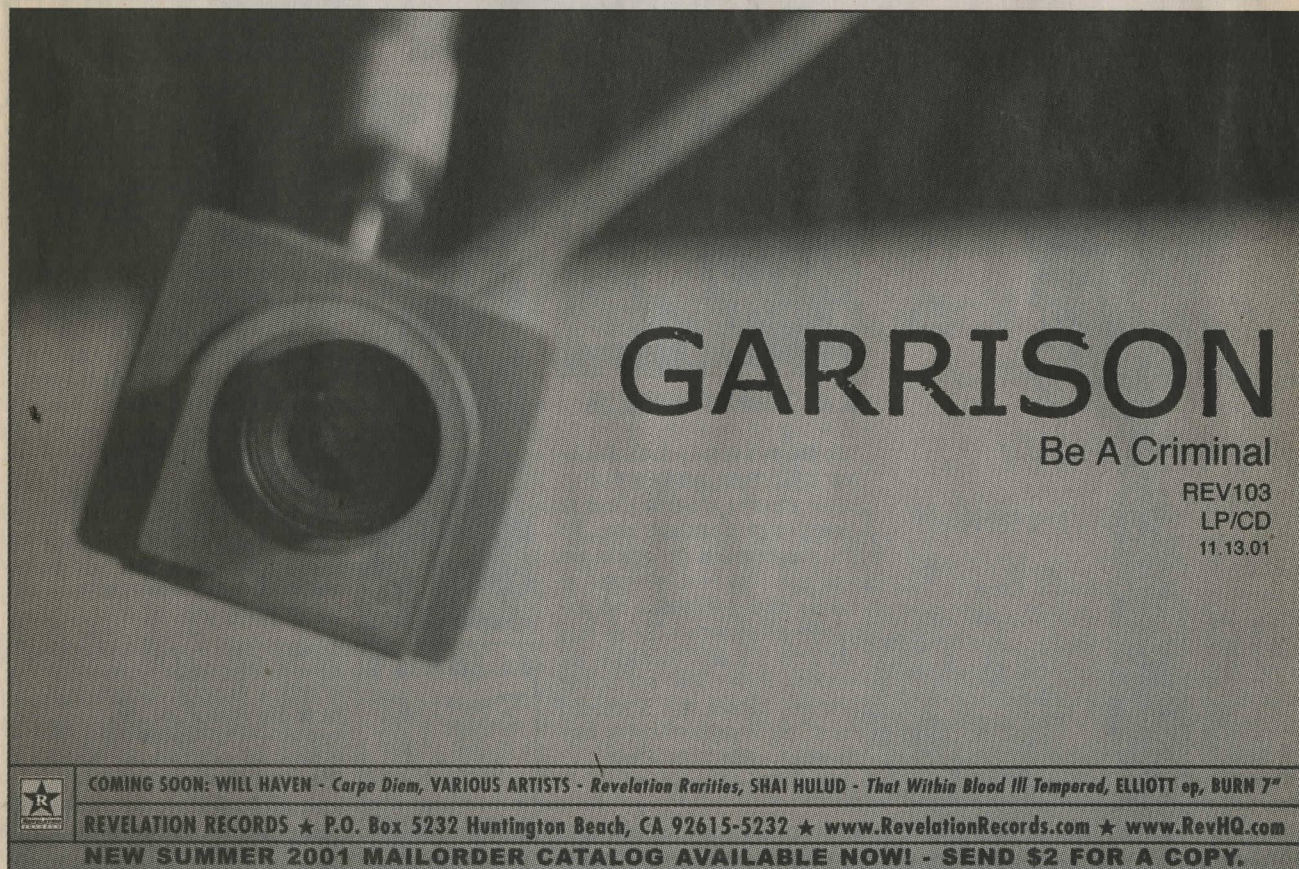
comic, #1, Julian Gunn, \$2, PO Box 8673, Victoria, BC, V8X 3S2

Um a kinda annoying comic about a guy who has a vagina instead of a penis. This satyr type thing appears and wants to have sex with cuntboy. Then there's the adventures of pirate cuntboy and a whole long bit at the end which drops the cuntboy business and has the author revealing transsexual status to new friends and things get peevish. Anyway, the art in this is pretty lame, and, well, the various scenarios aren't all that engaging, so unless this premise really turns you on, I'd give it a miss. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Her Wonderful Life

comic, #4, 32 pgs, Therese Starck, 1460 Gladstone Ave, Victoria, BC, V8R 1S3

It's been four years since the last edition of Therese's Her Wonderful Life, but the anguish of lost love has not yet dissipated. In fact, the pain seems even more acute, with Therese's sparse thin drawings of broken hearts and the words "I've met someone" oozing out of them, evoking a despair bordering on mawkish. There are some great moments in this series of images and text — essentially a rumination on a failed relationship. For instance, a drawing of a naked woman with a black line across her face and the caption "What Lies Between Us" evoke sen-



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uality, jealousy, desperation, and bewilderment. But other panels just seem too maudlin — such as the drawing of Therese crying in bed accompanied by text explaining how she was supposed to be making “passionate-I’m-so-happy-to-be-back-in-your-arms-love” but instead she is alone and “crying with swollen slits where brown eyes used to be.” Therese is sincere, but her efforts to convey that sincerity don’t always captivate. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## British Columbia

### Alien Basement Food

zine, #14, 50 pages, \$1/\$5 for 3, Anarchy Ashley, c/o Basement Freak Productions, 9020-99 Ave Suite #1, Fort St-John, BC, V1J 1T1

One of the funniest tics self-proclaimed anarchist zine-makers have is the urge to write introductions to their zines — always trying to catch their breath after all the terrible obstacles they had to hurdle in order to bring this fabulous, direly needed mag into existence — and conclusions that say in a lot of words “well, thanks for reading me, hope you enjoyed yourself and hope you come again.” In between, they usually include reams of scribbly poetry, hand-written articles that start with “well, so and so who makes this zine asked me to write something, and so I sat around for a while trying to think something up...” sloppy collages, reiterations of the editor’s rebel status (with exclamation marks),

memorable quotes, emblematic page-wasters and scraps of disembodied information. They’re often done on the cheapest possible photocopier (on the extra-blochy, dark setting), have catchy names, and are about 15-20 pages too long. (Donato Mancini)

### Divine Contact

Issue 1, Free, Shy-Spy, 8715, 78A Street, Fort St. John, BC, Canada, V1J 3B3

Another earnest zine tossing out anarcho-spirituality. Poetry and spiritual exploration abound. Production is minimal. What we have here is 30 or so double sided photocopied pages. This zine reads too much like a journal that has just been photocopied and released to the world. Shy-Spy is on her way to self discovery, but lectures on oracles and chakras are just not my cup of tea. The rant “I am not a feminist” adds nothing new to the debate. I would say that this zine is better as a souvenir of a time and place for those addressed and included in it. (Jeffrey Mackie)

### Gnome Sane?

Gnome Zine, #1, 12pages, 50cents, Ryan Dyck, 2864 Evergreen St., Abbotsford, BC, V2T 2S1 sk8\_or\_try@hotmail.com

What the hell?! What is this? A zine about gnomes?? Why would I want to read this... and why would someone go to the trouble of making it? Gnomes... Yes, anyway, this is a zine about gnomes. I’m not sure why Mr. Dyck decided to put out a zine about gnomes, but here it is. What really bothers me about Gnome Sane?

is the fact that, while attesting that it is a zine for Gnome enthusiasts, in the letters section, all of the replies are either mean, sarcastic, or both. Listen to me, Mr. Dyck: if you make a zine “for enthusiasts”, you do not reply sarcastically to their letters. This is common courtesy. Well, I guess he can operate under the moniker of “punk rock”, something which has seemingly taken to mean “assholism” in these troubled times. Or maybe he’s just an asshole, I don’t know. I couldn’t really tell you, I just know that this zine is terrible and not worth the time it takes to read it. (Anthony Gerace)

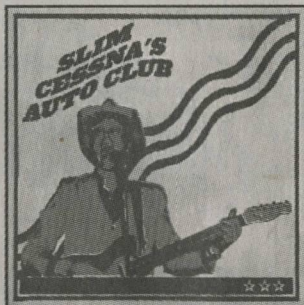
## Saskatchewan

### Green’s Magazine

litzine, Volume XXIX, Number 4, July 2001, \$5, David Green ed., 96 pages, Po Box 3236, Regina, Sask., S4P 3H1

Green’s is a hefty little staple-bound mag packed with mostly competent stories and poetry by journeyman writers from around the world. There’s nothing sparkling or spectacular here, yet there’s also nothing unbearable or embarrassing. Many of the stories have a strongly sentimental feeling that is sometimes cloying and sometimes quaint. I particularly enjoyed the story “Queen of the Erie Canal” by Paul Persia (Montreal), about a New York businessman remembering his rural school teacher, and the poem “There’ll Come a Day” by Virginia Thayer (Mass.), about banishing housework. (Shaun Smith)

## HE WON'T LIKE ANY OF THESE.



### SLIM CESSNA'S AUTO CLUB

S/T

Slim Cessna's Auto Club, the Denver band's 1995 debut, quickly sold out its initial pressing prompting fans to demand its re-release ever since. We now proudly deliver this gem to you once again. They have been called alt country, country-revisionist, and psychobilly while compared to old hats like Hank Williams, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Ernest Tubb and Jimmie Rodgers. Despite their traditional roots, they're weird enough to keep mainstream country fans at bay.

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## Alberta

### Altruizine

zine, April 2001, #1, 39 pages, free, Hose Clamp Press, PO Box 35078, Edmonton, AB, T5K 2R8, [www.altruizine.com](http://www.altruizine.com)

Altruizine is a new punk, DIY zine from Edmonton, but is far more professional and polished than most of its ilk. The people who put this together are well-skilled in layout and design, and obviously invested a lot of time and effort. Besides its great look, Altruizine also has great content. The zinesters responsible have a great two-page expose in which they reveal the first concert that they attended. (New Kids, oh my god!) There are also thoughtful interviews with punk bands where the interviewer asks the band interesting questions. In one interview, Ian from Sinclair is invited to play a version of "musical jeopardy." And what would a punk zine be without reviews? There are many of them, as well as a hodge podge of other articles, including one on reflexology, and several personal musings. The focus on music, as well as the highly personal tone of most of the writing worked really well. Readers should look forward to more Altruizine. (Alexis Keinlen)

### Visions of Verse/ Tales From Purgatory

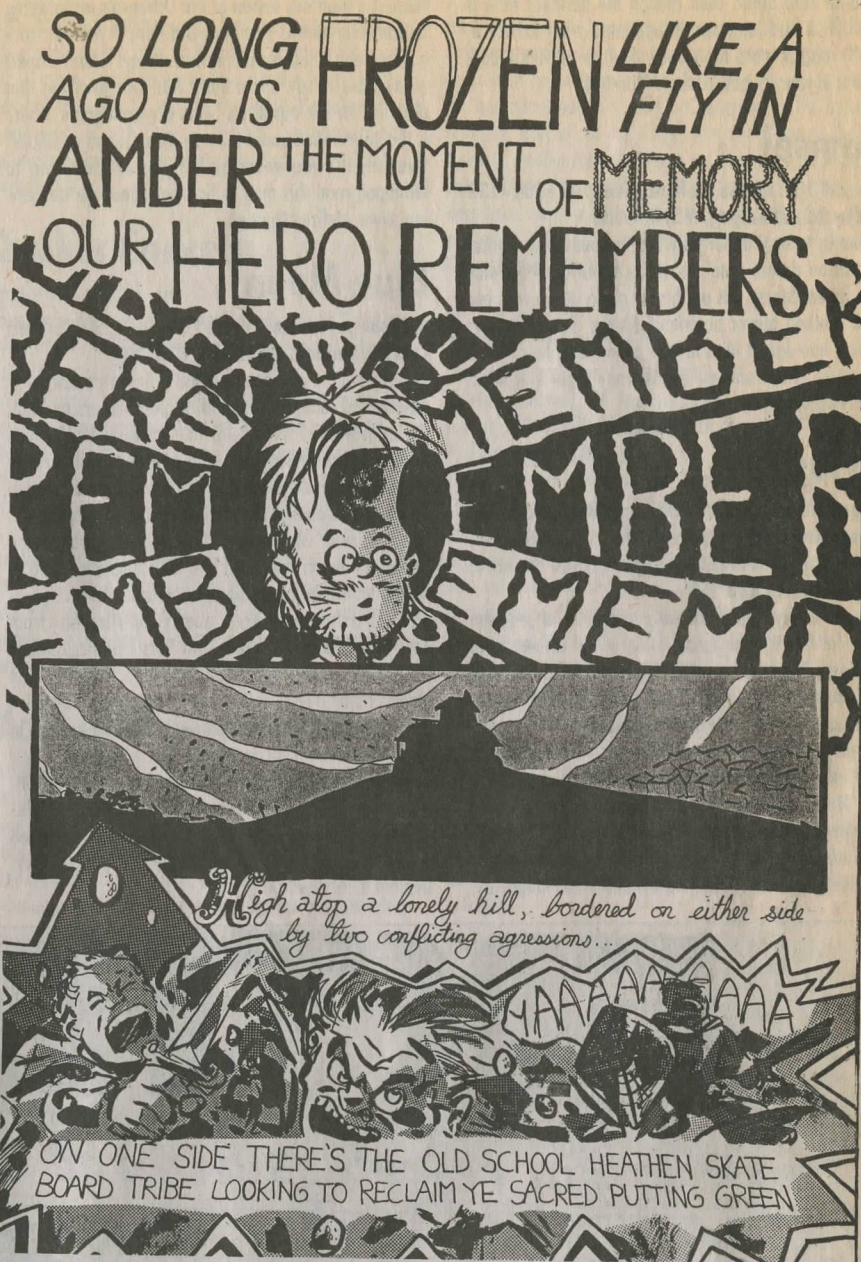
comic-poetry, a stack of issues, \$2.50, Randy Smallman, 10506 96 Ave. #304, Edmonton, AB T5K 0A8

This "zine series that joins comic art and poetry" is a very bizarre effort and I'm not sure if that's intentional. I have received a whole series of these art comic things in the mail, and they're quite a marvelous find. It feels sort of like Sunday mornings when you're a kid and you get out your old stack of comics and read them with your feet up on the wall and get lost for what seems like years. I enjoyed the "Waves no Particles" poem by Yvonne Rivers and accompanying art by Denny Linger - the girls have male genitalia, which I guess is supposed to be scary when placed in the context of the rest of the strip, which features the Grim Reaper, fetuses and gravestones. Some of the other art is not as good as Linger's, some of the writing could be less leaf-devoted. The trouble with this zine is that it takes Conan the Barbarian and mixes it with Oscar Wilde. I mean can we take poetry or violent cartoons seriously when they are pitted against their aesthetic opposite? It's hard to criticize something which has obviously taken a lot of effort to put together. "Tales From Purgatory" is the easiest comic to follow because it follows known etiquette, and the art is solid. I recommend TFP#25. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

### Anarchy Architecture

zine, E.B. Klassen, \$?, Box 9, Site 1, RR#1, Legal, AB T0G 1L0, [ebk@ecn.ab.ca](mailto:ebk@ecn.ab.ca)

This environmental/ highway/ personal zine starts off with a personal rant style article about the editor's experience at Stucco which I found alluring at times. I kept thinking I was reading a elementary school project, not because of the writing but because the zine looks so



by Greg McCann from Shmog

## Winnipeg

### Hollistarium

comic, \$5, 20 pages, Holly Dzama, 31 Winter Bay, Brandon, MB, R7B 3H9

Holly Dzama, little sister to Marcel Dzama of Royal Art Lodge fame, is already a master of cutesy, faux-naïve irony, and has created a funny little comic in the style of those who pretend to be simpler than they really are. Her sentences go: "I am a literate sixteen year old but I will write just like I am 8-and-a-half because I am simply more adorable that way," and so do her drawings. Fact is though, she is pretty adorable and, I don't mind saying, the crude drawings and the silly, pointless stories about vampires, ghosts and other Hallowe'en creeps



enhance each other, even though the aesthetic here is one I wish had long ago disappeared from existence. You'll read it more than once, and, in all likelihood, show it to your friends. (Donato Mancini)

## Damsel

zine, #19, James Collins, free, #1202-230 Roslyn Rd., Winnipeg, MB, R3L 0H1

A zine by a sissy about sissy life. Includes hypothetical "TV fiction dream date" in which the luscious popular cheerleader Stacey sets up the shy geeky Jason with her hunk football player boyfriend. Plus a discussion concerning how James likes to look at women's hair. "No," he writes, "I am not seeking therapy regarding this." (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Stylus

magazine, 48 pages, Deanna Radford (ed), University of Winnipeg Students Association, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 2E9

Stylus is a very well produced magazine and program guide for CKUW, the radio station at the University of Winnipeg. The cover is catchy, and features artwork by David Ashcroft. Throughout are interviews and reviews covering a wide variety of musical genres. The magazine gives the impression that Winnipeg is a happening place, contrary to stereotypes that may exist outside the city. Hell, they got the English Beat to come to Winnipeg! I enjoyed an interview with Montreal anarchist/musician Norman Nawrocki and another with a Winnipeg band called Ham. At the end of the magazine,

there is a hilarious review of Ani Difranco's last offering by someone named Pompous Old Fart. If you can score a copy, read it just for this review. It says what I suspect many want to say about Saint Ani. One question that did arise for me was if this is the program guide, where is the information about the non-music shows on CKUW? Overall, it's top notch and if you are heading to Winnipeg read this mag to find out about the happening scene. (Jeffrey Mackie)

## Blue Moon

low-budget litzine, Laurie Fuhr (ed.), 59 Barbara Cres., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3R 2Y4

This is what it's all about. I mean if the corporate snaggle-toothed robotic journals with glossy covers had half the ambition of those who live on Blue Moon, well whatever. The reviews are solid and so are the articles on poets from all over. This laid-back, simple, stapled litzine is a meaningful periodical dedicated to brilliance. This particular issue focuses on Ottawa's literary scene (including venue reviews if you ever desire or need to have a launch or poetry slam in the area) and with regular superstar small press poetry contributions from Tom Schmidts, Elana Wolff and Ross Priddle, readers can be assured a well-rounded romp through Blue Moon's home planet of Winnipeg. Like many innovative indie litzines, BM manages to outrank most litmags in terms of potential for untapped poetry markets. BM is dedicated to the unknown, the known as well as contests, the individual poets and publishers, single-authored and anthology reviews, letters and that small press essential, Canadian poetry. Very necessary. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

## Tart

magazine, #9, \$3, 200-63 Albert St., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 1G4

Plagued by funding upsets and the need to get on with life, there hasn't been a Tart issue in a while and, in fact, this one is probably pretty old. Still, the coolest mag out of Winnipeg lives on — if just barely. This issue takes on "post-urban narratives," raves, a report on the work of Chris Dorosz, who does ornate labour intensive abstract paintings that end up looking like a cross between a prism and a computer screen, and a report on an attempt to stage a free festival at the Forks Festival Stage last summer. The festival gets busted up by the cops after a successful day of revelry and Tart's Phil Koch examines what exactly happened and why. Wonder if they tried again this summer? Hopefully, Tart will rise once more to tell us. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Local Scores

spoken word CD, Terrance Cox, Cyclops Press, Box 2775, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4B4, [www.cyclops-press.com](http://www.cyclops-press.com)

This collection is not overtly diverse, which is a good thing if you like your arrangements to stay roughly similar to one another. The arrangements vary. This is an album in the strictest sense. Mr. Cox has a dark menacing voice, but at times it is also tranquil. Almost like if Darth Vader read children's stories. "Play please some jazz I might like you think" begins the second piece. Slow and methodical and heavily narrative, this slew of symphonies melds with his gentle gargoyle voice. His voice is the most appealing thing about the CD, but

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unfortunately, it detracts from pulling apart meaning in the words. The accompanying liner notes do little to encourage the poetry itself, however depending on whether one thinks and learns through vision or sound, this CD does have its poetry. "Cover Version of Caedom's Hymn" is a rhythmic and intelligent piece of writing, the music takes a back seat there. "Of Glory in the Flower" is by far my favourite, not just because its about Hockey, but in its simplest meaning it's the boy and his hero theme, which everyone can identify with, whether the hero's a sports figure, music icon or Martha Stewart. This is a CD you might hear at Indigo or Chapters, which isn't a bad thing. This CD originated from a reading in late October 1993 at the Niagara's Artists' Centre in St Catharines. The music is exquisite, the arrangements move from the subtle to overcharged. Local Score is a well produced narrative. Occasionally I found the jungle drumming drowned Mr. Cox's voice, and from time to time the list style delivery of the poetry became weary. A distinct voice and sound, a worthwhile collection of spoken word symphony. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

## Toronto

### True Love: The Sequel

photo romance, #2, Naomi Reid, \$2.50, 510 Dovercourt Rd., Toronto, ON, M6H 2W4

Premise here is photos are taken and arranged in story with cartoon-like dialogue. There are three stories, each one involving love/romance. The stories are deliberately corny and fake, which makes them kinda charming in a strange sort of way. The tales — like the one in which a

guy's roommate sabotages his date, or the one in which a guy is dating two girls on the same night and is found out — seem to be commenting on the state of the romance narrative in pop culture, implicitly referencing everything from Archie to Three's Company to the Harlequin. Maybe I'm reading too much into this. (Hal Niedzviecki)

### Quaker Concern

newsletter, vol. 27, no. 2, 8 pages, 4 for \$10 (or donation of more), Canadian Friends Service Committee, 60 Lowther Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M5R 1C7, [cfsc@quaker.ca](mailto:cfsc@quaker.ca)

Among the most radical people I have worked with over the years have been members of the Quakers (Society of Friends). From advocating prison abolition to singing on the front lines in the Quebec City protests, after a mass arrest, the person in the jail cell next door could easily be a Quaker. Alternatively, the person assisting you to develop a funding proposal for a grassroots economic initiative could also be a Quaker. This newsletter provides glimpses into some of the activities Quakers in Canada are involved in — not in depth but in effective bursts of enthusiastic writing. (Brian Burch)

### Moving Picture Views

film journal, #7, 24 pages, Free, Malcolm Fraser (ed.), 85 Beatty Ave., Toronto, ON, M6J 3G8

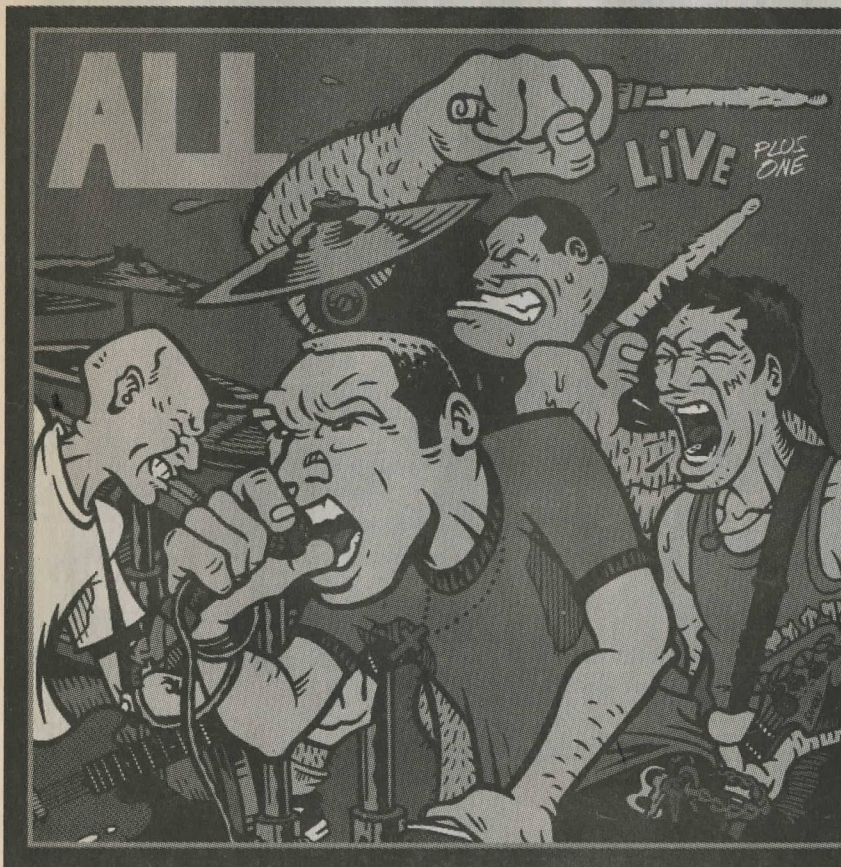
Here is a zine (and I'm hesitant to even call it that) which is enjoyable, educational and necessary all at the same time. What is it about, you ask? Well, it's a journal of independent cinematic events in Canada, ranging

from Alan Zweig's haunting documentary Vinyl, to Blain Thurier's work on the West Coast, to pornography and place in independent cinema. My favourite article was the one about one of the editors' discovery of the music industry, and all of the things that come out of that. Anyway, Moving Picture Views is an excellent little publication. The editors apologize, in the introduction, for the new issue coming out so late...but seriously, when the end result is this good, you don't really care about deadlines. (Anthony Gerace)

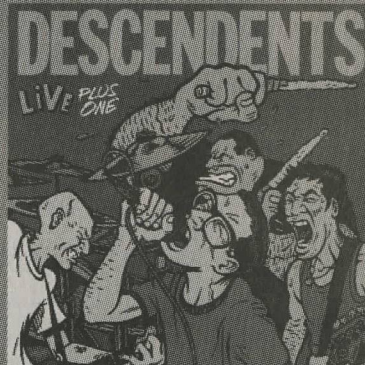
### Taddle Creek

magazine, volume 4, number 2, 44 pages, Conan Tobias (editor), 7\$ for one year subscription (2 issues), Vitalis Publishing, P.O. Box 611, Station P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2Y4

There are some good short stories in this magazine: The Sandra Maneuver by Moe Berg is a weird story about an infatuation on a TV personality, and Jim Munroe's short piece is a funny if clichéd story about how corporatized U of T will be in 2020. Emily Pohl-Weary has an entertaining poem titled What I Learned Growing up in Parkdale. There is an interview with cool poetry writer Stuart Ross, who sold 7,000 copies (!!) of his 30 chapbooks by hawking them on the street during the 80s. Finally, even if this is primarily a lit magazine, the main feature is about how Toronto defaced numerous streets in its quest to make space for automobiles during the 50s. It's a fascinating look at how Toronto's streets are what they are today, complete with before/after pictures. Taddle Creek High is a good magazine that's mostly relevant to Torontonians. (Frandroid Atreides)



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## Snowpea

perzine, \$1, Elise Newman, 34 Elora Rd. Toronto, ON, M6P 3H6

A personal zine filled with photos of friends and tiny little hand-drawn flowers. Journal excerpts cover everything about Elise's trip to London and Ireland and there are photos to boot. An Irish seagull for example. From her Dublin days Elise writes "I am now living a not so totally different life — eating weirdly, sleeping in a strange bed in a city I don't understand." Collages, hand drawn sketches, eyes from magazines or photos pepper the spread. Reflections, scrawls, and sporadic prose: "It is December sixth two thousand. Something heavy about this date. Because eleven years ago, I heard about the Montreal massacre on the car radio. We were coming home from my grandmothers' house. It was dark and cold and I remember not understanding what had happened. Not really. The story got mangled with Simon and Garfunkle's Seven O'Clock News. The nurses were found stabbed and strangled in their Chicago apartments. We don't have that car anymore." Enjoy Snowpea. (Nathaniel George Moore)

## Jones Av.

litzine, Vol II #2, \$2, 24 pages, Paul Schwartz (ed.), OEL Press, 88 Dagmar Ave, Toronto, ON, M4M 1W1, oel@interlog.com

What a wonderful collection! Eighteen poems by fourteen poets, and five drawings by artist Wendy Lu. Editor Schwartz has thoughtfully and sensitively chosen one or two pieces from each poet, creating an exhilarating read. Most pleasing was the immaculate sense of line shared

by all. It is rare to find so many contemporary poets in one place who understand where line ends: "your eyes glittered/ like the crescent moon/ bright behind/ tattered racing clouds." (Hint: it breaks with the breath, not visa versa.) That staccato image, from Janice Lore's "RØMØ", is perfectly infused with the breathless excitement of fresh love, which in part is what the poem is about. This whole collection, regardless of subject, reads with the same deeply satisfying faultlessness. Go roll 200 pennies right now and buy Jones Av. (Shaun Smith)

## Kiss Machine: Sex & Condiments

zine, #3, 63 pages, Emily Pohl-Weary and Paola Poletto, \$4, 3 issues for \$10, 18 Virtue St., Toronto, ON, M6R 1C2, www.kissmachine.org

Awww. You open it up to the middle, and there's this little grocery bag stapled there, and it's got a booklet inside it that's the shape of a ketchup bottle, with a little ten-page history of ketchup, and the bibliography is printed out like a receipt, and...and... And there's a haunting little story about pizza delivery by Paul Hong, and an endearing story about sauce by Jessica Westhead, and a poem about pepper and the Vesta Lunch, and a pretty sexy (sexy ha-ha as opposed to sexy peculiar) photo essay featuring cucumbers and carrots and of course whipped cream and bananas. There are also many other things that are good in here, and some things that are not good. All in all, Kiss Machine is satisfying the way the appetizer sampler platter is satisfying — all kinds of little treats jumbled together producing surprising and amusing combinations. Yum. (Wendy Banks)

## Fuzzy Heads Are Better

zines, #9, Patti Kim, Box 68568, 360A Bloor St. W, Toronto, ON, M5S 1X1

As you read this, Patti is settling into her new role as an art student in Halifax. Though we'll miss running into her around town, if her lively zine is any indication, I'm sure that she will bring all kinds of good things to her new city. In this ninth edition of Fuzzy, Patti updates on her life (end of her Punk Planet column, impending move to Halifax) and compiles some good reading by contributors on menstruation, Quebec City protests, and more. The highlight for me was the very funny "Is Activism Sexy" comic strip done by Patti herself. Here, Patti asks "will the tear-off molotov cocktail bra be in vogue for summer 2001?" As always, engaging and friendly, those of us in Toronto can think of this edition of Fuzzy as our consolation prize — Patti is gone from our streets, but her zine makes up for her absence. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Part-Time Alcoholic

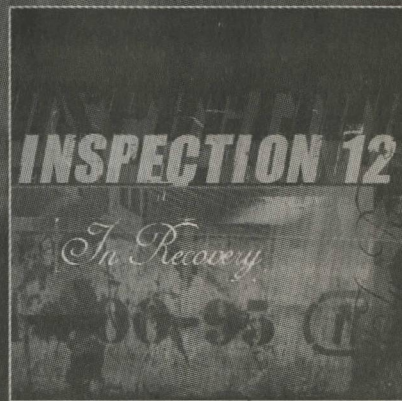
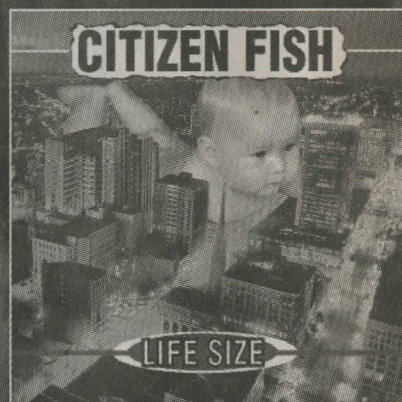
poetry zine, by M. Adams, \$2, 860 Bloor St. West Toronto, ON M6G 1M2

The poem about watching a woman on TV with no arms write with her toes and spoon sugar into coffee with her toes and pour and stir the milk with her toes was creepy and fun and awful. It was awfully good, but sort of demented. Most of these poems are crammed so deep inside the poet's head that they don't really fall clearly on the page. A whole lot of "my thoughts move too fast..." but then the voice gets good "a new wardrobe, a second closet, has sprung up in your apartment". While

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preparing this review I wanted to quote a line of poetry from "f&l" but the word didn't exist. "A vague sense of fullness has just left you" I ran it through spellcheck and came up with 'fluffiness', 'fullness' and finally 'Futleness'. But I'm a jerk sometimes. These poems are not yet fully invented, the laboratory is still making something odd; so there is more to look for from Adams in the future. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

## Ottawa

### Lucitanus

perzine, #2, \$1/trade, 11-413 Elgin St., Ottawa, ON, K2P 1N4

Lucy's follow-up to her first zine shows signs of improvement, but it still needs some work. On the plus side, Lucy is a wonderful storyteller and her tale of the March Break trip to Montreal drew me right in. The nostalgic piece about her job at an organic grocery store was good too. Even the simple one-page drawing and descriptions of various people, cats and plant life in her apartment were endearing. However, the contributions and haphazard (mistaken?) stapling job still demonstrates that this is a zine growing up. Lucy is a good writer but still stretching her wings. Give her time and a bit of space, and she'll come up with something great. In the meantime, this will do just fine. (Kevin Jagernauth)

### Glass People: A Literary Newsletter

Literary Newsletter, #1-10, Free, Ophelia Glass (editor), 269 Pickford Drive, Kanata, ON, K2L 3E3, glasspeople@hotmail.com

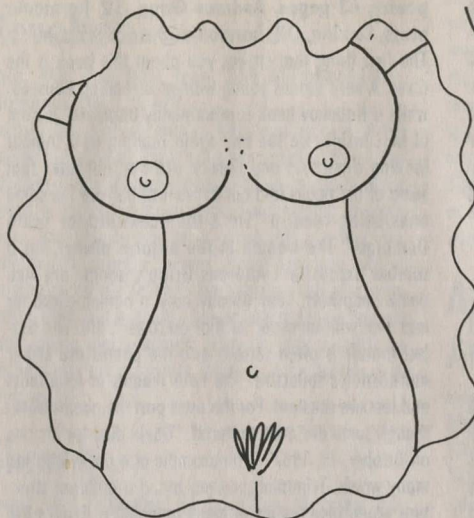
First, editor Ophelia deserves a big round of applause. She's managed to put out a monthly newsletter on poetry and other literary events for 10 months, the shortest issue being four pages, the longest, twelve. I don't know if I'm just impressed by the quality and consistency, but that's pretty cool. Second, Glass People is great. I mean, really great. That's the beauty of a literary zine/newsletter...there isn't the 1000:1 shit-to-quality ratio that's present in a lot of poetry zines. Ophelia has produced an excellent zine that is perfectly tuned into the Ottawa scene. Let's hope it keeps going for a long while. (Anthony Gerace)

### Haymarket

zine, # 3, 43 pages, ?\$, c/o OPIRG Carlton, 320 Unicentre, Carlton University, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6 zine666@hotmail.com

Haymarket continues the spirit of the Haymarket martyrs, the Chicago anarchists framed for a bombing that occurred at a Chicago rally in the late 1880s. From event listings to in-depth analysis of the corporate involvement in education, this is a very straightforward, optimistically radical zine coming from a group of activists in Ottawa connected to the wider anti-globalization struggle. This publication has been running a debate on violence vs non-violence, a really important issue in light of the tactics being used in resisting globalization. There was coverage of the Homes Not Bombs trial, which I found inter-

ON BEAUTY. BEING A  
BIT OF A SISSY I MUST ADMIT THAT I AM  
NOT ATTRACTED TO NAKED FEMALE BODIES.



WHAT I DO LIKE TO  
LOOK AT ON WOMEN  
IS HAIR, BUT IT HAS  
TO HAVE AN EVEN  
CUT AT THE BOTTOM.  
ANY KIND OF JAGG-  
EDNESS RUINS IT  
FOR ME. ONE GIRL  
I SEE AROUND HAS  
STRAIGHT HAIR THAT

IS VERY THIN SO IT  
DOES NOT COVER HER  
EARS, INSTEAD THEY  
PART HER HAIR. THE  
POINT OF THIS PART IS  
VISUALLY APPEALING I  
FIND. NO, I AM NOT  
SEEKING THERAPY  
REGARDING THIS.



by James from Damsel

## London

### The Day I Wrote Watermelon™

comic zine, issues #1-8, 32 pages each, D.S. Barrick, 1.75\$, From The Melon Patch, c/o Sideshow Press, 124 Garfield Avenue, London, ON, N6C 2B6

An absurd comic that follows the adventures of an ensign and his superior as they have to face A Horrible Nondescript Monster With Large Teeth, and end up hanging out with The Man in the Moon and two cute four-eyed aliens from the Intergalactic Parcel Service. Tense relationships follow. D.S. certainly has comic timing, and the simple drawing style fits the narrative. I don't know where the title comes from, except that all

esting (oddly enough that judge recognized me as an expert witness on housing, a different role than my usual one as defendant). Those who still believe electoral politics can make a significant difference will find that "Elections 2000 Boring," a short series of voting myth-busting pieces, might change their opinion. (Brian Burch)

### Murderous Signs

litzine, #3, 20 pages, Grant Wilkins (ed.), SASE, P.O. Box 53106, Ottawa, ON, K1N 1C5

The most interesting piece is the editorial about what one has to go through to publish a bona fide magazine and how the Canadian Magazine Publishers Association gives the shaft to small publications. The rest of the issue is split between Stan Rogal's and LeRoy Gorman's poetry. I didn't care much for Rogal's, but Gorman's poetry is mostly a bunch of puns that I enjoyed a lot. I guess I'm a cheap laugh, and not a poet. (Frandroid Atreides)



the heads are kind of melon-shaped, but that's something I will let others speculate on. Check it out. (Frandroid Atreides)

## Chaotic Heart

perzine, #1, 24 pages, Star, \$.50, 124 Hawthorne Road, London, ON, N6G 2W8, chaotic.heart@bust.com

Star talks about how she's starting to give more attention to her inspiration, about the difficulty of sharing personal thoughts in writing and how she stopped watching television and adoring idols. She also recalls one of her dreams where she ended up being a sadistic ghost. Like many perzines, it's kind of all over the place and contemplative. The layout, with typewriter fonts and handwriting set over cut 'n' paste, is beautifully done. Nice and quick romp through one girl's mind. (Frandroid Atreides)

## Line of Fire

zine, #1, 40 pages, collective, \$1.50, Riot Grrrl London, 124 Hawthorne Road, London, ON, N6G 2W8, rgldonon@gurmail.com

Riot Grrrl London's collectively written zine. The intro gives some history and rules of RGL, and then some history of the Riot Grrrl movement in general. Articles about fat obsession, Greek poet Sappho, the Promise Keepers (an American religious organization bent on reinstating men as dominant figures in the family), female genital mutilation, witch-hunting and instructions

on what to do against menstrual cramps constitute the expected RG fare. Then there's a good interview with Kinnie Starr, and an article on the anti-diet: Two women decide to go on a diet. Two of their friends, appalled, decide to put on all the weight that the other 2 women lose. This is a good example of the cool attitude this zine has. "Riots, not diets!" (Frandroid Atreides)

## Gullible Skeptic

poetry, 62 pages, Andreas Gripp, \$3, harmonia press, London, ON, harmonia@execulink.com

The first thing that strikes you about this book is the cover. A very serious young woman is reading Rousseau, while a Nabokov book is prominently displayed in front of her. Inside, we see her again reading in a somber looking classroom and library. We find out later that some of the books laid out in front of her are the same ones being read in "She's the bookworm of Santo Domingo." The woman in the pictures always has a somber expression. Andreas Gripp's poems are like poetic snapshots. They usually have a named character and deal with an aspect of that character's life. The subject matter is often serious and the poems are either moralistic or reflective. The twin themes of loneliness and loss are constant. For the most part the poems work, though some are a bit cluttered. "Gavin died for his sins on October, 13, 1967" is an example of a poem with too many words. Trimming or even trying a different structure would give the poem more readability. Gripp's use of the vernacular, while it often adds to the topicality in some poems, just ruins an otherwise good poem or idea.

Meanwhile, the collection's title is perfect, because we do find a naiveté in the work that's accompanied by world weariness. I wish I had thought of it first. (Jeffrey Mackie)

## Ontario

### Lumiere

poetry zine, #3, Andrew, \$1, 2056 Headon Forest, Burlington, ON, L7M 2M6

From "Hotdog": "My fear is disgusting - I walk thru cities wearing it like a false beard, drunk on pink tap water and coffee that tastes like cigarettes." Beat poetry mixes with personal moments/anecdotes in this cool little booklet. "Hamilton" describes finding old graffiti penned by the author back when the joint was still a donut hang-out. There is also a long story/poem about hitching across the country. More donut shops in Kenora, bear warnings in Labrador. I like the way Andrew moves between imagery and story-telling. (Hal Niedzviecki)

### XYZed

Zine, #13, \$2, J. Anxiety-Stewart, 6 Haig St., St. Catharines, ON, L2R 6K5

I'd heard about XYZed. Mainly from Broken Pencil, but I'd heard about it. So, reading it, I was expecting that it was going to be good. And, hey, it is a good zine...I just don't really dig the content. It's nothing against creator J. Anxiety, or the zine itself. In fact, there's a lot of cool

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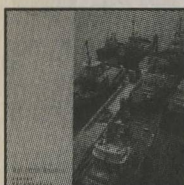
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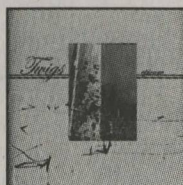
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stuff here (fifteen seconds with GEDDY LEE!!), it just isn't really my thing. (Anthony Gerace)

## For My Aunties

**litzine, \$5, 24 pages, James P. McAuliffe, ed. Norma McAuliffe, 140 Mercer Ave., Kitchener, Ont, N2H 1X8**

There is a kind of wonderfully innocent bravery at work in someone who'd publish a poem entitled "Without You: For Mom On Her Retirement," which contains the line "without you there'd be no sunrise, no sunset, no rainbows." Well! I'm jealous. That's one heck of a mom. We also learn that, without Jim's mom, there'd be no Thanksgiving, no juice-tin candle holders, no carmel [sic] corn, no "primal ability to stand and tell it like it is with unmatched ferocity and conviction", no Mr Rogers, no Robertson Davies, and no Jim, which, of course, is Jim's point. These poems read like folk paintings: sweet, earnest, playful and riddled with clichés that are easily pardoned because they are not the clichés of laziness. (Shaun Smith)

## A Collection of Water

**poetry zine, \$3.50 (plus postage), Kemeny Babinea, Laurel Reed Publishing, 206 Maple Ave. Mt Pleasant, ON, NOE 1K0, alaric@bis.on.ca**

The writings of rural Southern Ontario coming at you cardstock style. This zine's actually very nicely set up, the cover has a melted map of Southern Ontario (possibly due to the heatwave?) And the poems inside are really nicely laid out. "Sandpipers pipe/thru soft

shallows/backwards elbow/jaunes pieds" Wow. I liked that a lot. Then it continues: "Limestoney water ply/and reply/ of parchments peeling/sheet rock algae/under going sky." This poet is skilled in the jedi art of language poetry. Other poems worth skimming include the lyrical "Carnival Time/Brantford" and "Grand River at Brantford" which has so much geography, you really feel as if you should know where all this is taking place. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

## Revolted

**zine, #2, Rob Roa, free, 159 Aldergrove Dr., Markham, ON, L3R 6Z9**

Most of this zine chronicles Robs experiences at the Quebec City protests. He is articulate and thoughtful, and talks about how the experience of being gassed by police served to radicalize the protestors rather than dissuade them. Roa also briefly talks about this trip to India, reflecting on being a "brown" North American and on journeying to his father's hometown. This was compelling stuff, but it quickly segues into a James Baldwin quote and a more pedantic essay on Rage Against the Machine and the old major label vs. indie debate. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Shmog

**comic, #4, 100 pgs, \$6.50, Greg McCann, Box 31055, 25 Frederick St., Kitchner, ON, N2H 6M0**

Shmog is absolutely unique, unlike any comic I have ever read, and, though previous issues were fantastic, huge number 4 really transcends everything else Greg

has done and raises his artistry to new levels. A series of stories intersect and overlap in Shmog, which is essentially a rich collage of parallel existences, after-the-apocalypse scenarios, and rivetting lucid moments of narrative and character development. Greg moves between plots and drawing styles effortlessly, creating not a hodgepodge but a well thought out collage of instantaneously recognizable, utterly foreign scenarios. In one vignette, a mysterious woman draws a thick black question mark on a man's cheek: "People in this town know what this means," she screams as she runs away. Soon, a more comic-book style illustrates two youngsters exploring an abandoned house. When they get caught, violence erupts but before things develop the scene dissolves to a netherworld where a nameless figure floats through crowded molecules in search of "some space." Shmog is utterly compelling. A talent lurks in Kitchener as strange and menacing and wonderful as the Shmog world's dangerous Divot Head. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Ahimsa: Voice of Anarchopacifism

**newsletter, winter 2000, 10 pages, 4 for \$8, 89 Shannon Rd, PO Box 214, Mt. Albert, Ontario L0G 1M0, ahimsa1@egroups.com**

This is a very rare publication — anarchopacifism doesn't actually get a lot of media coverage. However, it is the philosophy of Leo Tolstoy, Dorothy Day, Liz MacAlister, David Dillinger and many other well known, effective advocates of practical anarchism. There is an underlying faith perspective, but

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not overwhelmingly so. When it does surface it can be pagan or Christian, eastern or western in focus. The non-violence these people describe isn't just from the perspective of those in safe settings. From Chiapas to Palestine to the front lines of militant protests, testing the theory of non-violence in violent settings is a key focus of this publication. They are open to new writers wanting to explore alternatives both to institutional hierarchies and violence. I'd like to see more graphics, but that is my only real criticism. (Brian Burch)

## Natural Life

magazine, #79, 32 pages, 6 for \$27.60, Wendy Prienitz (ed.), PO Box 340, St. George, Ontario N0E 1N0, [natural@life.ca](mailto:natural@life.ca)

Direct action has become identified with black bloc tactics at demonstrations. I don't agree with that restriction. This is a publication of real direct action — from energy efficiency to home schooling to community shared agriculture — that changes the world in the here and now. This particular issue has a major focus on energy alternatives, but does contain other practical and reflective pieces. Managing Household Pests, for example, provides non-pesticide alternatives to dealing with ants, cockroaches, flour moths and other small pests. The catalogue of well selected resources in each issue is helpful. This is an easy to read, non-new age, non-strident publication that contains a lot of information on how to make our entire eco-system healthier and more welcoming to all life. (Brian Burch)

## Montreal

### what's on the radio

journal, 35 pgs, by Victoria, ?\$, 2035 Boul. St-Laurent, Montreal, QC, H2X 2T3, [sixtringrrrl@gurmail.com](mailto:sixtringrrrl@gurmail.com)

At what point does punk alienation turn into narrow-minded elitism? Find out as you follow this account of a riotrrrl's hitchhiking odyssey from Montreal to Olympia to participate in Ladyfest. I will grant that it's a nice thing to be young, enlightened and vegan, and that it's frustrating when the rest of the world, outside of Olympia, insists on being paunchy, carnivorous, ignorant and working-class. But I still think it's boring and unfair to devote the better part of 34 pages to levelling accusations of sexism, racism, homophobia, tedium and creepiness, without corroborating evidence, at all the people who give you lifts and put you up as you cart your riotrrrl-style revolution across the country. Then again, it says in the introduction that this was mainly written so that everyone involved in the trip has something to look back on, so maybe I should just chill. (Wendy Banks)

### Louis Riel

comic, #6, \$4.25, Chester Brown, Drawn and Quarterly, PO Box 48056, Montreal, Quebec, H2V 4S8

Further adventures in the comic book retelling of the Metis Rebellion and the story of Louis Riel. Riel leaves Montana to help the Cree and Metis tricked onto reserves

and promised assistance from the federal government that never arrives. Back in Ottawa, the double-cross continues. When Riel finds out, armed rebellion looks increasingly like the only option. A fascinating tale told with wit and perspective. (Hal Niedzviecki)

### Ken's Guide to Texas

zine, Joni Murphy, Catch and Release Press, 265 Bernard St. O, Montreal, Quebec, H2V 1T5

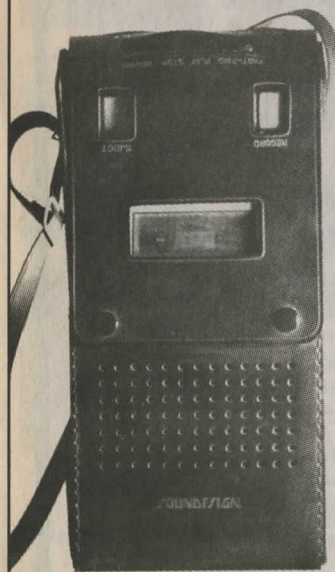
Ken's Guide to Texas comes with a beautiful design. The front and back covers are the flip sides of a postcard. It's perfect, because the story within is Ken's road trip. The story, told in a series of vignettes, reads like a short coming of age tale that revolves around Ken's imminent departure for the southwest. The short, somewhat disconnected episodes speak of change, loss, reflection and things said and left unsaid between family and friends. The characters are often caught up in dreams and the reader is also in a dreamlike state. But this state is not a pleasant slumber, underneath it lies unresolved tension. (Jeffrey Mackie)

### Jay the Blind Jaywalker: Book Two

comic zine, #2, 72 pgs, \$3, Michael Hind, 9-385 Edward-Charles, Montreal, QC, H2V 2N1

Why does Broken Pencil love Jay the Blind Jaywalker so much? How the fuck should I know? This is a bad comic strip in its purest form: terrible artwork, stupid gags, potty humour for the sake of potty humour, no sympathy

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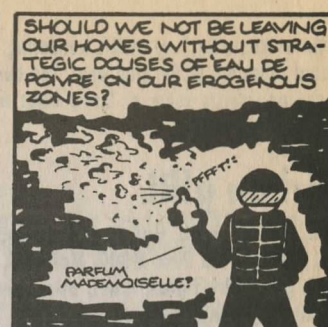
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by Patty Kim from Fuzzy Heads are Better

for the characters, unfunny... I can go on, believe me. What we have here is a series of strips in which Jay gets killed in some way or other while trying to cross the street. There's a reason you'll never see this in a newspaper, kids (and no, it isn't because creator Michael Hind is "indie as fuck".) I'm sorry. This is a pretty mean review, but honestly, when there's a strip called "Jay meets Buddy Holly", and has the last strip as a picture of a plane crashing, I can't get into it. (Anthony Gerace)

## Palookaville

comic, #1/#15, \$4.95 per, Seth, Drawn and Quarterly, PO Box 48056, Montreal, Quebec, H2V 4S8

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of Toronto cartoonist Seth's Palookaville, Drawn and Quarterly has re-released the now out-of-print #1. Seth starts off with a

self effacing intro talking about how embarrassed he is by that old comic from 1990, actually set in the mid-Eighties when Seth was going through a phase in which he was obsessed with having long white hair. Anyway, the story pretty much consists of Seth being gay-bashed after taunting a bunch of hoods. It's entertaining enough, but, as the older, more experienced Seth is quick to point out, not much more than an anecdote. Of course, anyone who follows Palookaville knows that the comic has gone in a completely different direction. In the latest issue, Seth continues to explore the life of Simon, a failure of a travelling fan salesman who can't seem to find a place for himself in the 1950s small towns he wanders through. Tense, depressing, utterly compelling, Seth brilliantly evokes a familiar yesteryear without ever making Simon's neuroses predictable. Reading both comics one after the other gave me a rare opportunity to see how talent grows and develops. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Girl on gIRL

zine, #1, 12 pgs, Girl on gIRL productions, \$1, 5311 avenue du Parc #300, Montréal, QC, H2V 4G9, <http://www.neoagent.com/girlongirl>

In the Spiked Riot issue, women against the patriarchy tell you, in handwritten and cut 'n' paste style, how to transform your bathroom into a feminist hell-raising war-zone by leaving political literature and reusable menstrual products around and hanging "controversial" art on the walls. Another guide tells us that we can graffiti "Smash the Patriarchy," "Women are not commodities," the circle-A and the double-female sign in various public places. They even tell you where each piece graffiti is most appropriate, and that you can use a Sharpie or paint to do them, in case you can't figure that out. Compared to the angry manifesto decrying "classical liberalism's public/private division as a paradigm that only



enforces hierarchy," we're left wondering where the actual substance of the zine went. Too bad, because these anarchists seem to know what they want. (Frandroid Atreides)

## Girl on gRL

zine, #3, 24 pages, Girl on gRL productions, 1\$, 5311 avenue du Parc #300, Montréal, QC, H2V 4G9, [girllongirl@graffiti.net](mailto:girllongirl@graffiti.net), <http://www.neogent.com/girllongirl>

Wow, compared to issue 1, this is a much more sensible publication. The first half of the zine consists of poetry and short stories, still in cut 'n' paste style but with computer type, which is more readable. Then a story about coming out in the 50s in NYC, and how it was to be a lesbian during that era, up until Stonewall happened and the scene planted itself into the public eye. The writer concludes with her current situation; she has a partner that's still in the closet. There's an album review of a cool folk duo. It seems that the women producing this have let their anger against the world be replaced by nostalgia and a longing for better days. I, for one, certainly like this better. (Frandroid Atreides)

## Riot Grrl Montreal

travel journal, 35 pgs, by Victoria, \$2, 2035 Boul. St-Laurent, Montreal, QC, H2X 2T3, [sixtringrrl@grrlmail.com](mailto:sixtringrrl@grrlmail.com)

Cool! It's bilingual! Aside from that, it's pretty run-of-the-mill blurry cut'n'paste photocopied riot grrl

stuff. There's an informative article on how to buy drums, some heartfelt, unreadable poetry about a mother who just doesn't understand, some pretty interesting musings on the mating rituals of the heterosexual feminist, some other stuff, and then there's the same stuff in French with a different layout, which, I've gotta say, is a great idea. (Wendy Banks)

## Transplantation

zine, 24 pages, English, \$2, c/o Sabina Tigges, St. Urbain, Montreal, QC, H2T 2W9, [sciscandale@yahoo.com.au](mailto:sciscandale@yahoo.com.au)

This zine deals with the issue of organ transplants in no small detail. It begins with an overview of the history of transplants, after which clipped newspaper articles give examples of the current science. All material is referenced and I couldn't really detect an editorial slant, pro or con. This first issue deals with human and animal organ transplant, with future issues to be devoted to the organ trade, organ regeneration and more. It's not exactly the kind of subject you expect to see in a photocopied cut-and-paste zine, but it stays true to the spirit of zine-making in that this person is obviously knowledgeable and believes in getting that knowledge out there. I was most surprised to find out that the great Influenza Epidemic of 1918 was linked to pig diseases — something to keep in mind, what with pigs being the most likely animal to be bred for organs for humans. Definitely recommended reading for the curious or the concerned. (Louis Rastelli)

## Quebec

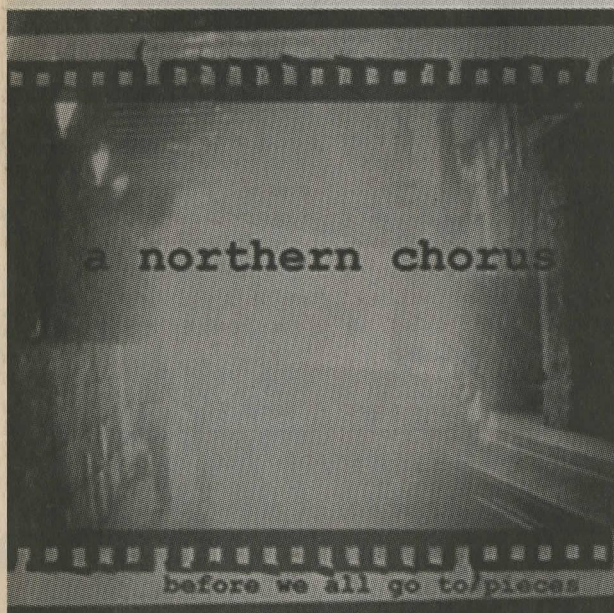
### Crooked Finger

zine, #2, \$1, plus postage, Boo, c/o P.O. Box 69 Laval, QC, N7X 3M2, [boo@peekaboocen-tral.com](mailto:boo@peekaboocen-tral.com)

A quick flip to a Sandy Atwal review from BP last year should clear up the end of this review. ("If poetry is going to make a comeback among the young, relevance must return.") BP 13 pg 63. On with the review. This is a dirty, personal romp through fetish fiction, poetry and photocopied lingerie that includes a poem by Toronto's Cynthia Gould. Boo Jupiter's rant on virginity was funny at times ("What? Give? You mean like you give someone a toaster? What have you given? What has s/he taken? Why the hell does it matter so much?... I think I would have been happier if it had just been sex, not the freak-ing super bowl.") There's an interview with ARTVAMP, a web artist who deals with sex. Everything in this issue of Crooked Finger revolves around sex. The cover promises, "For the joy of orgasms, true love and human contact..." Somehow this zine just never did it for me. Maybe it was the lack of focus or the fact that I was never sure who was writing what. The hand scrawled poetry at times seemed to be just unsound filler. It seems that the gulf between what the young are calling poetry and what in fact poetry has actually been historically, seems to grow wider and wider each year. Maybe just call them 12-line thing-a-majigs. (Nathaniel G. Moore)

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## nothing personal

litzine, \$?, Leroy Gorman, 52 pages, proof press,  
67 rue Court, Aylmer, QC, J9H 4M1  
small white chapbook  
haiku and tiny concrete poems  
abundant good  
(Shaun Smith)

## RAW NERVZ

litzine, vol 7 #2, \$6, 52 pgs, spring 2001, Dorthy  
Howard (editor) 67 Court, Aylmer, Quebec J9H  
4M1

Once again Raw Nervz positions itself with distinction as  
the be-all end-all of the haiku world. How can you  
review something as invincible as the haiku? This one is  
heavily indexed, impressively so. If you're a fan of  
Haiku, you should be a subscriber. Here are two Haikus:  
"Control issues: the editor's suggestions / my refusals"  
(Tom Tico) and "Tuba player, his metallic flatulence  
amusing the crowd" (William S. Galasso). There isn't  
anything new here, but the confetti business of Haiku  
poetry pumping itself like soft ammo throughout these  
pages perpetuates the enigmatic effects of the genre.  
(Nathaniel G. Moore)

## Atlantic Canada

### Nightwaves

zine, #8, free, 24 pgs, Gary Flanagan, 23 Fourth  
St., Rothesay, N.B., E2G 1W7, muzikman84@hotmail.com

Gary Flanagan's little zine that has gotten much praise  
from Broken Pencil in the past and with issue number  
eight, Gary gives us good reason to continue the acclaim.  
My knowledge of electronic music is based on more con-  
temporary acts, so looking back to late 70s and 80s is  
something I do as a reference point to better understand  
what I'm listening to now. That said, my knowledge of  
80s electronic acts and particularly their historical signifi-  
cance is limited. The sub-title for Nightwaves states that  
the zine is "For Fans and Followers of Electronic Music"  
and to that end it does its duty very well and probably  
much better than some publications you would have to  
pay for. As an outsider, it's a little difficult to grasp some  
of the more obscure names and terminologies thrown  
around, but this I will forgive, because Nightwaves is an  
effort of love. For any electronic music nuts, get on this.  
It's got everything: interviews, electronics tips, reviews,  
bargain bin finds (my personal favorite) and much

more. Did I mention it's free? Things this well done don't  
stay free for long. (Kevin Jagernauth)

### True Family Chronicles presents: The Ornithology Tales

zine, \$2 + postage, 14 pgs, Missy J. Martin,  
General Delivery, Hodges Cove, NF, A0E 2B0,  
a\_red\_thread@hotmail.com

In The Ornithology Tales, Missy presents us with seven  
photo-journalistic fairy tales revolving around various  
people in her family. On one page we are presented with  
a photograph and on the following, a whimsical fairy  
tale. Missy informs us this was all written in one day of  
inspiration, which would perhaps explain some of the  
rough edges and repetitiveness. For instance, early on,  
the stories all involve someone disappearing. The stories  
are not particularly strong or really bad, but sympto-  
matic of a burst of energy. Missy is talented, but without  
proper editing or additions, the writing's flow is awk-  
ward and bumpy, resulting in the stronger stories not  
being as strong as they could be, and the weaker stories  
standing out. (Kevin Jagernauth)

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## **Frogs On The Highway**

perzine, \$2 + postage, Missy J. Martin, Hodges Cove, NF, AOE 2B0, [frogs\\_on\\_the\\_highway@hotmail.com](mailto:frogs_on_the_highway@hotmail.com)

*Frogs On The Highway* is a scatterbrained affair, with stories, collage and clip art all fighting for space and struggling to breathe. This is an example of too much stuff and not enough room; a bit of everything is crammed in, but it still feels empty. Missy has a knack for creating a sense of intimacy. Her abilities come shining through in the wonderful story "Aunt Judy's Bathroom" a beautiful, gut wrenching anecdote about small comfort found in her aunt's commode amidst the familiar sensations of the tiles and the cats that would wantonly wader in and out. Unfortunately, the rest of zine is cluttered with clip art of Courtney Love snowboarding that is terribly out of place. Take out the filler and you have a keeper. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## **USA**

## **Miranda: All Baby All the Time**

perzine, #6, 26 pages, \$1, Kate Haas, 3510 SE Alder St., Portland, OR, 97214, [bruceandkate@juno.com](mailto:bruceandkate@juno.com)

I like the way this zine is set up. Three stories from the author's life, a section called "Motel of Lost Companions" about old friends, some book reviews (in this issue, at least) and a recipe. It's simple, versatile and satisfying to read. As the title of the issue suggests, the author has had a baby, so most of the content is understandably taken up with that. I would recommend this to anybody who's contemplating reproducing; Haas is a frank, articulate and observant writer, and she covers a remarkable amount of ground in very few pages. She manages to go into details about the trials of parenthood, like breastfeeding difficulties and sleepless babies, without getting boring, which is something of a feat. A tip: if you make the pancake recipe in the back, don't stir the batter as much as she says to. Other than that, they're really good. (Wendy Banks)

## **Miranda**

zine, #5, 24 pages, Kate Haas, \$1, 3510 SE Alder St., Portland, OR 97214

While most zines seem to be written by people in their teens and 20s, some of them are written by older people, like say, a woman in her thirties who has settled down and leads a happy life. In her first article, she writes about the disillusionment that occurs during the first trimester of pregnancy. Then she writes about how her family suddenly joined an anti-war group marching in the Fourth of July parade when she was young, and how that was significant then and later. The utter uselessness of math and a long lost companion get some attention, four good sports books get reviewed, and we're finally treated to an easy chocolate cake recipe. Nothing too serious nor too political in this zine, but it's a good peek into Kate's life. (Frandroid Atreides)

## **I Fucked Up!**

Comic Zine, #1&2, 50cents, Jason Gibner, Matt Delight, and Jeremy Wheeler, 6614

Adaridge, Ada, MI, USA, 49301, [Gibnerd@hotmail.com](mailto:Gibnerd@hotmail.com)

Follow the adventures of three Michigan cartoonists as each of them fucks things up with a girl. Sound dumb? It isn't. It's actually a really cool, funny, and heartfelt comic that leaves you wanting more at the end. The best story, by far, is Jason Gibner's account of courting a woman named Cara (I'm not sure if names were changed for the sake of those involved... they could have been). Jason has a date with her which he thinks he screwed up, and is too scared to talk to her again. But he finds out years later that she had a great time and was crushed when he didn't call again. On a whole, this comic is really cool, and good for those times when you think that you couldn't have screwed it up more with the girl you've got a crush on. Recommended. (Anthony Gerace)



## The Whirligig

litzine, Issue 3, Spring 2001, \$3 U.S., Frank J. Markopolos, 56 pages, 4809 Avenue N #117, Brooklyn, NY 11234, Whirligig21@aol.com

Why do people think that if they call something Pulp they can get away with murder? The tag line on the cover of Whirligig reads "Pulp With a Pulse". That's a redundancy, of course; pulp always has a pulse. If not, it's not pulp, it's just bad writing. With the exception of one recycled story by Jim Munroe - which originally appeared in the winter 2000 edition of the Chicago based zine "2nd Hand" - the stories and poetry in Whirligig most definitely do not pulsate, beat, flutter, palpitate, quiver, throb, tremble, vibrate nor behave in any other manner described by the verbs under "pulse" in the thesaurus. In fact, they flounder, stumble, stagger, grope, bumble, falter and waffle (see "blunder" in the thesaurus). In short, this is the sort of hackneyed, self-indulgent and wholly amateur stuff you have to painfully endure in writing workshops. Is it Pulp? No way. Is it murder? Oh yeah! (Shaun Smith)

## digthisreal

independent music zine, # 3, 64 pages, \$2.95 US, Edie (ed.), 244 Fifth Avenue, Suite 29037, New York, New York, USA, 10001-7604

It barely even matters if you like the bands they write about or not, or even whether you've heard of them, digthisreal is fat with good interviews, features, music news and reviews that are pleasant to read. The prose is sweetly indie, easy to read, chatty and informative, while the interviews demonstrate genuine interest in the bands themselves. There's absolutely no journalistic peacocking or band-baiting. It's obvious from cover to cover that the people who make this zine really care, and with text as nice as this, the glossy format of moneyed magazines isn't even sort of kind of slightly missed. Have you ever found a glossy music magazine that's all content? The ads are great too: the inside front cover has an ad for "Sandra, middle eastern dancer" with an outrageous, cleavage-emphasizing photograph that's hilarious. Only four words of caution. Avoid the poetry corner. (Donato Mancini)

smelling vestibules, in carpeted hallways, in all-night kitchens... buildings tower up over the blue city -- the sun comes up like a pink pink heart.

# DAYLIGHT

In this room, in the mornings, I drink coffee with V. -- the soft daylight coming in the window is the only brightness here, falling on grey carpet and creamy wall.

V. sits very still on the brown chair with the glow on his smooth light-brown face and tells me with slow-moving lips and big eyes how filled with the holy spirit he is that day. I frame the image carefully in my eyes, trimming off the rest of the room, the table the refrigerator the floor-lamp the door.

Meanwhile, in the other room, K. sits, he is sadder and quieter than I have ever seen him, picturesque in the orange armchair as he talks

by Andrew from Lumiere



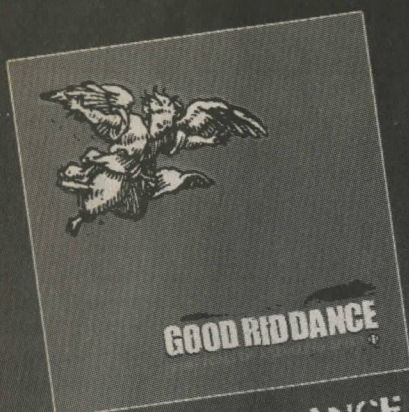
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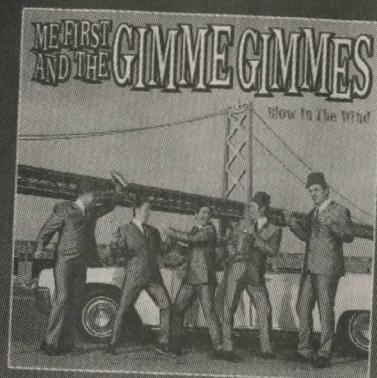
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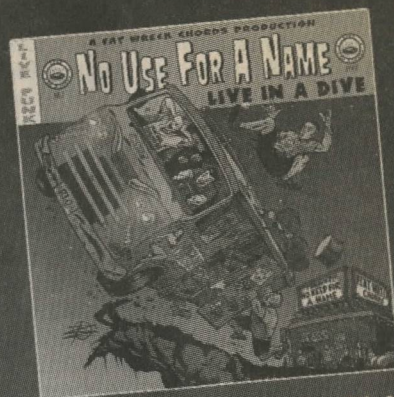
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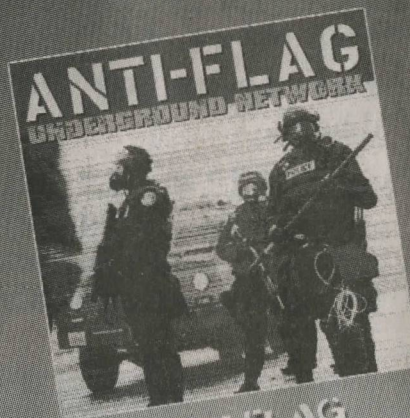
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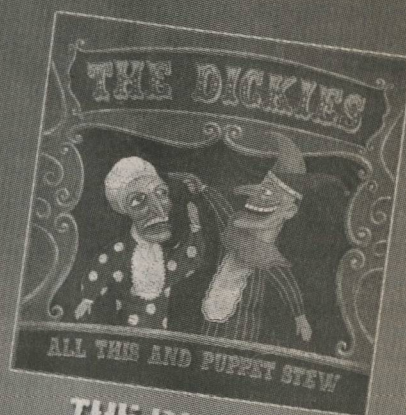
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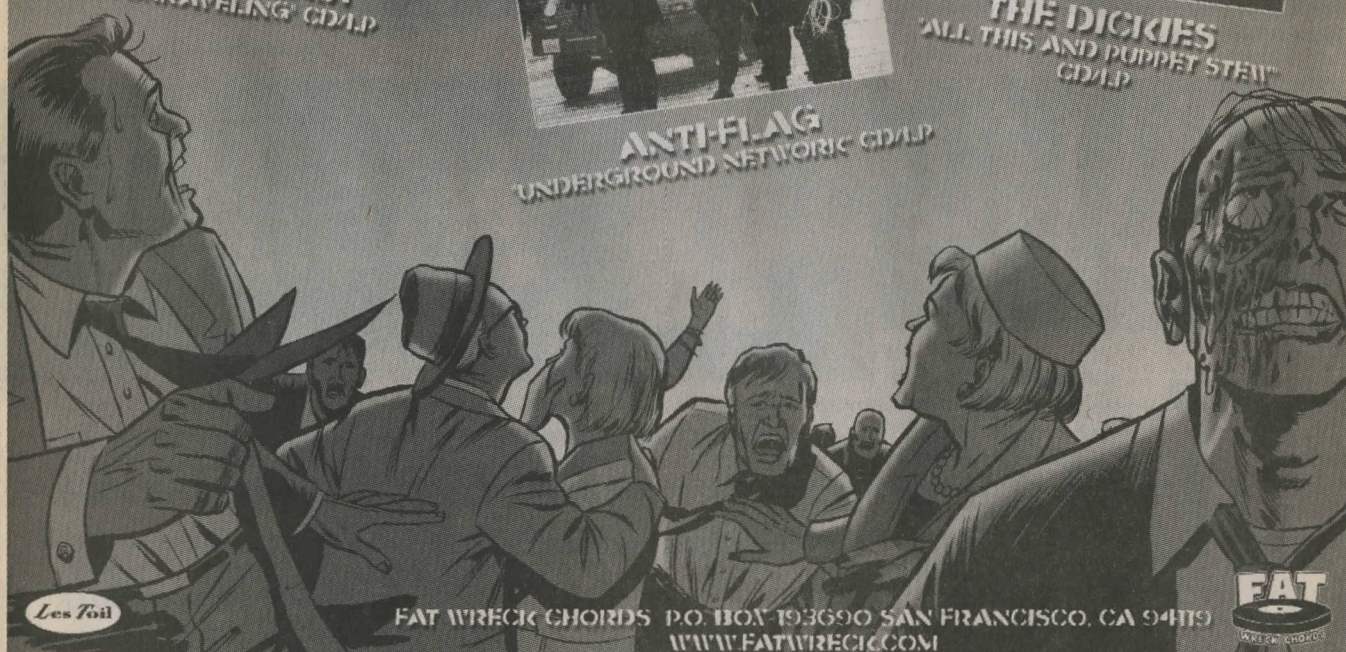
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## Ukulele!

zine poster(?), Vol. 3, #1, 25 cents, Alan Davenport (editor), 11565 Algonquin, Pinchney, MI, USA, 48169

My overall enjoyment of Ukulele! was hindered mostly by its weird layout... Is this a zine poster? What the heck am I going to do with a zine poster? Put it on my wall? No. Read it on the bus? No. And another thing! How am I supposed to read this? Side to side, top to bottom, how? Anyway, besides the layout confusion this isn't bad. Interesting Ukulele facts, some tablature, pictures. You know, typical stuff for a zine with a certain specificity. But the layout destroys any enjoyment I might have found in this. To the editor of Ukulele!: I apologize, but really, it's true. (Anthony Gerace)

## Impact Press

zine, #32, 55 pages, ed. Craig Mazer, Free/\$2 by mail, 6 months/3 issues/\$10 US, PMB 361, 10151 University Blvd., Orlando, FL 32817, editor@impactpress.com

Aaah, Impact. You never fail to baffle me. You give me informative, passionate articles on issues like the FTAA, gun control, factory farming and direct action. You inspire me with calls to action and concrete steps that I can take to change the world. Then you print a rant about the ethics of showing live surgery over the Internet, illustrated with a cartoon of three Silicon Valley "Hindus" in robes and turbans with laptops about to film a quadruple bypass. The article mocks their funny accents, and ends, "Do you think that just because we're in the nuclear winter of the dot com era we all won't all

(sic) fall prey to the back stabbing schemes of our young Hindu entrepreneur friends?" This is probably funny for some reason that I'm not aware of, right, Impact? You wouldn't just be using racial stereotypes for cheap laughs, would you, Impact? Well, would you? (Wendy Banks)

## Sore

lit zine, #12, 36 pages, 1\$, Taylor Ball, P.O. Box 68711, Virginia Beach, VA 23471, USA, sorezine@aol.com, members.aol.com/basspro14

The idea is interesting - it's a punk rock zine, but instead of interviews and columns, what accompanies the reviews are short stories. Sadly, the stories are mostly about bitter and anguished boys who ride cars to wherever. Features a few good book and show reviews, and many record reviews, on top of a feature (or rather a fan letter) on the band The Lot Six. Worth its cover price. (Frandroid Atreides)

## ButtNuggets

Comic, #1&2, \$2, Ed Masters, PO Box 40707, Portland, OR, USA, 97240

Ugh. With a title like ButtNuggets, you don't go in expecting a whole lot. But...this zine isn't half bad. It's comic strips in the vein of R. Crumb...quite disgusting but otherwise well done. The artwork is a bit lacking, but that can be forgiven, as there are people out there doing zines with art that makes the stuff in ButtNuggets look like Pablo Picasso. But you know something? I don't really feel it. That's not to say it isn't good, it's just not my thing. Don't let that stop you from checking it out, though. (Anthony Gerace)

## Prisoner Zines

zine, free, 37 pages, Anthony Rayson, South Chicago ABC Zine Distro, PO. Box 721 Homewood, IL, 60430

The day I picked up this zine, the Globe and Mail had a headline that declared the US prison population was declining. Reading the article, I found out that the prison population had dropped .5 of a percentage point. The US still has one of the highest rates of incarceration in the world. Activist and anarchist Anthony Rayson is committed to fighting this fact. He publishes his own zines as well as helps to distribute prisoners' zines. This particular effort is well written and informative pub that gives an overview of prisoner zines and how to gain access to them. Also included are poems and testimonies by prisoners. The voice of the prisoner is not one you often hear in society. Anthony is working to rectify this. He believes that the prison system is ground zero in the struggle against global capitalism and that prisons represent so much of what is wrong in our sick society. (Jeffrey Mackie)

## More Than a Paycheck

newsletter, Dec 2000, 8 pages, 6 for \$10 US, National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, PO Box 6512, Ithica, NY, USA, 14851, nwtrcc@lightlink.com

Not only the right feels that there needs to be controls on the way that our taxes are spent. One specific and ongoing effort is war tax resistance, a struggle to divert taxes from military spending to paying for efforts to meet human needs. From poems to a list of resources to news

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of efforts to build a world free of war, this is a very good introduction to the world of the people who seriously oppose war and violence of any sort. (Brian Burch)

## Minimum Security

comic, #1, 16 pgs, \$1, Stephanie McMillan, P.O. Box 2083, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, 33303, USA, [steph@minimumsecurity.net](mailto:steph@minimumsecurity.net), [www.minimumsecurity.net](http://www.minimumsecurity.net)

Stephanie McMillan's wonderful Minimum Security is a single panel comic which combines the political satire of Tom Tomorrow's "This Modern World" and the absurdist wit of Ruben Bolling's "Tom, The Dancing Bug". Stephanie mostly succeeds at providing activist awareness and deft political timing in a single frame. "Instant Disillusion" is a delightful jab at the mass ignorance of Americans with regards to modern politics. "Product Of Nature" is a witty deconstruction of the corporate mindset. However, being a single frame comic does cause a certain simplification of heady political topics, as seen in "Selective Outrage", which addresses physical violence against corporate companies. However, Stephanie mostly hits the mark, and for a first collection, this is a sign of great things to come. A large anthology called "Out Of The Box" will be published next fall, but until then this should keep you well satisfied. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## Blue Divide

music magazine, vol. 2, iss. 1, 40 pgs, \$3.75 Can/\$2.75 U.S., Mike Ramirez (ed.), 19478 Colorado Circle, Boca Raton, FL, 33434, USA, [www.bluedivide.com](http://www.bluedivide.com)

This is a slick glossy looking publication from Florida, with a cover story on Nine Inch Nails. I had high hopes for it, but was let down just a few pages into the magazine. The first article is called "DJs Suck" and it's about how much DJs suck and about how much local DJs suck and so on and so forth. Then there's a bizarre editorial decision to interview LTJ Bukem, an article on circuit bending, another interview with DJ Carl Cox, and finally one with Amon Tobin. What? Also spliced in there is a terrible amateurish article entitled "L.A. Women," which is really nothing more than an excuse to paste in a picture of Laetitia Costa in her underwear. A thoroughly professional-looking magazine is marred by these terrible slights, which prevent the magazine (which is otherwise fine) from becoming a very well put together publication. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## Fighting To Save A Life On Death Row

political zine, 21 pgs, free, Ali Khalid Abdullah & Ryan James (eds), Political Prisoners of War Coalition, c/o Cynthia J. Ritscher, P.O. Box 554, Lincoln, MA, 01773, USA, [www.geocities.com/ppwc\\_uk](http://www.geocities.com/ppwc_uk)

This pamphlet is a good example of well-intentioned politics weakly delivered. The title of the pamphlet speaks of its intentions. The focus of their argument is the case of a woman on death row named Cathy Lynn Henderson who, according to the writers, accidentally killed a child, fled the scene and was prosecuted due to zealous politicians and politicians and a media frenzy that vilified her before the trial even began. The last portion of the zine is writ-

ten by Ms. Henderson herself, and it explains her childhood and how she has since found God. I too, am against the death penalty, however this zine is not convincing argument that the death penalty is wrong and that Ms. Henderson should be spared. Other than emotional arguments, there are no details, excerpts from articles, statistics or anything of that nature that make a strong case. If you are already against the death penalty, this zine will appear simplistic and sadly, this will do nothing to change the minds of those who believe that it is a just form of punishment. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## Cain

perzine, #4, 50 pgs, \$1, Michelle, P.O. Box 200077, New Haven, CT, 06520, USA, <http://cainzine.tripod.com>

In the introduction, Michelle informs us that Cain has become an annual affair allowing her more time for "inspiration to accumulate." She also tells us that she has scrapped the clipart of the past and opted for her own photographs. I haven't seen the previous incarnations of Cain, but her latest is quite good. In a nice departure from most personal zines, Michelle tells four stories, and lets them unfold in quiet detail. Among the highlights is the account of her two month trip to China, written from the perspective of an American-Chinese, it is a nice account of trying to discover your roots in an ever growing global (American) village. "Activism, Schmativism" is a funny and familiar tale for anyone who has considered themselves political - until they've actually tried it. The last piece, "A Place Like This," is about Michelle's experience hanging out and interviewing the people who work and reside at a local homeless

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shelter. It's well done and enough for a single zine. The writing is a step above the conversational tone of most pubs, yet still relaxed enough to make me chuckle and smile. Recommended. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## Ghetto Booty

comic, #8, 25 cents, 6 pgs, Jeremy Wheeler & Matt Delight, Age Of Innocence, 6614 Adaridge Rd., Ada, MI, 49301, ageofinnocence@hotmail.com

A comic about two jock guys who leer at women and make degrading comments. I guess this is supposed to be a parody, but it has none of the talent, wit or intelligence needed to be funny. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## Insomniac

perzine, #2, 48 pgs, \$2, Tapil, 492 Grove St., Apt. #20, San Francisco, CA, 94102, USA, kyezine@yahoo.com

Tapil can't sleep. Really. So he spends his nights wandering the streets of San Francisco writing down everything he observes. This sounds like a great premise, but Tapil's insomnia makes him miserable, which makes his story a cynical and depressing read. This is a thick zine and it's hard to sift through all the sickness and rage to find any hope (if he has any) of getting through the night and getting some good sleep. I can't say it's not honest, because it is, but for this to be successful, it must be countered with at least a glimmer of getting past this state of being neither awake nor asleep. Here's to hoping for a nice day when Tapil will wake up, finally, from a well deserved sleep. (Kevin Jagernauth)



by Matt from M@B

## International

### Light's List 2000

review zine, #15, \$6, John Light, Photon Press, 37 The Meadows, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 1NY, UK

A global listing of independent press magazines, though not, by any means, an exhaustive one. Basically only provides contact info and categories, i.e. publishes poetry, fiction, etc. The Canadian section is pretty out of date, probably the UK section is the least out of date and the most useful. At any rate, could be handy if you want to make contacts, but doesn't really provide enough information about the publications to be of any real use. (Hal Niedzviecki)

### Black Velvet

music magazine, #28, 35 pgs, 1.60, Shari (ed.), 336 Birchfield Rd, Webheath, Redditch, Worcs, B97 4NG, England, www.blackvelvetmagazine.com

An average music zine that covers mostly mainstream bands and few underground rock/ glam/ pop/ punk bands. The interviews are pretty good and range from well known acts like Disturbed and Pitchshifter to more indie bands such as Libertine and My Ruin. The feature articles are well written and definitely give you what you expect. There is also a requisite pile of reviews. Nothing groundbreaking here, but hey, that's just fine. (Kevin Jagernauth)

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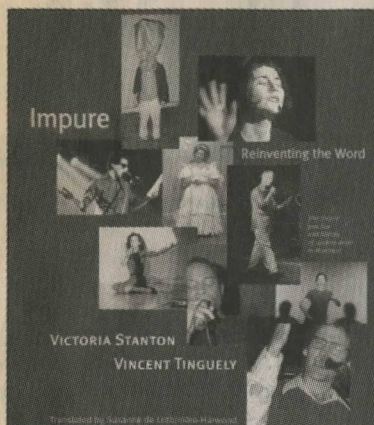


# Impure: Reinventing the Word

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VICTORIA STANTON & VINCENT TINGUELY

Translations by  
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*Impure: Reinventing the Word* compiles interviews with 75 French and English artists from Montreal, as well as New York poet John Giorno, into the first comprehensive examination of the theory and practice of spoken word. It also documents the history of the vibrant spoken word scene in Montreal from 1960 to the present. Whether talking to musicians, activists, griots, dub poets, publishers, or performance artists, this book asks: Whats a poetry slam and hows it done? Why is spoken word unlike theatre? Can it be understood as live publishing? In what ways do anglophone and francophone artists influence one another? Is spoken word literature? *Impure* serves as an invaluable resource for those interested in the medium which has single-handedly revitalized poetry for a new generation.



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## Peaching

[www.peaching.com](http://www.peaching.com)

From the former editor of Claptrap.net, we now have Peaching.com. "Peaching", in case you didn't know, is gangster slang for informing - or so the site says. Does this site inform? Kind of. The whole bloody site is written by "Bunny", the aforementioned editor, in breathless prose: "I was so fond of Alison Weir's *The Life of Elizabeth I* that I just didn't want it to end. So good." It was that extra "so good" that sent me over the top. Does Bunny know that informing in gangsterland means snitching, which means concrete shoes and a quick trip to the bottom of Halifax harbour? Hmm. The other thing that ticked me off about this site was the warning not to steal the content because it's copyrighted. Meanwhile, the site is full of pop culture images stolen from movie web sites and other international media conglomerates. Holden Caulfield dissed his brother as a Hollywood sellout; he would diss this site as phoney, too. (Michael Bryson)

## JasonGallagher.com

[www.jasongallagher.com](http://www.jasongallagher.com)

This is the web site of Montreal-based poet Jason Gallagher, author of five self-published chapbooks, all written in the Bukowski booze'n'sex tradition. The web site shows Gallagher pressing into new areas, including some short prose pieces: "i have my mother's eyes, i keep them in a jar on top of the fridge. it was a small formality to get them from the morgue before she was prepped to be cremated." That's from a piece called "mother's eyes", and it's representative of Gallagher's approach, which is half absurdist and half cry-till-you-die realism. For all his crudity, Gallagher has a way with line breaks. He also has Buk's natural rhythm, and Buk's ability to place outright ugliness beside unsentimental hope. That's not as easy as it sounds, and it keeps Gallagher interesting in an area where so many have failed. The web site has new work, old work, links, a fake bio, and not much else. The poetry is what counts. As always. (Michael Bryson)

## The Ultimate Hallucination

<http://members.home.net/breeno/ultimate-hallucination.html>

UH is a small e-zine maintained by Sean Gazeley and Robert LeBlanc. It features poetry and fiction, and the former genre is strongest. Most of the pieces by the five featured poets are reflexive and border on melodrama. Matt Welter's "Starting Him Up" is the most engaging and playful of the collection. With the stories, however, the trend is bathos over pathos. Each work by Lisa Kauffman and Stephen L. Hoffman has a rather over-the-top treatment of its subject. Brendan Connell's entry features a rather pat exami-

nation of vacuous art. As for the design of the site, it's very pragmatic and has a very cookie-cutter-built-on-a-Microsoft-template feel. Hey, I know a bunch of unemployed Web designers who might want to lend a hand... (Matthew Piro)

## Mecca Normal

<http://meccanormal.tripod.com/>

I have to admit, shamefully, that I'm not very familiar with the band Mecca Normal. I should be since Jean Smith and David Lester are so darn prolific. Smith has even contributed two articles to this very magazine, and Lester has done some cover art. The site is a very good introduction to Smith and Lester's musical activities as well as everything else they've been doing for the last fifteen years, including writing, publishing and graphic design. Its only drawback is a slight lack of focus. Is the site for fans who want to know what's up? Or is it for potential employers/collaborators/grant-dispensing institutions? As an MN initiate, I'm much more interested in what's been done and what I can hear and read as opposed to, say, solicitations for a publisher. But, if I was a publisher... (Matthew Piro)

## Studio XX

[www.studioxx.org](http://www.studioxx.org)

Studio XX is a Montreal-based women's digital art centre. On their site, they have links to web art done by women from across the globe - from Australia to Montreal to South Korea. It's run by a group of feminists who are passionate about demystifying new technology and committed to prodding women into taking the driver's seat when it comes to the Internet. Their week-long virtual Maid in Cyberspace Festival takes place every February, but the online gallery exhibiting digital art by ten women who are selected by the jury stays up all year. The artists' work includes video, animation, web installations, visual art and sound performance about everything from memories of the Ravensbrueck concentration camp to the bitterness of a sour romance. Well worth repeat visits. (Emily Pohl-Weary)

## ThePuddingStore.com

[www.thepuddingstore.com](http://www.thepuddingstore.com)

Humm, pudding. This site was started by James F.W. Thompson, Adrienne MacIntosh, Mat Hiscock and Allison MacDougall as a way for members of the group who were spreading out from Pudding's HQ in Sydney, Nova Scotia to keep in touch. The site is still predominately a means for this objective. The postings on the landing page read like oh so many inside jokes. It's like you've arrived way to late at someone else's party. The rest of the site is rife with all sorts of zaniness. The PuddingStore clerks have this thing for the colour yellow. It's a running gag, an obsession, a T-shirt you can order. Crazy! My favourite, though, has got to be the interviews with local bands, especially the one with Nothing to Say. Hilarious. I nearly laughed my pudding through my nose. (Matthew Piro)

## Gavroche: The Political Poetry E-zine

[www.gavroche.org/zine](http://www.gavroche.org/zine)

Based in St. Louis, MO, this site takes its name from a character in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, and borrows a bit of Hugo from that novel to suggest "so long as ignorance and poverty exist on earth, [sites] of this nature cannot fail to be of use." This may be the case. However, it must be asked: of use to whom? No one was ever rescued by an overabundance of clichés. One example will have to serve as an illustration. In a work called "The Rape of the Land" (get it?), Susie D writes: "Two hemispheres flourished five centuries ago,/ The ocean between them symbolically wide,/ And though of the other each one did not know,/ Their ways of existence were doomed to collide." (Symbolically wide?) Karl Marx once said he could never be a Marxist. Neither can I. This site contains some of the worst poetry I've read in years, and a load of political naivete older than Hugo's novel. (Michael Bryson)

## 120 Seconds

[www.120seconds.com](http://www.120seconds.com)

120seconds is digital entertainment at its best. Creativity abounds in the new media art, video, music, cartoons and photo-essays. Its snazzy design is obviously geared toward the video-game generation more than its stodgier and more serious parent site, CBC.ca; could ever hope to be, and the content is current and fresh. The work covers a wide array of subjects, such as the travails of a Vancouver dumpster-diver, miserable Valentine's Day, e-mail romances, pregnant superheroes and more. Well worth repeat visits, if you've got a new computer at home, or else wait until you're at work or the library to check it out. It will inspire, surprise and inform you. (Emily Pohl-Weary)

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[www.webtools.com](http://www.webtools.com), <http://forums.internet.com>, [www.icanstream.com](http://www.icanstream.com), [www.gif.com](http://www.gif.com), [www.colormix.com](http://www.colormix.com)

OK, I added this review at the last second. What's the point of checking out great web art if you can't make it yourself? Get the low-down on the most current website building products being released at Webtools.com, then hop on Kazaa or Limewire and find cracked versions of the software or just download trial versions. I just got the Flash trial and it comes with great step-by-step lessons on all facets of the program. Read articles about all things Internet-related, at Forums.internet.com, but this site's a little technical, so don't feel intimidated if it's over your head. Everything you want to know about streaming digital video (shooting, editing, compressing, publishing, interactive authoring, live streaming, and DVD creation) is at Icanstream.com. On the Gif.com and Colormix.com sites, you can learn all about graphics formats and colours. That should be enough to get you started! (Emily Pohl-Weary)



## Burnt Orange Lipstick

by Lydia Eugene, \$15, Gutter Press, PO Box 600, Station Q, Toronto, ON, M4T 2N4

Eugene creates a strange and unique world in this collection of short stories. Though not interconnected, her characters all share an eerie innocence, a desperate desire to sort things out, and the knowledge that things will never sort out. "The Floor Man" is one of the many stories that takes us into the family — immigrants with a "clothes-line" and a "boozing" dad — all narrated by a young girl determined not to be embarrassed. Other stories, such as "The Dog Has Dreams", are more deliberately strange. In "Dog", a similarly dead-pan narrator moves us through a hot world falling apart, Sophie and David trying to figure out their relationship amidst a back-drop of homeless mystics and hazy deserts. These are crisp wonderful stories and individual sentences and moments stand out like scars on white flesh. In *Burnt Orange*, we try to free ourselves from the "hot red madness" as butchers drag dead carcasses down the sidewalk. But there's a distance to these stories, a sense of jaded displacement, that makes them blur together — individually they are like fires smoldered down to glowing coals. But together, they are a forest fire, burning your face, tears blurring the moment you wish you could remember. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## generator [volume 1]: floating point

by Gregory Zbitnew, fiction, \$15.00, Dream Logic Corporation, 2268 W. 45th, Vancouver, B.C., V6M 2J3, [www.ghost-robot.com](http://www.ghost-robot.com)

floating point, which is the first volume in Gregory Zbitnew's four volume generator series, is an ambitious tome. With this work of science fiction (or speculative fiction or whatever the term is for writing that features electronic things that don't exist), Zbitnew attempts to illustrate a radical evolutionary step for humankind. (Side note: The author has classified his work as 'metafiction,' which I find rather odd. Though I may have missed something, there is nothing in floating point that indicates the story is self-reflexive or self-conscious of its narrative. The closest 'metafictional' element could be the moments when characters say something along the lines of "Gee, that's out of a work of science fiction!" But that's stretching it.) The story centres on Jurgen Ernst, an expert in artificial intelligence and a multitude of other sciences. At the start, Jurgen lends his incredible intellect to the creation of the brains of the most advanced joy-dolls the world has ever seen. This endeavor, however, is merely a stepping stone that leads Jurgen to a higher path, which involves downloading the human soul into a computer network. While the ambition of this Frankenstein meets *Neuromancer* meets the first *Star Trek* movie is admirable, the prose is not. Zbitnew wants his writing to carry so much weight that the sentences actually bog the reader down. The story itself doesn't move very well either. Zbitnew is all about telling the reader what happens instead of showing. As a result, the plot seems forced and details do little to fur-

burnt orange lipstick



lydia eugene

ther the movement of the story. Unfortunately, there isn't much reward for the reader. I don't imagine I'll look out for the next volume, which is supposed to be generated soon. (Matthew Pioro)

## Painting Shadows

by Mark McCann, poetry, 147 pages, Whisper Rebellion Publications, 97 Thomas St., Cambridge, ON, N3C 3C6

I know this sort of thing isn't supposed to matter, but it does: if this is entirely a work of fiction, then it's an artistic success. It's creepy, sad, violent and disturbing, with a convincingly unlikable narrator and a streak of very, very dark comedy. If it's not a work of fiction, well, see above, minus the artistic success part. Why does it matter? Well, let's see: It's nearly 150 pages of free verse. The first 80 pages are mostly taken up by the narrator riding the subway, drinking and thinking about how everyone but him is a mindless sheep: "they don't invent themselves/ they identify themselves by being similar to others/ through common opinion style look sound decision..." He is so self-absorbed that his minute inspection of every thought and feeling sometimes leads to insight, or at least nifty turns of phrase: "only now have i begun to hunt/ the tigers that are hunting me/ in the empty streets of boredom..." By the third chapter, we learn that he's got a girlfriend who means the whole world to him, and whom he treats sorta bad. We start to think he's a bit of a dick. Then the girlfriend dies, and we feel bad for thinking that; then he and some friends reminisce about beating a rapist half to death, and how he accidentally stepped on some stranger who'd O.D.ed at a party, but didn't realize he was dead. There's a really good example of what makes me so ambivalent about this book right near the end. The narrator is sitting on the porch, reflecting on his mourning: "in a drawn out version of soon/ i will be something better/ something like okay/ occupied by a life of a different texture/ soon even my probation will be over..." Then there's this doozy of a revelation: "i brought my knee up hard into the face of a mailman when he bent down to tie his shoe" with the following

footnote: "from the angle i was at, it looked like he was letting the air out of my car tire" I have to assume that this is made up, in which case it's brilliant in its imaginative portrayal of a guy who thinks about himself so intensely and relentlessly that he winds up understanding nothing. This is what I choose to believe, because the alternative is too upsetting. (Wendy Banks)

## Tell It Slant

by Beth Follett, novel, \$18, Coach House Books, [www.chbooks.com](http://www.chbooks.com)

Borrowing its central characters and plot from *Nightwood*, Djuna Barnes' ground-breaking novel of Paris in the 1930s, Beth Follett's first novel about a faithless lesbian romance is a study in obsessive love. Though there are many similarities between the two books, central characters Nora and Robin are modern women, transposed to present-day Montreal. They work the queer bar scene and read modern literature. What works best in Follett's book are the liberties she takes in departing from the original and her heady portrayal of photographer Nora Flood's pathological hunger for self-acceptance. *Tell It Slant* spins Nora's tale of passionate loneliness through stream of consciousness musings. We follow her intimate path of self-discovery by examining her interactions with the people closest to her. Follett's writing periodically breaks into rhythmic, lyrical prose that a poet who attended the book launch described as being suspiciously reminiscent of Leonard Cohen's songs. Nora is guided through the depths of her journey by Barnes' ghost, who acts as a guide, and her much loved dead older sister Jeanette. She ponders the dynamics of her childhood and dysfunctional family. She speculates "maybe our whole lives we spend garnering love" and hinges all her happiness around her affair with sexually charged, masculine Robin. Follett is also the editor and publisher of the independent Pedlar Press, which publishes poetry and fiction. Her writing is accordingly intellectual and cryptic — evoking the wildly popular sensualist work of Jeanette Winterson. In keeping with Coach House's literary tradition, *Slant* is not an easy read — it's obscure and filled with references that make you feel like you should head to the local library to brush up on your reading before you can finish Follett's novel. However, if you can get past the detours, this book's well worth a little extra effort. (Emily Pohl-Weary)

## Alien Invasion

Ruth Cohen (ed), non-fiction, 240 pages, \$19.95, Insomniac Press, 192 Spadina Ave, Suite 403, Toronto, ON, M5T 2C2

*Alien Invasion* is a book of articles that analyzes the effect the Harris government is having on Ontario. The authors are activists, economists and concerned citizens with an impressive array of facts and statistics on the neo-liberal agenda of the Harris Tories. The writing is engaging and though the topic may at first appear dry, the articles are compelling. The impassioned authors express their dismay at the dismantling in Ontario of the social institutions that many Canadians hold as sacred, particularly education and health care. There is also a



series of articles that place the Harris agenda in a global perspective. After reading the book though, I do have two criticisms. Many of the articles take a "high" tone, as if the great unwashed doesn't know what's going on in the province. There is also a naivety running through the book about the fact that yes this is happening in Canada. Maybe people are waiting for Trudeau to come back and set it all right. That's why the article by Bruce Allen halfway through the book is so refreshing. Mr. Allen basically states, "Why are we so surprised? Mike Harris told us what he was going to do." I like this article because it challenges us all to move away from our naivety about the right-wing agenda. He's not preachy. He challenges the left to do more than protest and then walk away feeling like we've gotten therapy. This sentiment applies very well to those who are participating in the recurring street theater of FTAA/G-8 protests. From my perspective, he is the only author who is saying let's build a platform to defeat the neo-libs, rather than just continue to reiterate how bad they all are. A little realpolitik from the left is very refreshing. This book is packed with useful information and some of the Harris foibles described are so pathetic they seem funny. (Jeffrey Mackie)

## Little Buffalo River

novel by Frances Beaulieu, 158 pages, McGilligan Books, P.O. Box 16024, 859 Dundas St. West, Toronto, ON, M6J 1W0

I sat down to read this impressive first novel by Frances Beaulieu on one of those hot nights during the recent heat wave. The novel's setting is the Northwest Territories, and it seemed far removed from my urban existence. But that juxtaposition hardly mattered - I was immediately drawn into the plot and found myself reading it all in one night. The book centres around Anna, a Metis girl growing up in the north in the 1950s. While the stories detail the tragic effects of alcohol, racism and poverty in her life, I actually found the book uplifting. Anna's imagination, her will to survive and the humour throughout make this a compelling read. Likewise, the character of Ama, Anna's adoptive grandmother, is full of strength and humour. She holds the family together. Ama is also the keeper of traditional wisdom and through her, we have a window into the Dene world that was disappearing. The rich description of smells, tastes and textures brought the characters's daily affairs alive for me. Some of the most heartbreaking episodes in the novel arise when this world encounters the outside "white" world. Personally, I would argue that this book should be required reading on high school Can-Lit courses. (Jeffrey Mackie)

## I'm Johnny and I Don't Give a Fuck

by Andy, novel, #4, \$6-10, 220 pp, p.o. Box 21533, 1850 Commercial Drive, Vancouver B.C., V5V 4A0

The voice of this novel, a somewhat thin distillation of the author's speech, is one of its most important features, and certain flaws in the voice are among the only things that really block our fun. Basically, Andy tries unsuccessfully to give it a literary coiffe. If he could only get still closer to his speaking style, it would be much

easier for us to lose ourselves in his stories. Andy's real gift as a writer is more circumstantial than innate: he has access to a world, the punk scene, that is still under-represented in writing; anecdotes, legends, biographies, secret knowledge, survival tricks, jargon and on and on and on that few with literary talent or ambition have - it is originality granted, an inexhaustible treasure, more than a writer can ask for. Kerouac didn't have it so good. Reading I'm Johnny...#4 makes me crave more; I want to have all the stories of punk told to me in the voice of punk. His world is usually depicted in the vomitous post-Bukowski way that mixes up mental laziness, self-hatred and closeted megalomania. It badly needs some loving, non-ironic, celebratory attention paid to it in writing solid enough to transcend the scene while still speaking its language. Andy could possibly give us that. (Donato Mancini)

## The I.V. Lounge Reader

edited by Paul Vermeersch, anthology, \$19.95, Insomniac Press, 192 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON, M5T 2C2, www.insomniacpress.com

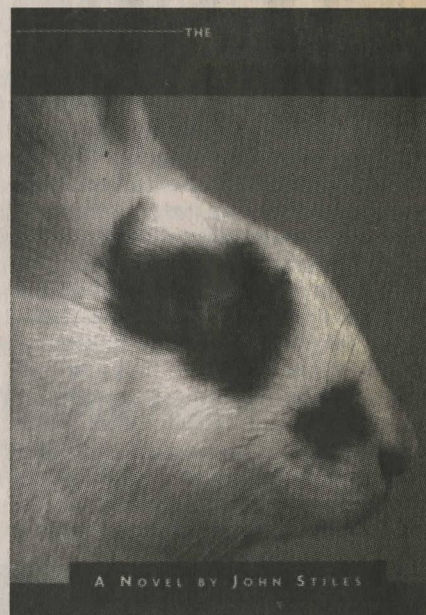
The I.V. Lounge Reading Series has been running strong in Toronto since 1998. Since its inception it has featured a ton of talented writers. Not only does the table of contents show an impressive number of contemporary scribes, whose names you can find in Canadian literary journals during any given month, but the dedication - which includes every writer who has read for the series over the last three years - will make some cringe at what they've been missing. Furthermore, all the writing in this collection is fresh. Paul Vermeersch has gathered works that were read at I.V. and has also included some material that's never been seen before. The book includes a few writers who are no strangers to anthologies. George Bowering's poems are solid and bill bissett is still doing wut e duz best. Oddly enough, the poems of Denis Lee and those of David Donnell are not that strong. But at the heart of this collection are all the writers who you have kinda heard of or whose names you sorta know or whose books you've been thinking of picking up. Because there are so many good works, I have critic's guilt for highlighting only a few. In the department of messing with contemporary mediums, there are the works of Andrew Pyper and Sherwin Tjia. Pyper's story is a clever investigation of the narrative conventions in porn films. Tjia's visual poems shake up your preconceptions about public writings, like want ads. "Children & Teens" appears to be cut straight out of a classified section, but lines like "For Sale: Girl, 12, beautiful, never used..." highlight the menace that lies behind some of the ads you see at the back of tabloid newspapers. Nataliee Caple's story is rich and poetic; Tamas Dobozy's tale is elegantly executed. The poetry in the anthology ranges from Michael Holmes' pop-culture free-verse romps to Adam Sol's more formal but still fresh structures. The story by Jason Anderson is just funny. The variety and skill is stellar. I, for one, am going to the next reading at the I.V. so I don't miss out on anything again. (Matthew Pioro)

## Pedigree Girls

by Sherwin Tjia, \$19.95, Insomniac Press, 192 Spadina Ave., Suite 403, Toronto, M5T 2C2

In Sherwin Tjia's Pedigree Girls we have the near-death

of the comic strip. One b&w clip-art image of two girls is repeated in three-panel strips over, and over, and over with scant conversational text. Reading the text, we learn that they are snotty, malicious private-school girls. They make snide and nasty jokes at everyone's expense, thus exposing their own fear-filled emptiness to the fly-on-the-wall reader. The satire is often cutting or titillating, but equally often it falls flat. The illustration is always boring, of course. This book has struck the "comix ain't just for kids" chord. These are "cool" comics, gawd forbid Tjia should require his audience to follow a visual narrative. And gawd forbid he actually be able to draw one. (There is no evidence here that he can.) Silly me. I was still functioning under the assumption that comics and drawing went together like peanut butter and jam. But to actually tell a story in drawings, we learn from Pedigree Girls, is passé, unhip. That's for geeks, the kind of people these Girls would savage. As a piece of art (if we can call it that) it is just as paralyzed and shallow as its subject. Ask yourself this: why a comic strip? Why not a poem, or a sculpture, or a dance piece, or a plate of spaghetti? Why did Tjia need Pedigree Girls to be a comic strip, in the same way that, say, Brian Wilson needed Little Deuce Coupe to be a pop song, or Roman Polanski needed Knife in the Water to be a movie? Got the answer? No? That's because it's a trick question. He didn't. There is no discernible reason why Pedigree Girls had to be a comic. It uses only the most rudimentary iconographic language (unadorned frame, image and text, all b&w), because it can't get beyond them. Today's buzz word for such work is "minimal". In reality, it is just impotent. (Shaun Smith)



## The Insolent Boy

by John Stiles, \$20, Insomniac Press, 192 Spadina Ave., #403, Toronto, ON, M5T 2C2

Rarely has a book started off so promisingly and dissolved into such utter disappointment. Selwyn is the Billy Elliot of rural Nova Scotia, a horrendously talented screw-up who can't fit in. Weird and mean, he runs rampant through the rectory while his aging foster parents - the rector and his wife - attempt to get him to be friends



with the other kids. This is promising material, rich in setting and personality, and Stiles makes the first quarter of this book a delight to read. But after Selwyn burns down the house of his girlfriend's parents and sets off to Vancouver to find himself, things quickly dissemble. Mired in plot, Stiles has an angst ridden Selwyn become a roadie, a rock-star, a Japanese convict, and a husband in short order. None of these developments ring true or engage the way Selwyn's childhood does. Now that he has grown up, he seems simply maudlin and annoying — he is a whiner with no charm, and even after he randomly marries, he insists on telling us how lonely and unhappy he is. One hopes the book will improve when he finally returns to Nova Scotia to make amends with the ailing rector's wife but instead the book spirals off into an elaborate tale concerning how he came to be adopted and how his first girlfriend — who had his baby — is really his sister. All of this comes as no surprise to the reader, and, in the end, this book conveys nothing more than a series of caricatures. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Slant

**By Andy Quan, 111 pages, Nightwood Editions, RR #22, 3692 Beach Ave., Roberts Creek, BC, V0N 2W2**

This book of poetry reads like a post-rock record. Although that description leaves a lot to the imagination, let's just say that the poetry in the book oozes with tension. I'll be frank, though: I'm not sure if I really dig it. Something else: many of these poems have a very architectural and geographic quality to them. I like that. In "Last Europe", Quan writes: "My years on this old continent meld together:/the spring weekend in Vienna, white/wine summer Belgian patios, the baked/red earth car trip from Florence to Rome." The way he keeps it moving evokes driving through the countryside, not stopping, but looking at the mountains and feeling the sun on your face. However, this book has its bad moments. In "The Barbershop," Quan writes: "Four Greek barbers, dusted in talcum/their hairy arms perspire/antiseptic leaking from square bottles/jagged scissors and sharp toothed combs/sparkle like dangerous marbles." The stanza, like the entire poem, seems somewhat heavy-handed and clumsy. Unlike "Last Europe", which is evocative and produces a real emotional response, I really couldn't care less about "The Barbershop." Likewise, "Gym Boy" is another piece that doesn't produce any reaction. Except...in the third stanza, when he writes: "He forgets his legs,/has heard that/beauty is chest/and arms/he could topple/over top - /heavy a Pisa tower/if not for symmetry", it works. Although it's vague, it stands out from the rest of the poem as a moment of

pure beauty. In "Sun Bathing," another highlight, his lament for a summer's day spent in a different place morphs into a semi-narrative on a picture taken of a woman's body. "Sun Bathing" stands as the centerpiece of the collection, and can easily be used to help define the overall mood of the book: sadness on account of a memory of happiness which has long since passed. Yes, I guess I do dig Slant. (Anthony Gerace)

## Mungo City

**by Rutiger Knox, novel, 308 pages, Flanker Press, PO Box 2522, Stn C, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 6K1**

From the blurb that came with the book: "In Mungo City, democracy is but a dream lost in the shadow of yesterday...Mungo City is a satirical construction of a globalized world a few years from now, where governments have contracted out public services to multinational conglomerates...In this world, college dropout Jimmy Doodle learns that all is not as it seems. Corporate tentacles are everywhere. Free thinking is prohibited as the administrators go to any lengths to stifle dissent..." Reading Mungo City is like hanging out with a young cousin who's just started his undergraduate degree and had his first run-ins with existentialism and economics. It's fresh, wide-eyed and a little bit annoying, but its heart's in the right place, and at times it's genuinely funny. Although this book doesn't always make sense, the plot moves along at a reasonable pace, and the style, while too quirky and precious for my jaded palate, will appeal to some. Recommended for high school and university students who really liked the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy series, who are experiencing the uneasy and confused first stirrings of political outrage, and who find the idea of mime screamingly funny. (Wendy Banks)

## Torontology

**by Stephen Cain, poetry, \$15.95, ECW Press, 2120 Queen St. E., Suite 200, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 1E2, www.ecw.ca/press**

Torontology is a cool little neologism, and it doesn't refer to the study of the capital of Ontario. Specific Toronto locations may appear in some of the poems, from Cain's pad to local bars, but a larger part of the writing features musings and jabs at ideas from philosophy and modern criticism. Stephen Cain's poetry isn't preoccupied with examinations of dark coloured clothes, motionless concert audiences or the simultaneous use of a cell phone and a bicycle. Cain's poetry is dense, but it's also fun. This combination makes for the first bit of poetry in a long time that has made me excited. The poems

take their cue from the late Avant-garde tradition. Cain's poems are like playgrounds that allow semiotic sliding. Non-sequiturs move into new ideas and then jump into something else again. Take this snippet from the poem Star Wars: "Spleen is a humour so is Stove Top stuffing/ Stuffing the envelope pressed against the device/ Device of revelation Bakhtin has a conversation." In three lines, Cain mixes his way from low culinary arts to Russian critical theory with the smoothness of a DJ. Which brings me to his outrageous play with pop-culture. One excellent example comes from 4 X 5: "I can't get no status action. Keep me lurching for that art of old. However, whether mine? This pun goes out to the fun I shove." The poems in Torontology are so full that you'll get something new out of it each time you pick it up. The majority of the works gain their titles from popular movies: Citizen Kane, Apocalypse Now, Manhattan. My two favourite cycles are 5 X 4 and 4 X 5, which feature parenthetical titles between each poem. These titles tend to be place names such as "My Place", "Wendy's Cottage" or "College Streetcar". Such concrete details make Cain's word play a little more personal and human and not free-form lexical wanking. Definitely good. Check it out. (Matthew Pioro)

## Roulathèque Roulathèque Nicolore

**Book, by Geneviève Castrée, 56 pages, French, \$10, Published by L'Oie de Cravan, 5460 rue Waverly, Montréal, Que. H2T 2X9**

Another innovative, quixotic gem by the prolific comic artist now based in Victoria, BC. It does this book no justice to call it a comic book. Perhaps 'experimental visual poetry' would be more exact. A strange, unfinished phrase guides the first images, before departing into various digressions: "Unfortunately...many women...that I know...are rather fragile..." Like Joe Hale's work, it feels to me that the tension between the words and images is what's being conveyed. It's not just a simple written message illustrated by images that you read, look at, and read again, until gradually a real mood emerges that you can't quite put your finger on. The series of impressions the story takes you through finds closure in the repetition of the opening sentence, this time completed, right at the end. Through it all, what seems like the figuration of the artist's muse in the story dances along in the form of a built-in flip book in the corner of each page. Once again, we're presented with a very unconventional artifact in the oeuvre of an artist developing her own highly original visual lexicon. (Louis Rastelli)

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## Weights & Measures

**Tonight, the Lower Abdominals**  
**CD, \$8, Matlock Records, 1858 Auclair Blvd.,**  
**Sainte-Foy, PQ, G2G 1R7**

Fourteen furious minutes of power post-rock. Guitars jar against exuberant drums and the bass has to be careful lest this come out sounding like mere rock and roll. An instrumental trio of finesse but also passion, this is a great example of shoe-gazing indie rock, at once complex and oh so simple, you'll be staring at the floor and shaking your shaggy head till way past dizzy. A weighty disc worthy of being measured against and favourably compared to Pecola, Smallmouth, Kepler and the Wooden Stars. (Hal Niedzviecki)

## Projektor

**Red Wolf Glass**  
**CD, Endearing Records, PO Box 69009, Winnipeg,**  
**MB, R3P 2G9, www.endearing.com**

Readers familiar with the Endearing Records roster may be a bit surprised by the kind of music Projektor make (as I was). Unlike Endearing bands such as B'ehl and the Salteens, known for their indie pop leanings, the debut CD from this Winnipeg-based band forays into the intensely emotional canon of rock and roll. It's late night music, with some tracks informed by a bit of Afghan Whigs (although not nearly as sexually charged) and some emo-type sounds. Most of this CD flows along at an even keel, with an element of diversity thrown in via alternating vocalists. (Alex Mlynek)

## Man-at-Arms

**Circuit**  
**CD, Medicine Records, atarms@home.com,**  
**www.catch-and-release.org/medicine**

Man-at-Arms is Jeffrey MacLeod. He lives in Victoria, BC. You may have already seen him in concert at this point, as he was supposed to tour in July and August of 2001. Man-at-Arms' first release is filled with the kind of singer/songwriter material that's selling well these days. Largely acoustically based, Man-at-Arms is "guy and his guitar" music, with some electronics thrown into the production. Despite the fact that MacLeod is an accomplished musician who plays every instrument on the album, Circuit does not add anything particularly forward-looking to the genre. (Alex Mlynek)

## 11 Objects Lost and Found

**Various Artists**  
**CD, Catch-and-Release Recording Collective,**  
**#210, 2137 33rd Ave. SW, Calgary, AB, T2T 1Z7,**  
**www.catch-and-release.org**

The latest compilation from the Catch-and-Release Recording Collective is meant to showcase music from around Alberta. Rayovaq, who recently released a fine album, are featured with two songs of minimalist pop. Keeping with the less-is-more theme are the four songs by Laura Palmer, the soundscape-laden alter-ego of

Craig Boyko. In contrast with these groups are tracks from the post-rock pop sounds of Shecky Formé and punkier hard-core inspired band Parkade. And rounding things out are the bass heavy, cleverly named, Whitey Houston, who are somewhat reminiscent of Morphine; a good release to pick up if you're interested in finding out more about their vision of the indie scene in Alberta. (Alex Mlynek)

## The Joel Plaskett Emergency

**Down At The Khyber**  
**CD, Brobdingnagian Records, P.O. Box 36142,**  
**Halifax, N.S., B3J 3S9, www.brobdingnagian.com**

Dear Joel Plaskett, Thank you for making the rock 'n roll fun again. From the unbelievable riffage of "Waiting To Be Discovered" to the inspired "This Is A Message" to the fantastic title track, you've made the warm tone of an electric guitar played loudly through a vintage amp all that is needed to have a good time on a record. I guess you've been listening to your Neil Young and The Who records lately, huh? And as if that isn't enough, you just had to go and write some of the best porch songs I've heard in quite a while. The soulful "It's Catchin' On" (with some fabulous backing vocal arrangements) and the lovely "Cry Together" are perfect for a sundowner on a Sunday afternoon. A full studio recording has finally delivered on the promise of your debut album, "In Need Of Medical Attention". At a time when straight up rock 'n roll isn't fashionable and anything loud means a horrible fusion of metal, pop and rap, "Down At The Khyber" is that much more refreshing and fun. This thing has "timeless" written all over it. Sincerely, Rock Critic. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## Snailhouse

**A New Tradition, 2001**  
**CD, The Snailhouse Institute For The Recording**  
**Arts, 23-191 McLeod St., Ottawa, ON, K2P 0Z8,**  
**snailhouse@hotmail.com**

Mike Feuerstack has been a busy boy during the past year or so, but you probably wouldn't know that. He's been quietly recording a follow-up to his last Snailhouse record, "The Radio Dances". While we're waiting patiently for its arrival, Mike has graced his fans with an EP to hold us over until the full-length appears. The cheekily titled, "A New Tradition, 2001" is a collection of songs recorded at home in the studio. Often, EPs aren't worth a glance. They are mostly packages for throwaway songs and b-sides, but, on this rare occasion, the five songs collected here step up to the challenge of their format and deliver as album-caliber songs. The beauty of Mike's songwriting lies in the details. In the opening "The Medicine Makes My Heart Beat Faster," the addition of Doug Tielli on cello adds a layer of warmth and fever. In my favourite track, "Witches And Snowmen", it's the lovely addition of the organ in the third verse. It's a small detail, but it's brilliant and falls in intimately with the soft guitar and voice work. But Mike also knows when to hold back, like in the heart-stopping "Bell." His voice alone carries the song, with a plaintive piano

accompanying him softly. The other two songs, "Twenty-One Years" (the closest thing to a rock song on this EP) and "Turn That Awful Music Off" are excellent too. If these songs are any indication of what is to come on Mike's next full length, we are all in for a big treat. (Kevin Jagernauth)

## The Intentions

**s/t**  
**CD, Mighty Midget Music, 564 Yonge St, Suite 91,**  
**Toronto, ON, M4Y 1Y8, theintentions@hotmail.com**

The Intentions, fronted by Ian McIntyre, play spacious and bombastic acoustic rock that reminds me of the whimsical attitude of the earliest Barenaked Ladies recordings. You know, before they were big in frat houses across America? This is not a slur against the Intentions, who bring a punk sensibility to high-spirited songs such as "You Live With Your Parents." Although they have a similar sense of humour to the Ladies and their ilk, they still balance the album with more earnest songs like "Here I Go Again On My Own" (which is not a Whitesnake cover). Despite their attempts to avoid the kiss of death of being a "funny band", The Intentions are at their best with lighthearted songs rather than with more serious fare. (Paul Corupe)

## The Undercurrents

**Cold Turkey all the Way to Japan**  
**CD, Pupkin Records, 1383 Monaghan Circle,**  
**Mississauga, Ontario L5C 1R7, pupkinrecords@hotmail.com**

The Undercurrents serve up seven catchy pop songs on their debut EP. Unpretentious and fun, their first release benefits from some excellent production by Ian Blurton. The title track is a spirited workout that features driving lyrics, but towards the end of the album, there are some unwelcome howls ("styrofoa-oh-oh-oh-oh") that distract from the crunchy guitars. Despite this, The Undercurrents have put together a solid pop album to satisfy your sweet tooth. (Paul Corupe)

## The Summerlad

**Distance Will be Swept up**  
**CD, Catch & Release, www.catch-and-release.org**

It seems that rock and roll is constantly being deconstructed and reconstructed these days in an effort to reinvent a sound for the 21st century. The desperate attempts to keep rock relevant can give you the impression that the entire genre is on life-support. Calgary's The Summerlad are a self-described "retro-futurist" band that have creatively positioned themselves as the beginning of a new rock movement, not the end of it. Fronted by P7, formerly of the Primrods, the band has a manifesto that includes a declaration to liberate the public from harmful and useless critics (hey, that's me!). But for a band that is trying to start a new musical movement, they certainly wear their influences on their sleeves. Flirtations with math rock, straight-ahead pop and quasi-Deftones riffs are immediately obvious in the first





## Satan Macnuggit Popular Arts

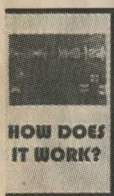
### Videos and stuff

#### VideoActive 3

##### Preview - Quebec City

TVAC in Quebec City! This is a fund raiser for the up coming 90min version. Lots of tear gas battles, stuffed animal catapults and tearin' down that fence!

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#### QueerCore

Very cool documentary about gay punks. Interviews, clips from No Skin Off My Ass, Super 8 footage and a rockin soundtrack make this really fun to watch. Directed by Scott Treleven.

VHS - 20 minutes - \$15ppd.



#### The Pie's the Limit

A cornucopia of political pie throwings in San Fran and beyond, with history and interviews w/ underground pie Produced by Whispered Media.

VHS - 30 minutes - \$20ppd.

#### BEYOND THE SCREAMS

A well made film documenting Latinos in punk rock. Personal, political and totally intriguing - another must have for punks with vcrl! Directed by Martin Sorrondeguy.

VHS - 30 minutes - \$20ppd.



Hey! We've got a website!

[www.satanmacnuggit.com](http://www.satanmacnuggit.com)

checks/MO (payable to Jonathan Culp) or concealed cash to

Satan Macnuggit Popular Arts

130 Clinton St., #27

Toronto, On, M5G 2Y3

[sm\\_orders@hotmail.com](mailto:sm_orders@hotmail.com)

[satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com](mailto:satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com)

and most outstanding track, "On a Highway State." While their album is ultimately enjoyable and combines their influences in a fresh and interesting way, it is hardly the revolutionary sound that their lofty ideals hint at. (Paul Corupe)

## Syrup & Gasoline Vol. 2

### Various Artists

CD, Grenadine Records, PO Box 42050, Montréal, PQ, H2W 2T3, [www.grenadinerecords.com](http://www.grenadinerecords.com)

Transylvania 500 are Colour Me Psycho minus the guitar, bass and vocals. The Carnations probably have lots of cute girls at their shows. The Dears are all over this record. Music for Mapmakers have the longest song on this CD. Mike O'Neil is sad and beautiful. Organics are four of the Dears and just as good. Les Séquelles swim in reverb. The Riff Randels will appear on a mix tape soon. Deadenders have a catchy chorus that nauseates me. Test Tone Channel don't do anything for me. The Bronze Medal with Ariel Engel is the singer guy from the Dears. Scott Walker is not that Scott Walker but still pretty good. Mario Poupette et Les Chevettes provide yet more French pop. Clover Honey steal Elevator riffs. Elevator promise to grow into hermit, goth-psych rock warlocks one day. The Frenetics are generic. Bionic are less grunge when you see them live. Les Protagonistes Rébarbatifs's song is too long at a minute thirty. Les Tabernades sound like a band from the eighties copying a band from the seventies (à la UIC but in 2001). Novillero should have been the first track but that would make tracks 2 through 20 look weak in comparison. (Terence Dick)

## Da Bloody Gashes

### Pedal to the Metal

LP, Total Zero, PO Box 32046, 901 Ste. Catherine East, Montreal, PQ, H2L 2E0, [dabloodygashes@yahoo.ca](mailto:dabloodygashes@yahoo.ca)

Na' dis's sum o' skoo' tshit (uhn' jus' becuz it's ona elpee, vinyl, natch). Bak-innaday, 's wendt b' d'naym o'PIGFUCKER m'sic. Ears up t'Pussy (fukkin) Galore, Rat At Rat R (whodey?), man, e'en t'furst ('r secon' mebbe?) White Zombie fell int' dis class. Punk 'n noise 'n garage 'n sex 'n sweat iz d'recipe. Granny grunty girlz shoutin' n' hollerin'. N'... Ah, fuck it. I was trying to write this review in the style of Peach of Immortality, an ultra-obscure kinda pigfucker but mostly noise band from around the same time I'm talking about and early, early label-mates of Pussy Galore who really set the template for this sorta thing. Any loser who spent the eighties poring over issues of Forced Exposure and dropping Canadian dollars for American imports (when the exchange was slightly better) in pressings of less than a hundred, should have a couple records that sound like this somewhere gathering dust. These Frenchies pull off the howling feedback, the distorto-bellowed singing (esp. on a cover of "You Don't Own Me," Lesley Gore? How appropriate!), the super-saturated recording grot, the cymbal wash and bass drum thump rhythm. The singer sometimes gets nekkid when they play. That's cool. Makes me nostalgic for my antisocial adolescence which probably isn't the point but if I'd had a high school sweetheart then, we'd now be sitting back on the couch, bouncing babies on our knees and listening to this. (Terence Dick)

## Music Maul

### Music Maul 1

CD, [musicmaul@hotmail.com](mailto:musicmaul@hotmail.com)

Knowing that this was recorded in a rambling farmhouse outside of Kingston inhabited by a couple couples of musicians who played us the Danielson Family late one night after a gig helps one get a handle on what's to come. We declined the drugs but felt the feeling, the altered state of freedom in isolation, crickets at the window, and an indiscriminate musical appetite that revels in melody, hooks and the left field. The country twang that flavours most of these tracks is reminiscent of Lambchop because the man-singer's got a full-voiced tenor and the lyrics are equally witty, twisted and sincere. The use of electronic gadgets (like instruments) and a computerized home studio to create rootsy, hyperactive pop songs makes one think of the Residents and Ween. The instrumental interludes sound like Disney music if Walt had been a Czech surrealist puppeteer and the songs are strong enough to be sung by the campfire with just an acoustic guitar (and maybe a theremin). But Music Maul mastermind Trevor Henderson is in a league of his own with the quirky arrangements and unexpected noise that throw the music just slightly off the beaten track. This is the kind of CD that I'd like to see more of in the pages of Broken Pencil. It's a homemade and personally distributed CD, the aural equivalent of a zine that, as yet, is just passed amongst friends. One guy (and his group of friends) creating in the name of some unexplained, idiosyncratic vision, telling stories in an original and compelling way. This is the type of music that should be reviewed in these pages. As BP music editor, I invite more individuals to send in their home recordings and I encourage all our readers to search out these musicians. (Terence Dick)

## The Silverhearts

CD, [johnnyroadkill@aol.com](mailto:johnnyroadkill@aol.com)

I hate the so-called punk rock. Ever since I became music editor here at BP, I've been inundated with the generic guitar and shouting crap, the formulaic songs, sub-adolescent platitudes and pseudo-iconoclasm. The evangelical dogmatism of this conformist culture really irks the tiny punk rock homunculus that sits in my head. My punk rock homunculus doesn't care about musical styles; he cares about soul and independence. He loves the punk rock toddlers who bash away at pots and pans, he loves the classical pianist who plays a box of cereal with a twig, he loves Gord Downie doing experimental dance to the accompaniment of a free-improvising orchestra. He also loves the ne'er-do-wells who gather every Wednesday at the Montreal House in Peterborough (a drinking establishment that until recently reputedly had no women's toilet, how old school is that?). The Silverhearts could probably kick my ass, drink me under the table and steal my wallet without missing a beat, without dropping a note, without missing a solo. There's so many of them 'cause they never know if they're gonna fuck, fight or fire up a blues holler and jam all night through four hundred originals, all of which sound like they were written eighty years ago by Blind Lemon Jefferson, Tom Waits or Ennio Morricone. Sure the saw is a mighty fine instrument, but it's also a weapon. Same with the violin bow, the sousaphone and the spoons. If the harmonica player kicks over your drink when he



jumps up on your table to take a solo, I would not recommend retaliating. Remember, the first four letters in harmonica spell HARM. But these miscreants aren't here to hurt you, they play the blues like ex-punks who got tired of moshing; they get down to the serious business of tearing the heart from a song, howling at the moon, and fucking shit up in a depression-era stylee. Now, that's punk. (Terence Dick)

## Blurtonia

CD, 533 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, ON, M6S 3L5, [www.blurtoniamusic.com](http://www.blurtoniamusic.com)

The semiotics of Ian Blurton's facial hair need to be addressed. For those of you out of the King of Rock's immediate vicinity, Sir Ian has gone Grizzly Adams and now sports a full and scruffy beard to accompany his nipple length locks. This striking look has been commented on with his every public appearance. If Ian were simply a new-edge hippy, a jam band weedler who wore Nicaraguan sweaters and saddles, the beard would pass without a glance. If it were sculpted in a new metal goatee or matched with a short haircut, it would probably not be as unnerving. But as it is, and especially with King Blur's wardrobe of baseball caps and mechanic chic workwear, the look is so radical it can only be described as "cool." No one else has such a rep, such an air of hardcore-ness (in the non-poseur, in the true to yourself, in the no compromise sense, not in the stupid music sense), such an individual iconicity to get away with this look. Who knows why Ian did it, he cannot be questioned about fashion. It is unthinkable. He is outside such petty concerns. The man has been playing longer than most BP readers have been alive. Fuck you. And couple the follies with the gaze, and place the beast on stage with a guitar in his hands, and the wildman, the castaway, the hillbilly metalhead becomes a frenzied shaman, twisting and flailing and rushing to the edge of the stage, looking like a possessed hermit, staring a thousand miles out and channeling who knows how much electricity through his fingers into that guitar. If the beard makes the music that much more striking when you see this vision of fur and fretboard, it can only be inadvertent. If it was intended, it would never work and Ian has never worked that way, trapped as he is with his voice and his songs and his inimitable playing (check out the Change of Heart tribute record for proof). The beard rocks and I don't know why. The CD rocks too. Let it blurt. (Terence Dick)

## New Onion

CD, Troubled Cat Records, 121 Elm Ridge Drive, Toronto, ON, M6B 1A6, [stevenfogel@hotmail.com](mailto:stevenfogel@hotmail.com)

There is a river of song and it could be as wide as the Mississippi but I've never seen the Mississippi so let's say it's as wide as the St. Lawrence right around Montreal. And that river has been rushing past for years with song after song after song. There are a billion (well, maybe not a billion but if you take Rob Pollard's output into consideration, there's probably a hundred million) songs behind you and too many to count for the years ahead. The well isn't drying up. On stages throughout the world, new songs are born each night. In records stores across the land, old songs rest in wait. You'd think with all that water, we'd eventually get tired of quenching our thirst.



White Bell Oklahoma live

And you might think that with all those songs, you'd eventually hear enough and move on to something else. But then you hear something that replenishes you even if the elements are all familiar, even if it sounds like a song you heard before, but this song, right now, it tears your gaze from the window, your ears prick up and your head nods just slightly, your foot taps and suddenly someone's talking to you. This whole theory applies to onions as well. (Terence Dick)

## White Cowbell Oklahoma

CD, \$10, [www.whitecowbell.com](http://www.whitecowbell.com)

Lordy! Where to begin? The nine guitars? The seventies boogie-rock thing? The complete over-the-topness of the entire exercise? The first time I saw the Cowbell, they had two bassists, two drummers, an MC dressed like Colonel Sanders, a singer dressed like Boss Hogg, a midget dressed like a Mexican bandito, and the dominatrix who sang with the opening band won the wet t-shirt contest. Two guitarists looked like Greg Allman (pre- and post-Cher), some were hillbillies (and dueled banjos), some were truckers, and the two keyboardists were dressed like Jewish mystics for some reason. They rocked out (spell it: R-A-W-K) to a selection of classics by the 'Nuge, AC/CD, Zeppelin, and Mountain. Everyone sang along to the theme from the Dukes of Hazzard. There was a fist fight. And then we all went home and had sex. The CD has some video footage for those with computers. The rest of you will have to make do with originals like "This Cracker's Got the Blues" and "Shot a Gambler Man" until White Cowbell come to your town. When that time comes, pull out the rock-wear, flex your devil-symbol and prepare to worship the Bell. (Terence Dick)

## Logo Hoax

CD, Strip Maul Records, [www.logohoax.com](http://www.logohoax.com)

Too often computers are used to make music that sounds like it wasn't made with a computer. The fancy box is restricted to being a mirror to reality, capturing sound as an exact replica of how you imagine it sounds out in the world. The instruments remain in the hands of the musicians and the recording conceits are transparent. But those who capitalize on the trans-dimensional fucked-upness of computer sound editing are truly exploiting the powers of digital editing and using the tool as it

should be. Referring to cyberspace seems kinda old hat but it's the necessary vision to explain how a computer can realize the potential of recorded music. The recording studio is a cramped box where the laws of physics and acoustics and anatomy and mechanics still apply. Once the sounds have entered the computer, if they haven't been created there in the first place, the rule-book goes out the window and no sound is taboo. It's like working in a vacuum, the air that surrounds each individual sound maker in the studio is sucked away, leaving more room to cram an unnatural array of sounds in one space, on one track. There are those musics that suffer from the cold isolation of digital recording. This is true. But there is also music of such density, materiality and detail that it can only be imagined as ones and zeros. Drum and bass would never have existed without the computer. Neither would Logo Hoax. This home studio project eviscerates boundaries, reveling in sound, overstimulating the ears at that line when pleasure and pain shake hands. Too erratic for the dance floor, never to be seen on stage, this is uneasy listening music for the concurrently agitated. (Terence Dick)

## Malefaction

Crush the Dream

CD, G7 Welcoming Committee, 484 River Road, St. Andrews, MB, R1A 3C2, [travisfaction@hotmail.com](mailto:travisfaction@hotmail.com)

Twennythreesongsintwennyfiveminutesgrowlingsingerhe avyspeedmetalangryangrylyricsifyoucanmakeoutthewordsandthenextsongsoundsthesameandthenextsongssoundsthesameANDTHENEXTSONGSOUNDSTHESAMEAAA AARRRRGGGGGAAAHUUURRRUHGGGUURRRUNH. (Terence Dick)

## Akuma

100 Demons

CD, the Union Label Group, [www.akumatribes.com](http://www.akumatribes.com)

Recently, I've been rediscovering the joys of Supertramp's Breakfast in America album. It was the first album that I owned as a kid. There are some really great songs on it and the arrangements are mind-boggling. The lyrics to the title track could be a Weezer song and everyone keeps on reminding me that my favourite song, "Goodbye Stranger" was on the soundtrack to Magnolia, but I still hear it with my preteen,



1970s ears. Wow. Talk about trippy. By the way, Akuma is a bilingual, Montreal punk band. (Terence Dick)

## The Trikl Act

### A Spatial Plot Thickens

CD, Medicine Records, #1, 1411 – 4th Street SW, Calgary AB, T2R 0Y2

In some really hip record stores, there's a section found just after "Roots" and just before "Swing" called "Slint." This is where you find your Mogwai albums, your more mathematical emo-core compilations and maybe some early Arab Strap singles. You can also find the Trickl Act here. These Albertans lean closer to the Slint singer's sing-speak-storytelling side of the box (thank Slint for giving passive boys with guitars someone other than Lou Reed to model their half-octave singing voice on). The band creates a nice, churning groove for the lyrics (I can't believe I just wrote that). The atmosphere is dark and moody. 'Nuff said. (Terence Dick)

## Mitchell Akiyama

### Hope That Lines Don't Cross

CD, Substratif, PO Box 666, Station R, Montreal, PQ, H2S 3L1, [www.substratif.com](http://www.substratif.com)

Bloopy music for Scandinavian cryogenics labs decorated by Caban. This is the type of music that I imagine web-designers play after they come home from work, un-Velcro their gunmetal gray, cross-chest rucksacks, unzip the lower section of their beige utility slacks, and collapse in front of their PlayStations. If they are lucky

enough to have a partner (with matching Rapp optical nerd-frame glasses), they will share blue-hued NRG drinks and discuss whether intelligent techno is an oxymoron. They will agree that it is not. I would argue that this is New Age music for IT workers. This would not be a criticism. Just an observation. (Terence Dick)

## Mayra Caridad Valdés

### La Diosa del Mar

CD, Mateca, 67 Madison Avenue, Toronto, ON, M5R 2S3, [tottens@sprint.ca](mailto:tottens@sprint.ca)

Mayra does that jazz singer thing where she demonstrates vocal acrobatics by holding single notes together while she runs them up and down and up and up and down and up the scales. That's annoying. I wanted to like this Cuban-jazz CD. Or at least not say anything bad about. But she had to wail and I had to dis. Reviewing CDS is a tough job but somebody has to do it. (Terence Dick)

## Warped Tour, Toronto

### Various Artists

On August 11th, 2001, over 40 great bands, many pro extreme athletes and even a pro wrestler came together at Toronto's Skydome as part of the Vans Warped Tour '01 presented by Target. The event included an array of punk bands including Sum 41, Pennywise, the Dropkick Murphys, Rancid and many more. There were plenty of things to keep everyone entertained throughout the eight-hour show. There were three bands playing at all times on six alternating stages. Often, the music from

one stage drifted over to the other stage areas making it difficult to concentrate on any one band. For fans of extreme sports, there was a massive half pipe and a street course both of which had demonstrations and competitions throughout the day. There were hundreds of tents littered throughout the floor area, many for bands and some for clothing sales or Play Station 2. The event was somewhat disorganized. There was no schedule given out so many people had no idea when and where bands were playing. But overall, the day went well. All those who came for a day of punk music and extreme sport were more than satisfied. The security did an exceptional job of keeping people from getting injured in the mosh pit without actually stopping them from moshing. With a bit of tinkering, the Warped tour could be perfect. (Donovan McNally)

## Void

### The First Gay Album

CD, MF Label Records, 329 Campion Crescent, Saskatoon, SK, S7H 3T8, [www.members.home.com/voyd](http://www.members.home.com/voyd)

I was going to make fun of this for sounding like Silver chair but then the next song sounded like the Counting Crows and too much of the rest of it was juvenile punk rock that fell out of a cookie cutter. And these guys were in diapers when I discovered the Remains so to make fun of them, I'd come off like the bitter ex-punk that I am (at least the bitter part, I was never a punk). And I never managed to put out a CD of my angsty wailings or witty ditties, so these kiddies got one up on me. (Terence Dick)

# Turntable Boy

Everyone, I'm sure, already knows the biggest Canadian indie rock news, but I'll repeat it in case you've been sleeping under a rock. Eric's Trip reunited for a late summer tour across Canada. You can look for "The Eric's Trip Show", a live compilation CD in stores now. It is available on Teenage USA Records. Julie Doiron is keeping busy too, with two anticipated albums in the works. The first is an all French recording due out in October on Endearing Records in Canada and Jagjaguwar in the United States. In February 2002 she will release an English album with the same record conglomerates behind it. In the meantime, Endearing will be busy with upcoming releases by Clive Holden, Hot Little Rocket and Readymade all due in the coming months.

Montreal's The Dears have left Grenadine Records and joined forces with Toronto's Shipbuilding Records. Before releasing a follow-up to their critically acclaimed "End Of A Hollywood Bedtime Story", they will release two teaser EPs, the first being "Orchestral Pop

Noir Romantique", before they begin work on their next full-length. Speaking of orchestras, Godspeed You Black Emperor head out in September and October for an eight date mini-tour in the American mid-west and Japan. Not to be outdone, once-side-project A Silver Mt. Zion have increased membership to six and have lengthened their name to – wait for it – A Silver Mt. Zion Memorial Orchestra And Tra-La-La Band. With a new record due in October called "Born Into Trouble As The Sparks Fly Upward" there is no word yet if they have gone completely crazy.

Matlock Records is gearing up for a busy fall with two new releases. The Plan will unleash their second full-length "Only These Movements Remain," followed by an appropriately large tour. Recent Matlock acquisition Slight Return will make their debut with "You Are Not Our Demographic" with touring to follow as well. Matlock Records protégée's North Of America have graduated and moved onto Progeria Records out of New York. They are comfortably resting after a

summer of touring in support of their new release, "This Is Dance Floor Numerology".

Ottawa metal maniacs Buried Inside have just finished work on their new CD "Suspect Symmetries." Not as loud but just as heavy, Kepler have begun work with producer David Draves on the follow-up to their debut full-length, "Fuck Fight Fail." Look for a release on Troubleman Unlimited in 2002. Fellow Ottawan, Snailhouse, is keeping busy and getting ready to release a full length this fall on his own imprint label. Keep your eyes and ears peeled. Over on the west coast, Mint Records is currently showing off Operation Makeout (featuring ex-d.b.s. bassist Jesse) to the rest of the world. Their first CDEP, "First Base" is in stores as this issue hits the news stands. Finally, from October 11-13 in Halifax, a large amount of smelly and cynical musicians will converge at the Halifax Pop Explosion. No confirmed acts as of press time you can bet it'll be worth checking out.

(Kevin Jagernauth)



# Julie Voyce's Mail Art Fun House

by Paola Poletto and Jon Sasaki

It seems like almost everyone in Toronto's art community owns a piece of work by Julie Voyce. Since discovering the semi-covert networked world of mail-art four years ago, Voyce has been distributing her vibrant silk-screened images via mail. Though she also works in the gallery system, one gets the sense that she finds intense satisfaction in exploring new ways to disseminate art. Lucky us: Rarely is artwork of this caliber so accessible.

The day we visit her studio is the hottest of the summer. Voyce offers to make a snack as we peruse her art, and announces that she's invented a new approach to sandwiches. Instead of slicing pieces of bread, she produces a cabbage roughly the size of a loaf of bread, and proceeds to carve inch-thick cross-sections. These cabbage-slices, topped with chicken salad, are a refreshing hybrid of salad and sandwich. The impression is that Voyce does not challenge convention for the sake of defiance, but because she's invented a better set of rules to play by.

Not unlike her version of the sandwich, Voyce's work oscillates between old and new. Looking at her assorted imagery, one is tempted to associate it with computerized vector graphics. The clean lines and bold chunks of colour appear to have just jumped out of a web browser. For instance, a silk-screened card depicting a strange woman/flower hybrid arm-curling 100-pound barbells is perplexing, gripping and seamless. But these images were not created in Illustrator with a few clicks of a mouse. Voyce is a self-professed luddite who employs the thoroughly anachronistic and relatively painstaking silk screen process in order to craft her images.

It is also noteworthy that snail-mail, not e-mail, is her chosen conduit for artwork. The silk screen process was originally developed as a commercial graphic tool, and it becomes apparent that another dualism is in play, that of high art/low art. In her hands, this traditionally "low



art" medium is a complex and expressive vocabulary for making serious work. Following the protocol with fine art prints, Voyce's editions are usually signed and numbered. Sort-of. Her entire recent edition is numbered identically, with a cryptic "X" hanging over the denominator. Voyce tips her hat to high art procedures, while simultaneously revoking the accepted gestures of the community.

To disseminate her mail-art, Julie has a recipe box. Inside, there is a distribution list of about two hundred indexed individuals who will receive four mailings over the course of a year. The four mailings make up a series of prints that are visually and conceptually connected. From year to year, what ties the prints together is an over-arching quirkiness; a feel-good, inspirational quality.

Julie's list includes relatives, friends, artists and non-artists. She has selected many of these people, and has also requested that a core group of them provide her with names of others who will appreciate receiving her mail art. At the time of our lovely sandwich meeting in her studio, Julie is in the process of sending her third piece of mail-art this year.

What is refreshingly unique about

Julie is that she's not holding her breath for money or acknowledgment. When you consider that she sells her stunning hand-printed artist's books for less than the price of a paperback by Danielle Steele, that's no surprise. It was to subvert the elitist world of high art altogether that Julie turned to mail art. Mail art provides a subjective and tactile sense of connection absent from the gallery system. Accordingly, she is happiest when there is a reciprocated exchange through the mail. When Julie sends out her work, she is disseminating not just art, but little pieces of her own fun house world. In return, she hopes others will share their unique sense of the world with her. Either way, the lucky recipients on her list must live in happy anticipation, waiting by the mail-box to see how the first two sections of a happy clown will grow into something new.

Send Julie Voyce your mail art well-wishes to R.E.D.H.O.T. Productions, P.O. Box 65232, Toronto, ON M4K 3Z2

Paola Poletto is BP's art editor. Jon Sasaki is an artist and regular contributor to BP. Both these fine folks live in Toronto.



## Art

### Money Value Art: State Funding, Free Markets, Big Pictures

Edited by Sally McKay and Andrew J. Paterson, \$22.95, YYZ books, YYZ Artists' Outlet, 401 Richmond Street West, Suite 140, Toronto, ON, M5V 3A8, [ABCartbookscanada.com](http://ABCartbookscanada.com)

Sporting a slick fifties retro style cover, I put my review copy of *Money Value Art* in a spot where guests would be sure to see it. The clear, concise introduction by Sally McKay and Andrew Paterson gives an accurate of the book, which contains perspectives on the uneasy relationship between art and economics by cultural workers, all of whom veer to the left. This is a must read for the Canadian artist, art student and visual art industry worker, and will undoubtedly become a staple in for students of Canadian art. Within a political, economic and social framework, there's a healthy balance of theoretical, historical and anecdotal/personal content. McKay explains that the book explores shifting ideologies and perspectives on art, money and value. It's a chronology of significant philosophical, political, cultural, economic and social events — information I think many artists should have when thinking about enacting social change through their art.

Many of the contributions will inspire you to make more politically motivated work, including Bernie Miller's politics of artist poverty in "Red Goods, White Goods" and John Marriot's hilarious "Children's Letters to Charles Saatchi: A Modest Proposal to Boost the Profile of Canadian Art". The disturbing, heart-felt images that accompany Krys Verrall and Bill Burns' contributions are beautiful and memorable. The contrasting piece by Michael Balser and Andy Fabo is a cynical, jaded and sometimes funny perspective on the artist's navigation through Canadian art scenes in the form of a board game called *Snakes and Tatters*. Jan Allen takes a look at the history and contestable practices of the Canadian Art Bank. Barbara Godard discusses the repercussions of and questions surrounding the slashing of government funding in Ontario. Josephine Mills investigates the politics of funding public art and Robin C. Pacific outlines models for thinking about community art practices and philosophies. Rinaldo Walcott critiques funding for Black artists while problematizing the concepts of multiculturalism, heritage work and blackness in "Blue Print for Resistance: Art, Nation and Citizenship." Andrew Johnson's essay explores the uneasy relationship between the Art Gallery of Windsor and the Ontario Casino Corporation, outlining the gallery's move from the water-front to the mall and back again.

The theme of encroaching gentrification floats through many of the articles and in classic pomo style, the recurring concepts are well troubled and problematized. Luis Jacob slams the city's push towards condo living by recounting the story of artists who were evicted from their studios on 9 Hanna Avenue in November 1999 in order to make room for the vehicles of new tenants. Bernie Miller mentions: "I read last week in the *Toronto Star*, in the context of a piece about impossibly high rents and the gentrification cycle generated by

artists settling into neighbourhoods, that the current average annual income for artists is \$8,000." Andrew Paterson notes: "It is paradoxical that artists, who have traditionally justified their lives and lifestyles by claiming that their processes and products should be evaluated by alternate values to the purely material or economic, have themselves served as agents of gentrification, a process which displaces affordable housing or accommodation for various low-income citizens." Pierre Beaudoin continues the discussion on low-income citizenship, by confessing his envy of those with well-paid jobs (like grocery store clerks), as he vacillates between whether it would have been a better choice to remain a kitchen assistant, get into the stripping industry or become an artist. Kevin Dowler offers "In the Bedrooms of the Nation: State Scrutiny and the Funding of Dirty Art", a troubled look at public funding for controversial religious and queer art. He reminds us that answers are not always straightforward: "the price of...autonomy has been an absolute lack of utility for art." This directly contrasts Andrew Johnson's restatement of Robert Smithson's wonderfully flippant quote: "utility and art don't mix."

This book is riveted with conflict and contradiction, reflecting the simple truth that the world is a complicated place. (Toni Latour)

### Browsing Room

personal artzine, #1, 72 pages, Tara Moyle, \$2, 2621 Stuart Ave. #34, Richmond, VA, USA, 23220, [taramoyle@hotmail.com](mailto:taramoyle@hotmail.com)

Back in high school, we would occasionally be asked to get up in front of class to deliver oral presentations. Invariably, some joker would give a speech about giving speeches. At first glance, *Browsing Room* appeared to be the perzine equivalent of this...a book about books. What I discovered instead was a very touching and thoughtful 72-page love letter to the DeKalb Public Library (Illinois), where the author was employed. "This zine is dedicated to all library employees, everywhere" it announces, with tongue nowhere near cheek. Highlights include "A day in the life of a technical services employee", a page about library ghosts, a short primer on notable libraries of the world, and a humorous discussion of librarian dress code. (Cardigans and holiday theme sweaters are a must-have, visible panty lines are de rigueur!) *Browsing room* is sincere enough to be heart-warming, yet funny enough to make the earnestness palatable. A zine with broad relevance. Curiously, this librarian neglected to tag an ISSN onto her own book. Hey, it's full of surprises. (Jon Sasaki)

### time in a cylinder

artzine, 2001, \$3, Karen Prig, [girlieprig@hotmail.com](mailto:girlieprig@hotmail.com)

Whenever I come across a work in a box resembling a deck of playing cards, I think of Marshall McLuhan. His is a tough act to follow. *Time in a cylinder* is a long poem, peppered with impressively cute ink drawing, and written on a series of 36 one-sided cards on textured cream paper. My inclination is to shuffle the cards, but layout doesn't suggest I do that. Rather, I am left trying to

maintain order to the set as one follows the narrator on a rhyming journey of romance and loneliness. I am guessing that the poem is influenced by the fact that the author is currently living in Korea, providing a basis for words like wit, tragedy and classic. She writes, "But if my tragedy is minor in this comedy of wits, how come in all the classics, my story sits?" Korea or not, it's a work's substance that ultimately counts, otherwise, writing from abroad is just sitting pretty. (Paola V Poletto)

### Joes I Know/Junior General Kit

catalogue by Lorraine Weideman and Clint Burnham, 31 pages, \$12, Artspeak Gallery

The use of Burnham's campy, slang-infused memoir of his days in the military is a welcome break from the tired-minded essays often seen in catalogues produced by small galleries. On the flip-side of this dually-oriented book, there's a lovely series of ten removable rectangular cards, each bearing three of Weideman's full-colour photographic bust-portraits of G.I. Joe dolls. The dolls naturally seem more and more human as you look, and very slight differences in the modeling of the faces start to portray a range of subtle, tragic personalities. The text side of the catalogue is designed using all the visual tags of magazine layout, like chunks of text printed at a font size twice as large as the body text and stylishly blurry details from the portraits. Just as the portraits, by being out of context, invite the re-creation of back stories, all of the usual padding has been removed from the text, which is composed of brief, quotable, verbal moments, leaving the reader with an unusual amount of archaeological, reconstructive responsibility. The irony of this method in a text concerned mainly with conformity and discipline is extremely compelling. (Donato Mancini)

### My Girl

artzine, 2000, \$2, Meg Sircom, A Conundrum Comic, 266 Fairmount W., Montreal, QC, H2V 2G3

This 12 page comic gives me shivers up my spine. It begs the question, "Who indeed is my girl?" Set in the home of a little girl obsessed with sumo wrestlers, I am unsure who the narrator is at times — the little girl, her best friend that visits her, the little girl's mother who is a cross between little bo-peep and the wicked witch of the west, or the creepy cardboard father. The sexual tension is magnified and unbearable because there is a deliberate confusion here. One is literally left wrestling with images of sexual abuse and the clenching bodies of sumo wrestlers. This artwork is brilliantly conceived. (Paola V Poletto)

### Head Full of Art

artzine, #2, \$?, David Schoonover, 1007-2699 Battleford Rd., Mississauga, ON, L5N 3R9, [www.headfullofart.bigstep.com](http://www.headfullofart.bigstep.com)

At first this zine, billed as "a show and tell for artists of all mediums," made me very skeptical. But there is a range of material in this relatively thick issue, including



a sobering punk interview with Jackie Joice (who made the documentary *Punk Pretty*), poetry, comics, reviews and visual poetry from a good range of styles and contributors. Yes, there is a little something for everyone in here, and the quality is generally high, thanks to creator/curator Schoonover. His own images are provocative and unique: a collage of cars asking their drivers to fend for themselves is just stellar. (Paola V Poletto)

## Stay As You Are

comic, #7, 32 pages, Brad Yung, \$2, P.O. Box 30007, Parkgate P.O., N. Vancouver, B.C., V7H 2Y8, bradyung@home.com

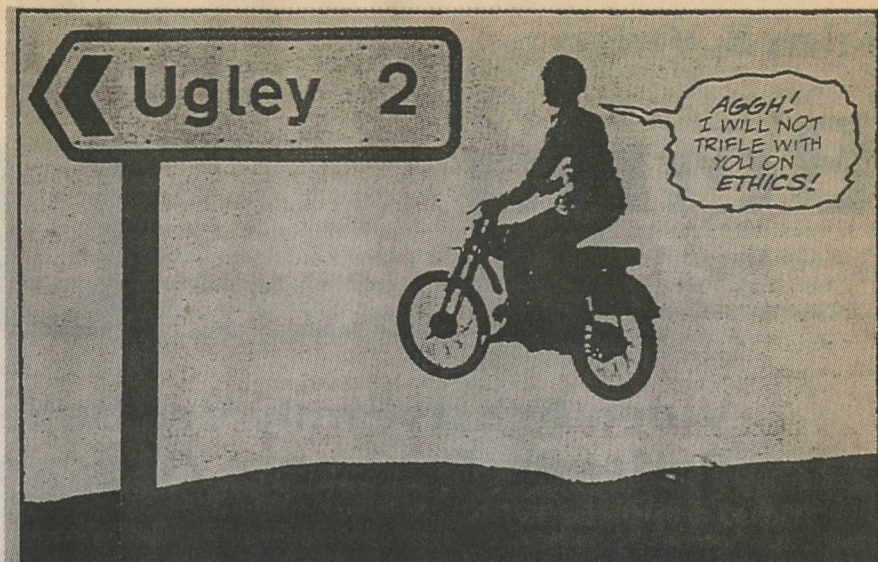
A collection of comics originally appearing in Vancouver's *WestEnder* newspaper, starring two Brad Yung alter egos pontificating about the futility of existence. They read kind of like a cynical version of *Family Circle*...never laugh-out-loud funny, and maybe a bit too preachy at times. What these comics do have, however, is a finger-on-the-pulse kind of relevance that must have readers thinking: "I can sure relate to these guys." Nothing like wholesome Starbucks-bashing to bring people together, or Moby-bashing, or Hollywood movie-bashing... Yung seems to be at his best in the *Non-Sequitur Theatre* pages. Six panels of mismatched images and one-liner captions amount to a well chosen form for his nihilistic content. It's like he's too apathetic to be bothered scripting a cohesive narrative. In a good way, though. My own completely unrelated thought: according to his web site <www.stayasyouare.com> Yung has recently built his own basement bar, complete with mirrored ball and discolights synchronized to his stereo. I'm starting to like this guy more and more. (Jon Sasaki)

## Rendering

artzine, #2, \$8, Brent Haig, Funsour Creations, 233 St. James St., Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 1P7  
Perhaps I was warmed by the note accompanying this set of 20 colour copy images. Haig writes that he returned to art despite the fact that he draws like he is in grade two. But that's part of the reason why these drawings work. The other reason is the gloss effect of the cheap ink of colour copies (cheaper than oil paint, that is). Together, they open up the way one looks at what have become in many ways the most banal paintings in history: the *Mona Lisa*, Dali's limp clocks, Warhol's cream of mushroom soup cans, Escher's self-drawing hands. This is a truly beautiful collection. Haig, you get a sticker star for effort! (Paola V Poletto)

## VAN, several one page issues

artzine, Ross Priddle, Imp Press, Box 1612, Vanderhoof, BC V0J 3A0, Yb396@victoria.tc.ca  
Most VAN issues are one 8 1/2 x 11" b&w copy, front and back, folded once. The inside fold is hand-written and incredibly difficult to read. I can't get past the writing style. That's why I find the images in each issue the most compelling element, and they are sometimes brilliant. They are cryptic visual poems that invite you to linger in front of them. For instance, in VAN #35, the zen cartoon by gustave morin of Windsor, Ontario, has strong visual



by Morin from VAN

tension. It is effectively striking a balance between picture plane and idea. Hope the VAN one-pagers come together soon to really set the stage for brilliant ideas! (Paola V Poletto)

## Assorted from Daniel

mini-zines, between 6 and 16 pages each, Daniel, 3156 Cameron, Regina SK, S4S 1W7

This is a baffling assortment of stuff from "Daniel". Baffling, not because he gives so little background information, (who IS this Daniel guy, anyway?), but because his zines manage to do so much with so little. A homely envelope contains a few bible-tract-sized zines, crudely photocopied onto garish paper. Everything about the format seems small. Tiny photos accompany the sparse text, which itself often shuns uppercase letters in a bid for smallness. things i found on my walk is a gem: "a pink panther toque/ a spoon/ two used Q-Tips/ a fortune/ 4 litres of milk..." Have these treasures been listed chronologically, or is there some underlying system of taxonomic classification happening here? Other booklets such as schizophrenia defy logic altogether for obvious reasons. These are little zines with big ideas. Like my grandfather used to say, good things come in small packages. Of course, he also used to say "rock-out with your cock out" and that got him in a bit of trouble. (Jon Sasaki)

## Whiskey Lollypop

zine, 32 pages, Geoffrey Hewett, \$? 2770 Seaview Road, Victoria, B.C. V8N 1K8, wl@hugecorp.net

If I were to judge a book by its cover, I would simply heap accolades on this one and be done with it. Each cover appears to be individually hand-printed on some archaic press. The two copies of *Whiskey Lollypop* that I received look vastly different. They both feature a cool Henry Moore-esque woodcut, but the ink colour, background graphic and paper stock is unique. Both covers have that sexy embossed lettering that you can only get with old-school printing presses. However, this printing process, besides being labour-intensive, also exposes the artist to large quantities of mind-numbing solvents. Which might help to explain all the goofy binder-doodles

you'll find inside this zine. Surely, this stuff looks a lot better with Varsol (or whiskey, for that matter) coursing through one's veins. Lowlights include a gorilla making the "hang-10" hand gesture, and two comics about a giant slug and his belligerent friend. Junior high flashbacks aside, there is some solid writing to be found here, so don't let the unevenness deter you. It's worth a look, and while you're at it, you might want to frame that front cover. (Jon Sasaki)

## One. Super:natural

artzine, \$20/4 issues, swaps ok, Small Change Press, June 2001, 307-1298 West 10th Ave, Vancouver BC V6H 1J4, smallchange@soon.com  
I think *One. Super:natural* is the title of this handsome chapbook. I'm also not sure who wrote this self-professed "baseball sex poem." No matter, it's jammed full of great writing, ideas, images, coupons — yes, coupons — charts, baseball history, ufo's and sex! You must order this! The images are appropriate every step of the way: a historical image of a baseball player is naturally set in black and white, but Dorothy Gales' shoes of the Wizard of Oz fame are printed in red. An ad for McDonald's "Trudeaburger" pulls out all colour stops too and gets a full-page spread. Very smart. Among my long list of favorites is "Learning about people w/ charts and graphs," which charts the tie between Lesbovia and Lesbiopia for the best name for a lesbian utopia. This chapbook is a treat for boys, girls and their grandparents. (Paola V Poletto)

## On My Brain McLean

drawings, #2, Jason McLean, \$2, 713 East Pender St., Vancouver, BC, V6A 1V8

A new collection of McLean's eclectic hodge-podge drawings feature elaborate almost-toys with all kinds of gears, feet, motors, balloons and smoke clouds coming out of them. McLean's stuff is fun, but the quality of this booklet isn't very good. Still, I'd look out for his work and even write away for it — just ask for a book that isn't suffering from poor reproduction quality. (Hal Niedzviecki)



# Being Fucked UP

**Video Artists Emily Vey Duke and Cooper Battersby Renounce Zines and Optimism**

by Flick Harrison

Vancouver video artists Emily Vey Duke and Cooper Battersby are a cute couple whose united life, and what they could now call a career-artist partnership, began in the most zine-like fashion. They flirted fleetingly at an art opening in Halifax in 1993. Emily tried to get Cooper to follow her outside but he was waiting for her to come back inside. Both went home alone.

Refusing to accept defeat, Emily printed up a stack of posters which read "Wish You Said" and plastered them all over Halifax. Apparently Haligonians are psychic, because Cooper knew right away they were aimed at him. His response was a barrage of posters made from found teenage love letters. Two weeks later they were hitchhiking across the continent together and in the years that followed they've produced torrents of zines, art books and now videos.

"We could have lived the life we imagined when we were 22," Emily says today, days before moving from Vancouver to Chicago to study under video artist Steve Reinke. "But you can't have a job making zines. You can have a job as video artists. We didn't have to sell out too much."

Actually, they don't seem to have sold out at all. Emily, whose eyes are like laser beams, is fearlessly independent. Cooper, on the other hand, has an iron grip on his art-school slouch.

Their new video, *Being Fucked Up*, and 1998's *Rapt and Happy* are collages of isolated microgenres, using blurs and degradation in a series of two-minute clips. The tech is too low (hand-wobbled photographs serve as special effects); the depression, too piercing; the payoffs, too subtle; and the crack-smoking, too real. Animations of dogs with deadpan human faces intermit with Emily and Cooper's home-video poetic vignettes. In



Emily Vey Duke in *Being Fucked Up*

*Monologue for Robots*, the robot proclaims that "triumph never comes, or worse, it comes and goes."

Even though their body of work is relatively small, they've been sucked into a slipstream of art video success. Their tapes are slinging through Europe, pulling in the no-budget prize at Hamburg's Short Film Festival, and second prize at Video X in Zurich.

Cooper reels at the thought of getting Canada Council grants to travel with the videos, and Emily brags about a film festival paying for her taxi. "That's like movie star stuff," Cooper says with a slouch. "There's no money in the zine world."

Their once-daily Halifax zine "Prizewinners" printed anything anyone submitted. They made it to 50 issues, some of which they admit were pretty bad. Then the duo became "less and less ziney", gaining glossy covers etc., until their productions morphed into artist's

books like *Poofters*, I'd rather be polymorphous perverse, and Group Action. "There's no money in the artist's book world either," Cooper adds.

"Zines are amazing for young people," Emily says, "they're for finding your voice. But once you find it you want to address your peers; zine makers are younger than me now."

*Being Fucked Up* recently screened at the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) as part of a group exhibit. The exposure, they gleefully assert, is great, but they are finding tiny problems with the way the art world has been so eager to gobble up their video works. They are ecstatic about the 80,000 visitors which the gallery boasts each summer, but wary of theoretical baggage.

Emily rolls her eyes demonically as I raise the issue of theory. "I would prefer never to talk about it again. Theory is at the opposite end of the spectrum from



what we do," she says. "It's not arty work, it's not conceptual. You don't need any other information to get it."

Predictably, their artist's talk at the VAG was overrun with theory buffs trying to call their stuff ironic. Can a cartoon dog reciting, "Her soft breasts, the sweet warm milk, I will punish her for making me wait" be considered ironic?

They also wonder whether gallery-style looping is the right thing for the video, and so for an upcoming January 2002 show at YYZ gallery in Toronto they may make something other than

single-channel video. But the idea of a six month deadline for a new video - which normally takes them 2 years - is daunting. "Let's not talk about it," Emily says.

They fear that material success might make it harder to find material for videos (their next project is tentatively called *Our New Life*). Optimism has its own problems. As Emily asks: "The market on optimism and sentimentality are so cornered by Oprah and Hallmark - how do we make a work that's optimistic without being phony?"

On the other hand, their optimism wasn't easily come by. The 2-year production of *Being Fucked Up* was interrupted by a year-long heroin problem. "If our budget was unlimited when we were making [that] we would probably be dead," Emily says.

*Flick Harrison is a filmmaker and writer whose work is on 120seconds.com and in Vancouver's Terminal City weekly. His coolest credit is shooting REM's "I'll take the rain" but don't sue him for Stockwelldork.com.*

## Film & Video



### Emotional Massacre

by Cody Critchloe, Shorts, 45 minutes, VHS, \$8, PO Box 591, Lewisport, KY, 42351, USA, [codykennedy@hotmail.com](mailto:codykennedy@hotmail.com).

This collection of oddments should be a lot more entertaining than it is. Critchloe is a sublimely annoying, whiney, in-your-face little brat. His bag of tricks runs from cheap-ass animation to music (of sorts) to Andy Warhol-style glamour dirt. You can tell he's smart because he leads with "The Greatest Day Ever!" and it's the best thing on the tape - a very funny and properly self-deflating animation about eating cows and riding around on big penises. After that, though, you get ten gallons of wank-o-rama. Several quickie blackout gags go nowhere. Punk concert footage with Madonna/Furs on the soundtrack is kind of amusing once, for a few seconds, but tedium ensues. (At least you don't have to listen to HIS songs - told you he's smart.) The tape ends with "I'm Serious", the Warhol number, which is as long as the other eleven put together. Some of the performers

have charisma, and it does have a structure, but it's pretty smug - a pretentious mockery of pretension, who needs it? And any good will he generates with his kooky spoof of "revolution" - they knock over an ashtray - is negated by three, count 'em three, separate putdowns of fat women. Spank him and send him to bed already. (Jonathan Culp)

### How Does It Work?

Collage, 22 minutes, VHS, By Jonathan Culp, Satan Macnuggit Popular Arts, 3584 John St., Vineland Station ON LOR 2E0, [satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com](mailto:satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com), [www.satanmacnuggit.com](http://www.satanmacnuggit.com), \$15

"How Does it Work?" evokes the mood and structure of dreams and memory. As it lectures on the state of hypnosis - the limbo that exists between the objective conscious and the subconscious - the video itself analogously wavers between the familiar and the surreal. By borrowing the imagery and narration of educational films from the 1960s and '70s, the video takes on, by association, a pedagogical tone and sense of authority. The borrowing, though, is not without self-consciousness and irony, as well as a sense of humour, which makes its authority a curious one. In addition, the narrator's steady, lulling voice combines with a procession of evocative images, and together they become a hypnotic force that exerts itself on the viewer. Because of this, the video becomes the very thing that it presumes to be about, and thus we can experience the video on at least two levels: a conscious or intellectual level, and a subconscious level which is affected by the hypnotic power of the video itself. Overall, "How Does it Work?" works exceptionally well, with its compelling imagery and surreal tone working together like a cheerful drug that hypnotizes and entertains. (Nicola Betts)

### Mas Alla De Los Gritos - Beyond The Screams

Documentary, Martin Sorrondeguy, 30 minutes, VHS, Satan Macnuggit Popular Arts, 3584 John St. Vineland Station ON LOR 2E0, [satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com](mailto:satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com), [www.satanmacnuggit.com](http://www.satanmacnuggit.com), \$20 ppd.

So are there Latinos listening to punk rock? This film answers the question by showing how Latinos/Chicanos

in the U.S. have taken a punk scene that they couldn't relate to and made their own space within it, where they can communicate what is going on in their lives as members of a marginalized community, and go beyond the roles they are expected to live up to. As the lead vocalist for the disbanded Los Crudos, director Martin Sorrondeguy was at the center of this scene and was able to interview a lot of smart people that had a compelling message: we took the white hardcore punk scene and made it our own. There is also a lot of live footage featuring Los Crudos, Kontra Ataque and Subsistencia among others and sudden, horrifying clips of police brutality show that the racism and oppression they sing about is for real. All of this is knit together by tight editing that keeps things rolling at a fast pace. (Frandroid Atreides)

### Queercore

Documentary, Scott Treleaven, 21 minutes, VHS, Satan MacNuggit Popular Arts, 3584 John St., Vineland Station, ON, LOR 2E0, [satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com](mailto:satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com), <http://www.satanmacnuggit.com>, \$15

This tape's cover features a rave review from Broken Pencil - and now that it's out on video, we're re-reviewing it! I guess it's an important piece of history. So this video styles itself as retracing the roots of the queer punk movement. Many people are interviewed, including Jen Angel of Fucktooth and Larry Bob of QueerZineExplosion, and we see covers of the legendary queer zine Outpunk, among other publications. Footage from Bruce LaBruce's *No Skin Off My Ass* peppers this up. It's a really thrilling piece, following each person's path towards the queer punk scene and liberation from the gay and punk scenes' trappings. However, this film lacks direction and pointers. We're shoved from one person to the other, without knowing who's who, much to my chagrin. That review on the cover mentions more people than I could recognize or name from what I've seen. We don't all know what Bruce LaBruce looks like! Please identify these people! The interviews are mostly glued one after the other; I think they could have been edited into meshing with one another, and made a more interesting feature. However, despite structural failure, this documentary packs up testimony to the birth of an incredible scene that fed off punk rock and burns energy on its own terms. Recommended. (Frandroid Atreides)



# Listen

by Geoffrey Brown • art by Sarah Butler

**L**isten to me. Are you listening to me? Listen to me. I want you to listen. You listen. To me.

I tried not to notice. I pretended not to notice. I closed my eyes and didn't notice. I knew what I wasn't noticing. I could hear what I wasn't noticing. I could hear things break. I could hear things rip. I closed my eyes and not noticed. Things broke. Things ripped. I failed to notice.

They arrived prepared. They brought their "tools." Their "instruments." Their "utensils." They arrived and went to work. They worked. They finished. They "put away" their "tools." "Packed away" their "instruments." "Washed off" their "utensils."

One morning there she is. He sees her as he leaves. There she is. He leaves.

I gave myself an hour. I thought, An hour will be plenty. How long is an hour? How much can an hour take? It took an hour. It took longer than an hour.

They knocked on his door. He let them in. Offered coffee. Took them out. Showed them the grounds. "These are the grounds," he said. He waved his hands. Brought them in. They went through the house. Let themselves out. He rinsed the cups.

"Don't do it," I thought. I said it to

myself: "Don't do it." I said it out loud. "Don't do it."

I could do anything. Whatever I wanted. Whatever there was.

I was supposed to wait. I made a deal. "I'll wait. I'll wait a week." I made another deal. I couldn't wait a week.

I keep thinking. What will happen? I keep thinking. What will happen if it happens?

I've never done this. I don't know why I'm doing this. I can't imagine why I'd do this.

It happens often. Not all that often. Fairly often. You could almost say it happens fairly often. It often happens fairly. You could almost say it happens fairly often. You couldn't say it happens fairly. I don't think you should say it happens fairly. I don't think you should say it happens. I think it happens. But I don't think you should say it happens.

I keep changing. I can't decide. I change. I decide. I can't decide.

She came over. It was the first time she came over. She came over for the first time and he let her look around. She moved about the room and looked

around. He sat in his seat.

I had a plan. I thought I had a plan. I thought I had a plan worked out. I thought I knew the plan I had. I thought I knew the plan I had that I was going to do.

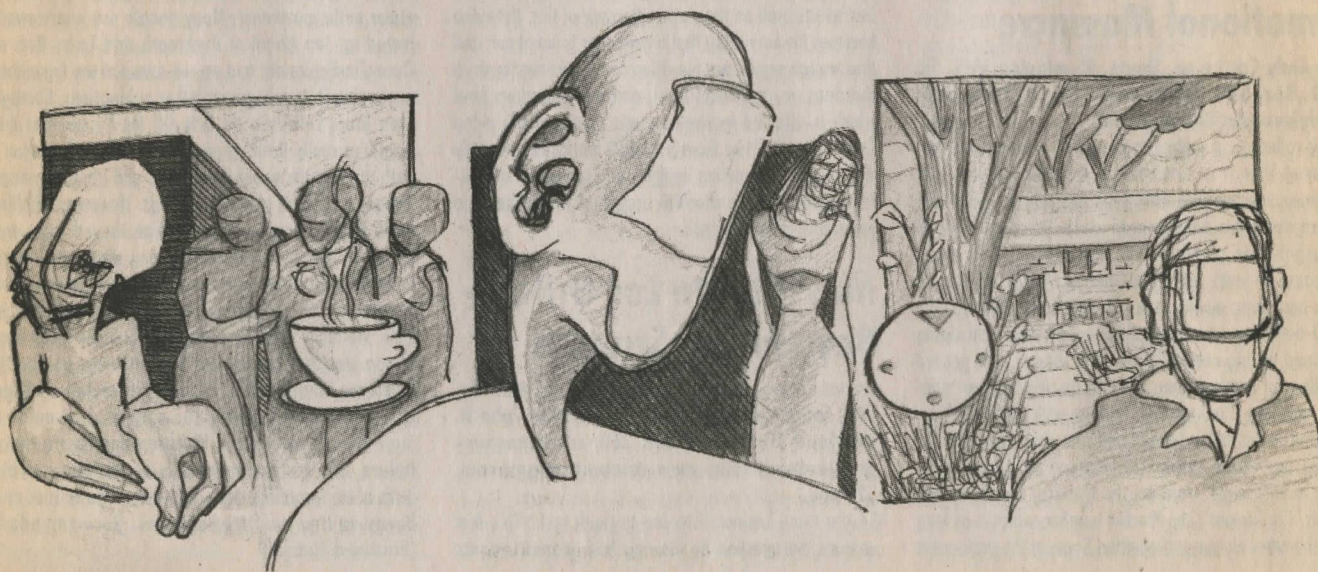
They called me. They told me they were ready. "We're ready," they said. I told them I was ready. I told them I would pick them up. I went to pick them up. I picked them up.

I kept trying. I have no idea why I kept trying. I could never do what I kept trying to do. I kept trying to do what I had never done. Trying to do what I had never done kept me trying.

I had only one. I only had one. I had one only. Only I had one.

This can't be done. I shouldn't do this. I shouldn't be doing this. I can't do this.

I did it one way and then I did it a second way. I put it back the way it was before I did it the first way. I did it a third way. I tried to put it back the way it was the time I did it the second way. I couldn't remember how I did it when I did it the second way.





I was doing it incorrectly. I was doing it wrong. Not the way it said. Not according. I was holding it wrong. I wasn't clutching. I had it wrong.

I told him what to do. I drew a diagram. I showed him. "I understand," he said.

He said, "I want to show you something. Come here."

They went. The two of them. They went ahead. They met with the others. There were others who were there whom they were meeting with. There were others who were waiting. They were waiting.

Inside it was dark. They felt their way along. "Slow down," she said. He stopped.

"What's wrong?"

"Don't stop."

He moved.

"Come on."

I decided to go. I could have stayed. I could have decided to stay. I could have decided to go. I could have decided. I wasn't being forced. No one said I had to go. No one said: "Go."

I promised I would go. I went. I promised I would go. I went. There was no one there. I promised I would go. I went. There was no one there. I promised I would go. I didn't want to go. I got it done. I got one done. I still have two to do. No, that's not right. I have as many to do as I haven't done. Of those I've done, there are none I haven't done. Of those I haven't done, I have as many yet to do.

I went back many times. I don't know how many times I went back. I can't remember how many times I went back. I remember going back many times. Numerous times. I went back. I went back. I went back. More times than that. I came away. I should have stayed.

He went first.

"Your turn," he said.

"No. Your turn."

He went.

"Your turn," he said.

I liked the way she looked. She said she liked to look. She said she liked to watch. I let her watch. I let her watch a lot. She never asked to touch. She never tried to touch. She only ever looked. I think she liked to look. I think she liked to watch.

No one paid attention. Not to me. No one paid attention to me. They paid me no attention.

I turned around.

I heard my name. I turned around.

Someone waved. I couldn't make them out. They waved. I waved back.

I took what I had and went over. I didn't have much. It fit in a bag. It fit in one bag. What it was was what fit in a bag. A bag was all it was. The size of a bag. The it was not without the bag. Without the bag the it it was was not.

I went first. She went second. I went first. She went second. We went one after the other. Me first, her second. First one, then the other. Me, then her.

I wanted to go. I was ready to go. I thought I was ready to go. I felt I was ready to go. I think I was ready to go. I think I thought I was ready to go.

"Listen," she said.

"Look," she said.

"Are you ready?" she said.

"Do you want to?" she said.

He told me he didn't care. I knew for a fact he did. He cared.

"I know you care."

"I don't care," he said.

"You care."

He cared.

It was easier than he thought. He thought it would be hard. It was hard.

He moved back. He went forward. He stepped back. Stepped forward. It was not a hesitation. I wouldn't say he hesi-

tated. I wouldn't say the stepping back and forth was hesitation. I would hesitate to say the stepping back and forth was not a hesitation.

I like to think that I'm prepared. If being prepared is possible. If being prepared is something for which one can be prepared. I like to think that I'm preparing to prepare.

He held up his hand. "Did you hear that?"

"Wait," he said. "Stop," he said.

"Listen," he said.

I waited. I stopped. I listened.

*Geoffrey Brown lives in Ottawa. He is the author of Notice (Gutter Press).*

# THEN

By Karen LaRocca

One way, there was this guy. Snap! Raccoon road-kill on a barn-board fence, yellow burbles. Click! Click! Click! Andy posing. Propping oily tendons for the camera. Andy baking a cake and winning a ribbon. Andy with Polaroids of my cunt.

In the other direction, Mike. Cow brain for a hat. Eyeballs that he holds in his hand, rolls around in his mouth for laughs.

I loved him. Mike.

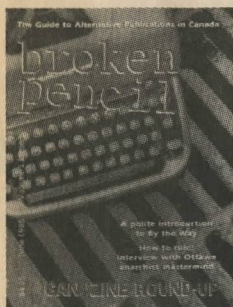
But I thought, maybe south. I longed for those women. Flowers planted in their lips, tucked into blouses. Honey smiles. White teeth. I thought: drive there – into clover breath and the beggar-men selling Chiclets. Tijuana. Good evening señoritas and germs.

He wasn't there, though. He forgot to meet me there.

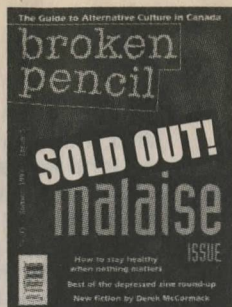
*Karen LaRocca is a Toronto writer and reformed starfucker who is nonetheless sleeping her way to the top.*



# broken pencil back issues!



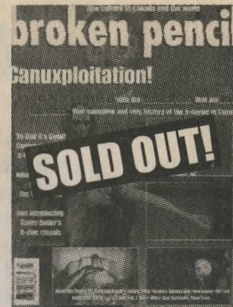
#1 - The original classic featuring the Lucien Bouchard Flesh Eating Zombie Doll.



#5 - The All Malaise Issue. Are We Really Depressed?



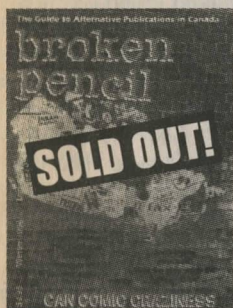
#8 - From the Margins of the Insurrection: Zine Writing and the Death of Literature.



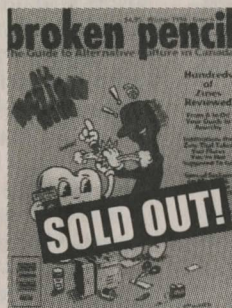
#11 - Canuxploitation: Your complete history of the Canadian b-movie. Sold out.



#14 - After the Riot: Indie Grrrrs! Shary Boyle, Zine Girls, Dear E-Diary.



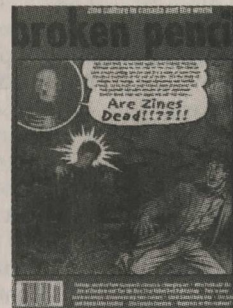
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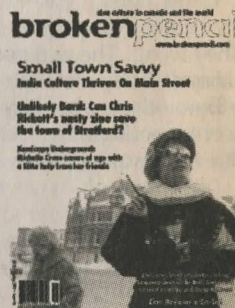
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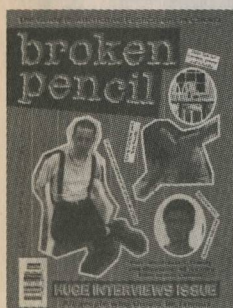
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# How to Take Up Space (and hold onto it)

by J Heynerd

## Pick a Relevant Target

As our western "liberal" governments move away from any pretence of democracy, and power is concentrated in the hands of business elites who only care about their own profit, simple protests have become less and less effective. The target should directly reflect the struggle at hand, whether it's a center for our opposition or merely symbolic of their machinations. Ideally, the target should also be photo- and tele-genic, so that the media spectacle propagates the event to a wider audience. Research your target as much as possible. Know its connection to your campaign, figure out whose toes you'll be stepping on, know the lay of the land (approach and escape routes), and the locations of nearby hospitals and jails.

## Plan the Occupation

The energy and resources required for a successful direct action will be determined by the people you can mobilize and the amount of state power that will be mounted against you. Assess the needs of the action thoroughly and develop teams to bring together what's required. Invite all affected communities and concerned citizens to participate in the planning. Meet regularly and well in advance. For important decisions, use consensus-style decision-making wherever possible, so that all who will be put at risk by a plan will be part of its development. Decide how forthcoming you can be about your plans. More people will take part if they know what is being planned, but a certain degree of secrecy may help avoid pre-emptive impediments. Some organizations mandate a small trusted group to choose a specific target while planning all other aspects of the action openly.

## Invite Lots of People

Get the word out to other activist groups, sympathetic citizens, the public and the media, through street posters, flyers, volunteers who will call people, e-mail lists, websites, public meetings, press releases and press conferences, radio announcements, etc. Plan a place nearby to rally before-hand and to disperse from safely afterwards. Even after leaving the action, people should stay in groups to avoid being picked off and arrested. Be wary of undercover infiltrators and provocateurs who might engage in unplanned actions, thereby "legitimizing" police repression.

## Taking Over

Meet near your target and move there together. Stop traffic as carefully as possible, then swarm the target area. A mass of bicycles may be helpful. Flow around obstacles, because a moving mass of people is generally harder to stop. Alternately, people may decide to sit down in the road, but they should remain ready to deal with aggressive traffic and police attack. Depending on how much resistance you are likely to meet, you may need more advanced techniques such as tripods, lock-downs or barricades. The general idea is to become as hard to remove as possible. Long, colourful strips of material or lines of wool webbed just above head height, between lamp-posts, street signs and trees, are both visually appealing and discourage police horses from charging.



A scaffold tripod, from <http://www.gn.apc.org/rts>

## Entertainment and Support

Keep energy and spirits up by planning street theatre, games and other activities. Avoid long speeches and boring chants wherever possible. Another option is to bring a sound system and kick up some tunes. Musicians are sometimes appropriate. Support includes everyone not directly participating in the action. This includes cheerleaders, people to supply food, and gophers. Medical supporters should hand out water to prevent dehydration, provide first aid and chemical weapons decontamination in the event of police attack, and help out injured activists because ambulances will not deploy to an area that has been designated "riots." Legal supporters will observe police behaviour, counsel people as to their rights, and support arrested activists. Before the action, organize lawyers to provide pro-bono legal work and distribute their phone numbers to participants.

## Ending the Action

When the action is over, make sure everyone leaves together, and that all people are accounted for. Consider organizing a jail solidarity rally to support any arrested activists, although the presence of an unruly crowd outside a police station can sometimes delay a comrade's release. At very stressful actions, consider some kind of ongoing after-care to deal with post-traumatic stress. Celebrate the victory heartily. Debrief, analyze successes and weaknesses, and plan for the next action.

*J Heynerd is a Toronto activist.*

*Visit <http://www.tao.ca/takeupspace> for more detailed information on planning your own spectacle.*

*Legal disclaimer: this article in no way counsels you to commit an offence. You'll do that of your own accord. This paragraph absolves me and Broken Pencil of any legal claims or criminal charges.*



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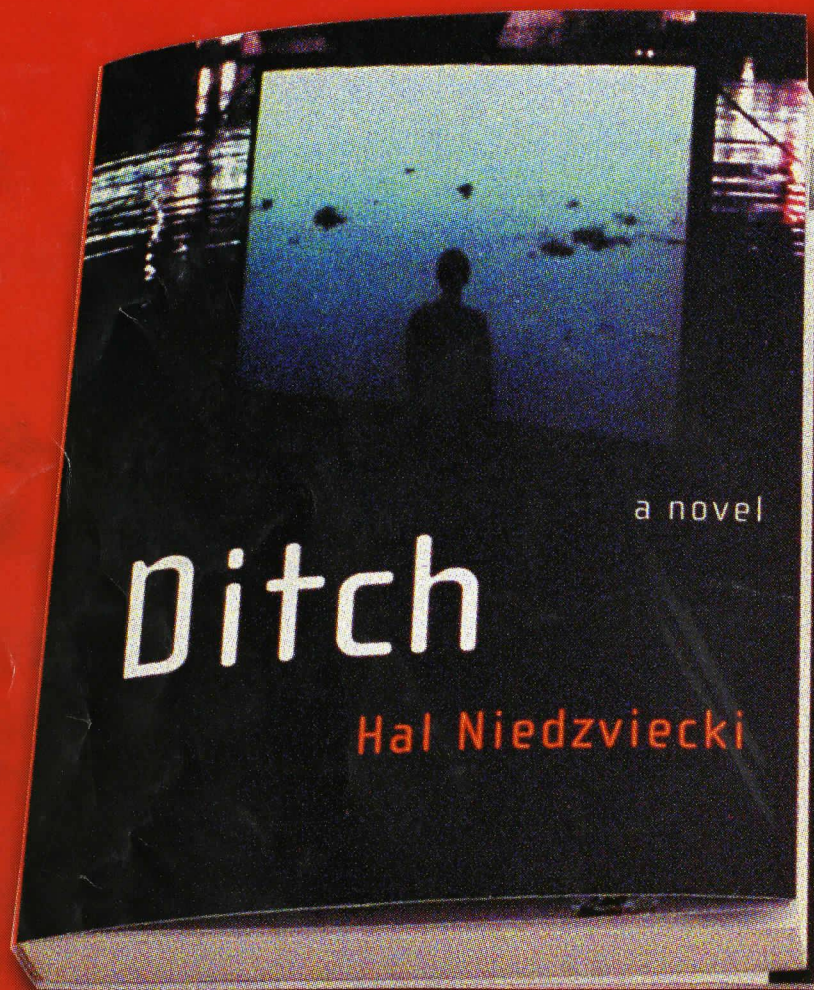
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