

DRAG LOVE TEST! "ARE YOU MY KIND OF GIRL?"

issue 23 fall 1991 \$2.50

performance art magazine

PERFORM

Plus

My Life with the
Thrill Kill Kilt

Joan Jett Blakk

Gurlene & Gurlette

Scout

Michael Palmer

Paris is Burning



WHITEWALLS

A Journal of Language and Art

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

WhiteWalls
P.O. Box 8204
Chicago, IL 60680

8-TRACK MIND

M A G A Z I N E

journal of the analog movement

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

ISSUES #69 AND #70 AVAILABLE FOR \$2.50

POSTPAID. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO
RUSS FORSTER.

8-TM PUBLICATIONS, C/O RUSS FORSTER
13731 JENNY DR.
WARREN, MI 48093



CAFE ARMAGEDDON

2008 OXFORD * AUSTIN * TEXAS * 78704

In The ARTs

In The Arts... a quarterly publication focusing on the contemporary arts/all media is available by mail/\$6 yr. Submissions of works of art and articles are welcome. Send S.A.S.E. for guidelines. For Advertising Rates & other information (413) 274-3838 or POB 556 Housatonic MA 01236.

FRANK MOORE'S

APPRENTICESHIP

ANNOUNCING

THREE OPENINGS

FOR THE MODERN

SHAMANISTIC

APPRENTICESHIP

WITH FRANK MOORE,

THE INTERNATIONALLY

RESPECTED TEACHER,

SHAMAN / PERFORMER,

AND THE AUTHOR OF

CHEROTIC MAGIC

ONLY FOR SERIOUS STUDENTS WHO FEEL THE CALLING

TO GO BEYOND THE NORMAL REALITY OF TABOOS AND

FEARS, TO LEARN THE DISCIPLINE OF CONTROLLED FOLLY,

TO BE MAGICAL WARRIORS OF REALITY-SHAPING PLAY.

"Transformative..." Moore "is thwarting nature in an astonishing manner, and is fusing art, ritual and religion in ways the Eurocentric world has only dim memories of. Espousing a kind of paganism without bite and without aggression, Frank Moore is indeed worth watching."
HIGH PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE

"Moore takes advantage of his disadvantage, becoming an unlikely guide into the pleasures of the body, taking ... (people) where they would probably never go without the example of his vulnerability and trust ... That Moore should be the one urging us to stay connected with our physical selves is both ironic and poetic..."
VILLAGE VOICE

"Frank Moore is the only 'spiritual teacher' I've ever met that I consider completely trustworthy ... he knows as much about practical details of how to work and teach magic as any of the famous occult teachers (such as) Gurdjieff, Crowley, etc."
KYLE GRIFFITH
THE AUTHOR OF war in heaven

CALL OR WRITE

FRANK MOORE

P.O. BOX 11445

BERKELEY, CA 94701

(510) 526-7858 -2445

**Frank Moore's
new book
cherotic magic
is available
for \$15**

**cherotic magic BY FRANK MOORE IS A MAJOR
ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE A POWERFUL SYSTEM
OF MAGIC INTO OUR MODERN WESTERN EVERY-
DAY LIFE, THEREBY EXPLOSIVELY EXPANDING
SUCH CONCEPTS AS SEX, HUMAN RELATION-
SHIPS. THE CLEAR, DOWN-TO-EARTH TEXT
IS AMPLIFIED BY THE NONLINEAR TRANCE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY LABASH.**

**Also available
for \$3 is the
premiere issue of
The Cherotic
Revolutionary,
the magazine
about the edge.**

P-FORM

Published by
Randolph Street Gallery
756 North Milwaukee
Chicago, IL 60622
312-666-7737

Carmela Rago
managing editor

Jaqueline Disler
Michelle Manes
Nancy Martell
Andy Soma
D. Travers Scott
Bob Whittinghill
editorial staff

Wayne Alan Brenner (Austin)
Deborah Hede (San Francisco)
Kestutis Nakas (Albuquerque)
regional editors

Brendan deVallance
Jim Ochsenreiter
Jenifer Carney
design and production
Stefanie Rothman
communications director

P-FORM is distributed nationally by
Fine Print Distributors, Austin, Texas.

P-FORM, published quarterly, is dedicated to the development and understanding of performance art, as well as to building critical dialogue in Chicago. Contributions are welcome. Contact Randolph Street Gallery or send manuscripts including author's name, bio and means of contact. Features should be limited to 2400 words, reviews 500. Typed copy or Microsoft Word disk is encouraged.

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



CONTENTS:

departments

- 6 all kinds of news
- 7 space survey: Chicago Drag Emporiums
- 30 contributors, acknowledgements
- 28 pix!: circus life
- 31 lesterology

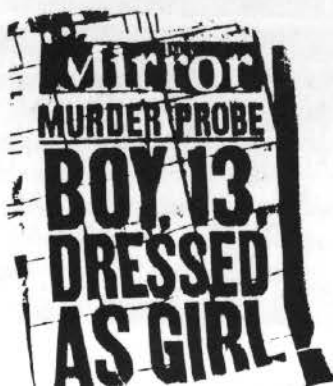
dragged

- 5 SDI, Jane's Addiction, Drag Queens: Jacqui Distler
- 8 Little Annie Adler: Nancy Martell
- 10 Inside Joan Jett Blakk: Terence Smith
- 12 Every Breathing Moment: Michael Palmer
- 14 I'm not a Boy I'm a Dyke: Scout
- 15 My Life with the Thrill Kill Kilt: Lester Brodzik
- 16 Liquid Mayhem (a song of praise): Gurlene Hussey
- 17 Bold, Beautiful and Blond: Gurlette Hussey

special feature

11 Day Without Art reviews

- 18 **Caprichos:** Tobi Johnson
- 19 **Extreme Neutrality:** Jacqui Distler
- 19 **Why Isn't He on MTV?:** SuZi
- 20 **Paris Is Burning:** D. Travers Scott
- 21 **Interview with Miss La Thing:**
Senor Gareth y D. La Winston
- 22 **A Poetic Appreciation of Summer Camp:**
Thax Douglas
- 23 **Stewart Sherman:** Brendan deVallance
- 24 **Secret Secret & The HearTH:** Charles Boone
- 25 **Balt and Switch:** G. I. Jill & le transparent butterfly



LOVE TEST!

- (1) Would you ever call me up for a date?
- (2) Must you be dominated—or are you willing to be an equal with me?
- (3) Would you forgive me if I forgot to hold a door open for you?
- (4) Is your head full of surprises, or do you always do the "expected"?
- (5) Do you think you could be totally devoted to me?

The right wing of this nation usually cites the breakdown or fragmentation of the family, and the failure of alternative familial or communal structures, as the cause of most of society's ills or weird behavior. The fact that since post-World War II our global politics has been based on a policy of mutually assured destruction at the highest levels of power is ignored. So much debate is given to how **Sid** and **Nancy** are socialized but little is given to the framework under which socialization occurs. **Nancy** is nurturing and is given a Strawberry Shortcake doll, **Sid** is aggressive and receives a Nintendo desert war game.

Aleister, a boy character on *You Can't Do That on Television*, is dressed in his sister's dress so that he may learn some manners and propriety. It is a little like white linen for formal dining and a red and white checkered tablecloth for bohemian or casual dining. Putting skirts on the Piano legs. We are window-dressing civilization. Is the popularity of drag performers in current vogue any surprise?

The world view is changing. The break up of the Soviet Union tips many new and different questions. Those of defense, its necessity, and the practical applications of SDI. In a video by *Jane's Addiction* we learn that shop-lifting is more easily carried out when one is in drag. Hence, "I shop I don't mop." Mopping is a slang term for stealing. Concealment and camouflage being major strategies in the development of weapons systems. A man in full battle dress may be wearing stiletto heels and a wig.



The social roles that have been built around transvestism and homosexuality in older societies are dislocated in Modern Industrial Society. In a society which believes that god is dead, it is not necessary that the bad karma of a new-born be removed by a man dressed as a woman dancing and chanting. In other words the traditional spiritual rites performed by cross-dressers in the Hindu religion grew out of the social need to include persons weird or not into the fabric of family life. Western society has chosen to outcast them. Shamans have taken

the forms of animals and cross-dressers in order to understand the working of the principle of anima in nature. Social constructions latent in dress define our attitudes and morals; performance can be a catalyst in exploring the meaning of pre-conceived notions about what is appropriate, how fashion dictates, in the roles that are assigned to us through our clothing.

Dress code is not just the rules for corporate uniforms or the bane of teenagers. Cross-dressers understand

the symbolic nature of the garments by using them and, perhaps, indeed become more polite as **Aleister** has. But the question is not whether dress influences behavior but rather can socialization occur under changing world conditions in which we become more humanitarian giving inclusive social familial roles to our members who may be different?

Jacqueline Disler





ALL KINDS OF NEWS

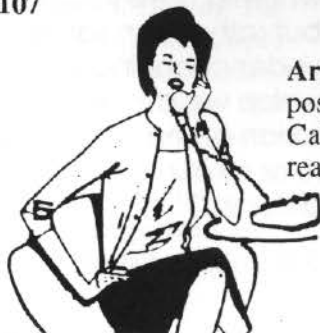


A.I.R. Gallery is hosting *Choice*, a show of solidarity for women's reproductive rights. All artists/writers, all media. The deadline for submissions is November 23. Exhibition dates: December 10, 1991—January 4, 1992. Send SASE for prospectus.

A.I.R. Gallery
63 Crosby Street
New York, NY 10012

Wit and Wisdom: Humor in Art, a show of overtly humorous artwork. The FORUM gallery is looking for work in all media that features elements of satire, parody, irony, etc. The exhibition dates are May 22—June 20, 1992, and will coincide with the *Second Lucille Ball Festival of New Comedy*. Send a maximum of 10 slides (film or video where appropriate), clearly marked with name, title, dimensions, and media, a resume, and related support material with SASE. Deadline is November 15. Contact Michelle Henry for further information.

Wit and Wisdom
The FORUM Gallery
525 Falconer Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 665-9107



Last month the *International Performance Studio* opened the *Arts Management Laboratory* at **Facets Multimedia, Inc.** The highly selective program is designed to give interns "hands on" experience in start-to-finish promotion and production of cultural events. Each intern will be assigned a guest artist and a single objective: to fill the theatre. The *IPS* will provide the intern with a small promotional budget, and a comprehensive promotional manual. For more information contact Cathy Birkenstein, or Kristin Larsen.

International Performance Research Center
1517 W. Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614
(312) 281- 9075

Artist **Frank Moore** announces three openings for a modern shamanistic apprenticeship. This is only for serious students who feel the calling to go beyond the normal reality of taboos and fears, to learn the discipline of controlled folly, to be magical warriors of reality shaping play. Moore is an internationally respected teacher, shaman and performer. Call (415) 526-7858 or write for more information.

Frank Moore
P.O. Box 11445
Berkeley, CA 94701-2445

The Cleveland Performance Art Festival is now accepting proposals from all performance artists. Call Festival Director, Tom Mulready, for more information.
1365 Webb Road
Lakewood, Ohio 44107
(216) 221-6017

Creative Time City Wide Projects of New York is interested in hearing about and sponsoring visual and performing artists' and architects' ideas for its *CityWide* project series. Projects should address current issues relating to communities and community residents, and explore areas that bridge cultures, ideologies, and disciplines. Open submission. Proposals are reviewed every 2 or 3 months. Write or call for a prospectus.

Creative Time
66 W. Broadway
New York, NY 10007
(212) 619- 1955

C.A.G.E. is accepting proposals for the 1992-1993 season. They are particularly interested in new installations, video and sound art, performance art, interdisciplinary projects and solo exhibitions of mid-career artists whose work deserves attention. Deadline is December 15..

Call (513) 381-2537.

Logo-motive, a new magazine of humor, liberation and the best sex one can find in two dimensions, is accepting submissions of photo stories, essays, short fiction, song lyrics, and original art. Explicit, literate, polysexual, controversial, provocative, strange, hot, joyous, or courageous work is welcomed. If it's not dangerous, don't send it. Submit work on Mac disk or double-spaced hard copy.

Logo-motive
Sunah Cherwin
P.O. Box 3101
Berkeley, CA 94703

SPACE SURVEY



The following are some Chicago venues which present drag performance on a regular or "special feature" basis.

Bank Lounge
200 State St.
Calumet City, IL.
708-891-9651
open 7pm daily

Baton Show Lounge
436 N. Clark.
312-244-5269
8pm Tues-Sun.

Vortex
3631 N. Halsted
312-975-6622
9pm daily,

Hosts touring divas such as Lip Syncha.



Bistro Too
5015 N. Clark
312-728-0050
9pm Wed-Sun;
Features in-house drag hostess Memory Lane and sporadically hosts Drag Queen Wrestling.

Cheeks
2730 N. Clark
312-348-3400
7am Mon-Sat, noon Sun.

Edge Room
6403 S. Martin Luther King Dr.
312-752-9086
9pm daily

Normandy
3401 N. Sheffield
312-348-9806
Rumors at press time indicate this classic venue may be closing. But just in case we're wrong, be sure to catch Miss Kitty's Latin Drag Revue: midnight Weds. in Spanish, English on Thurs.

Rusty's Showclub/Lounge
1723 N. Halsted
312-787-4511
7pm Tues-Sat

Club Lower Links
954 W. Newport
312-248-5238
8pm daily
Sporadically hosts visting gender illusionists such as Hapi Phace, non-traditional local drag and performance series oriented around sex and gender.

Berlin
954 W. Belmont
312-348-4975
Amateur drag contest Sun. nights..

AKA
6259 N. Broadway
312-274-6657

Heroes
2347 S. Michigan
326-3201

Lucky Horseshoe
3169 N. Halsted
312-404-3169

Riversedge
3548 N. River Rd.
Franklin Park, Il.
708-678-8862

SOUND SURVEY



BERLIN DRAG RACES

9-22-91: hosted by MEMORY LANE
 ☆*Condoms Are A Girl's Best Friend*, cover by MEMORY LANE
 ☆*You're Gonna Love Me* (theme from *Dream Girls*), Jennifer Holli-day: Performed by IVANYA
 ☆*Love Child*, the Supremes: MAXI SHIELDS
 ☆*Trust in Me* (from *The Jungle Book*), Siouxsie and the Banshees: BRANDY SINCLAIR
 ☆*Chicago, Illinois* (from *Victor, Victoria*), Lesley Ann Warren: LUSCIOUS

9-29-91: hosted by PAULA SINCLAIR
 ☆*I'd Rather Be Blue, I'm the Greatest Star*, Babs Streisand: PAULA SINCLAIR
 ☆*Gypsy Medley: Everything's Coming Up Roses, You'll Never Get*

Away From Me, Small World, cover by ETHEL HERMAN
 ☆*I'm Changing*, Stephanie Mills: Lip synch by BERNEICE BLUE
 ☆*Love Child*, the Supremes: MAXI SHIELDS

10-06-91: hosted by GINA TAYE
 ☆*Respect*, Adeva: GINA TAYE
 ☆*Rhythm Nation*, Janet Jackson: NAOMI CAMPBELL
 ☆*Slave to the Rhythm*, Grace Jones: done by A ZSA
 ☆*I Don't Wanna Change the World*, Phyllis Hyman: MYSTERE
 ☆*No No Nannette Medley: Tea for Two, No No Nannette*, cover by ETHEL HERMAN
 ☆*Eternal Flame*, The Bangles: INGRID
 ☆*I Don't Wanna Cry*, Mariah Carey: CAPRICE VALENTINE
 ☆*Makin' Happy*, Crystal Waters: JUICY BUTT



PORTRAIT OF A PERFORMANCE ARTIST

You can't mix performance art and theatre—it's a done thing, as Portrait of a Shiksa demonstrates

So often when I try to remember, assemble my thoughts, put my emotions into language, the image in my mind is a stage set like the Tonight Show. A full frontal shot of a couch on a platform, "So what did you think . . . What happened then?" The host, the questioner, the House of Large Sizes. (I'm slouching my knees aren't together) every thought, twitch is raw, exposed. How many idle moments of my life have been pre-occupied with what I would wear—Sexy or dignified? Will my figure and clothing critique the TV status quo, the dominant reality? Will some little girl somewhere experience a revelation, learn something about herself—when she sees I'm not wearing high-heeled pumps, (but I am wearing my platform Minnie Mouse shoes) when I refuse to enter into the sexist banter? Does some little

girl somewhere lie in her bed at night—her mind blown wide open because she knows she exists, she is sentient, autonomous?



my favorite thrift ensembles. sleeveless white on yellow polka dot nylon dress, slightly princess seamed, skirt, just above the knee length. Worn with a gold chain belt, roman coin insets. White vinyl basket work sandals. Acrylic "ice cube" necklace, and a smoky transparent clutch purse with a sparkle handle that has black lace floating in the plastic. Gray and wine cowboy shirt with multi colored chenille lariat and flow-ers over the yoke and cuffs. 7 snaps on the cuffs. Black and white cotton print skirt, aztec motif in zig-zag stripes, and rows of of iridescent clear sequins. Pointy pink sparkle patent leather T-strap flats.

LITTLE ANNIE

Drag Queen—woman by any other name. The first TV I saw, shared a bath-room with, clung ferociously to all the trappings I had so recently rejected. The cultural boundaries I worked so hard to cross, she claimed as her own. The most cliched, pop culture stereotype was the desired effect. Later I made the connection that drag isn't about women, it is about the dominant culture's images of women. It is about symbology, imagery, and the place those symbols occupy. It is a mapping of the feminine according to male desire. Money changes everything. *Male privilege—I went with the flow—I'm not gonna go against the flow. Straight women come on to me as a potential male, I understand how men have the problem of being the good catch all the time. Whether you have a job or not, you have the possibility of having property, owning everything.* The direct approach to the libido and its subsequent effect on the pocketbook, have named, located, shaped, placed, and painted women and DragQueens. Now there are Queens, queers, artists, and feminists who are challenging the culture's construction of sexuality and identity, an act as effortless and as radical as putting on lipstick.



Dear Karen:

I am a girl who will be in the 7th grade next year and I want my ears pierced, but my mother says that she's afraid that I will get an infection. She has hers done and she says if you say so, I can get them done, otherwise I have to wait until 8th grade and that seems like a long time. Besides they're my ears. Karen, be reasonable (for my side). I'm a fan of yours and always watch "Room 222."

Can't Wait!

Well, I'm here to say it can't be done. Evans's

efforts notwithstanding, performance art and theatre can't be brought together, for two reasons: because it's already happened and because performance art never really existed in the first place.

Dear Can't Wait:

I think you should have your ears pierced. I think pierced ears are fantastic and there are so many great looking earrings now. I don't think you'll get an infection nowadays because doctors do a very sterile job of it and it doesn't hurt.

It was kind of touching to see all those conservatory-trained painters and sculptors, with no stage sense whatever, getting up in front of a crowd to make art of themselves.

I dreamed I was Anthony Adler, *Oh yes—how do you get erect Les? Constant erection, girls—24 hours.* he had a dream.

It was like a cable porn loop, the 2 women channel. *So you see Les kept his female genitals and just added a penis.*

Annie and Les were making out on a bed in garters, *Its so close to my clitoris which is enlarged to the size of my thumb.* stockings—all the trappings. *I understand how guys have to get relief.* I was in the room with them, but they couldn't see me. I was a woman, *My parents—they sorta don't talk to me.* wearing a hospital gown, I was very uncomfortable because I didn't know how to walk in high heels, *You look 10 years younger when you change to a male. Why? Because you change into a boy before you change into a man. Vice versa? I have no idea, I don't even know why someone would change into a female.* but my overwhelming feeling was one of relief that I couldn't be seen. I watched. *Let's take a closer look at Les Nichols,* I felt jealous. *let's take a look under those testicles, see what we have, pull this out. What have we got here—Ahhhh—a large and succulent clitoris—Les calls it his micro-phallus.*

I dreamed I was Anthony Adler, *Look at those macho tattoos. What do we have under the shirt—ah good!—we see first pierced nipples.* he had a dream.

It was like a cable porn loop, the 2 women channel. *No my ovaries are gone, but there are 10 ways to have a baby. I prefer women, but I'm flexible.*

I'm in a hospital bed. My IV's come out. The monitors are screaming, "Nurse, nurse, Nurse Annie." My head throbs. She turns, "Why should I be interested in you? Les has everything I need." *But he still has his large succulent nipples, the kind made for feeding babies.* Les turns his head, an Elvis sneer on his lips. Annie pulls down his panties, I see an erect penis *Go ahead and show your cock, as you can see, it is quite large and has a head on it and it hangs a little bit to the left. You can see testicles here* and a moist vagina. *And under there, a vagina opening. So you see Les kept his female genitals and just added a penis.* I'm trying to scream. I can't, the effort wakes me up.



ADLER

by Nancy Martell

See into, she is into women now. Woman, sexual healing force, power, wholeness, wellness, nursing babe. Switched on, come energy, glow, that special glow, the plow that cuts the furrows, Annie returns—Come again?



Here's a joke—A little old lady man phones the police, outraged over "obscenity and indecent exposure." When they arrive she leads them into her seemingly empty backyard. The police are confused, "There's nothing here," they say. "It's right over there," she points, "Climb up on that box by the fence and you can see right into my neighbor's yard. There ought to be a law."

FALL 1991 9

So you can't bring performance art and theatre together. The effort's inherently passé.

Inside Joan Jett Blakk

by Terence Smith

Joan Jett Blakk debuted in Chicago in May of 1990 as part of **Gurlene and Gurlene's Rodeo Against AIDS**. Since then, **Joan** has performed in numerous revues all over Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison, hosted her own show and acted in performance art productions. Most attention, however, has been focused on her recent political activities, running first for Chicago mayor, and now U.S. President as the candidate of Chicago's **Queer Nation** activist group. Along with massive coverage in the gay/lesbian press, Joan has been the subject of a video documentary and been written up in the **Chicago Tribune** and **SunTimes**.

For the last month or so, one of the questions on everyone's lips is "Have you seen **Paris is Burning**?" Yeah, well, I did see it; and while it's a very sad movie, it did bring some wonderful insight as to what this **Joan Jett Blakk** thing means to and does for me.

First of all, the best thing about **Joan** is that I can step in to and out of her at any time. Unlike most of the drag queens in **Paris is Burning**, and those who work at female impersonation revues like **The Baton**, I do not live this character. She is definitely an extension of my personality, but I am not **Joan** 24 hours a day. She does, however, hover just below the surface like some glamorous jelly-fish. I find myself out shopping or looking through fashion magazines (yes, I am a fashion groupie) and knowing, right away, that **Joan** would love this or hate that. I find myself speaking of her as if she's a very close friend.

She's also the best protection against stage fright I've ever had. I mean, I'm no **Barbra Streisand**, I don't throw up for hours before I have to go on stage or anything because, honey, I'm wearing my

armour. Dressing in drag, I can be as invulnerable as if wearing a metal suit. No one can 'harm' me when I'm in drag because part of me is hidden beneath a **Maybelline** shell.

This brings to mind another thing. I've always been thoroughly fascinated with the idea of lip-synching. I remember, as a kid, watching shows like **Hulabaloo** or **Shindig** and they would have musical guests. I'd think, "Hmmm, there's no band in sight, but there they are singing that hit song I love and it sounds just like the record. However do they do that?" Even on **American Bandstand**, no one sang live! No one in any musical movie or musical variety show sang live! Now, I've never been a very good actor, but I'm a wonderful mimic, and, when I discovered I could sing a song, any song, without having to have the sound come out of my mouth, I was (and still

am) thrilled. In order to do it right, you must learn every note, every word, every hem and haws in that song. Unless, of course, you are one of the **Hussey Gurls** or **Hapi-Phoxa**. They have mastered the blah-blah-blah technique of lip-synching.

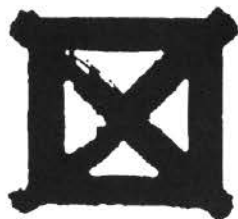
Now, I'm lucky in another respect as well. By taking drag out of the clubs and into the political arena, I have a chance to add another dimension to an ancient and respected art form. Drag as politics forces those not blessed with an understanding of gender-fuck to deal with the issues of sexual roles and role-playing. We, the gender-free, are leading the way for millions of homo and a couple of hetero sapiens to wonder: What is a man? What makes a woman? Can a man be a woman and still be a man? Can a woman be more manly than the manliest man? I say

yes, yes and yes! There are no lines anymore; we have stomped on them all.

Finally, I ain't gonna lie, I have this vision of myself as the dark-skinned **Divine**, and I'm fortunate enough to be in a place in my life where I can create that vision. Like I always say, I hope that every man who ever wore a dress, and every woman who ever wore a moustache had, is having, will have half as much fun as I do.

photo by LEE KAY





DAY WITHOUT ART November 29 to December 1
a national day of action and mourning in response to the AIDS crisis

You know, the most difficult time I had in writing this piece was in figuring out how to get across what it's like to appreciate every breathing moment and keep it to a minimum of words. Even as my heart raced all day with energy and excitement, I had to really sit and come together with my thoughts.

There are people out there who have taken an opportunity to expose their lives in the most dishonorable, disrespectful and low-life ways. It's rare, absolutely in this case, that you read or hear about someone who's positive, productive, ambitious, extremely happy, and yes, even respected in one's daily living AND would not change what they've done to feel this good in the thought it takes to blink an eye.

To be alive, and to think that for one moment had I listened to ANYONE, I would be dead right this moment, is, in itself, a miracle.

I can tell you that the power I have in knowing that I DIDN'T listen leaves me shaking with happiness sometimes.

NOT FRIENDS, NOT FAMILY, NOT OLD LOVERS OR PRESENT ONES, NOT EVEN DOCTORS.

I can tell you that thinking, at my young age, there was no hope for having my body reconstructed to match my male mental moves left me at a total loss of the will to live. I wanted to die at every breathing moment. Being born physically wrong is a mental torture. I WAS BORN WITH A COMPLETE FEMALE BODY. MY TERM IS BEING BORN PHYSICALLY DISABLED OR HANDICAPPED, AS IF WITHOUT A HAND OR FOOT.

OK. So I was born without a penis. That doesn't make me any less of a man. I would dare someone to approach a crippled war vet who's been shot and paralyzed from the waist down and tell him that because his penis couldn't function, he wasn't 100% a thinking and feeling man. Or a boy born with an infection that leaves him disabled from the waist down. HE IS A MALE, no matter what.

Compare the pain of this life to a leg cramp attacking you in the dead of sleep—only the pain and agony go on from the time you awake until you miserably lie down to sleep. The pain intensifies every morning as you open your eyes and touch yourself slowly, crying because you didn't change overnight.

"Just let me die. I don't want to live like this anymore. Please, God, can't you see I'm all wrong?"

When I was younger, I would look in the mirror from the waist up on any 'drag-queen night' and, in complete numbness, twist and pull at the agony that hung from my body. Not until I was 20 did I realize that there could be peace only in death, unless I TRIED to change this body.

If there were drugs to be taken, I took them. They took away the pain of my life. If I was going to be miserable, I might as well get some sadistic pleasure out of it.

I tried to go the way of the system, but found its formula for my happiness and success to be a complete joke.

The first step was to be evaluated by a psychiatrist. During this \$150 evaluation I learned that I would have to go under a new name and prove myself physically

for 1 year WITHOUT medication. Then, I would have to go back to the psychiatrist, be re-evaluated. THEN, a panel of doctors would vote on whether THEY thought I deserved medical attention.

WAIT! WAIT! WAIT a damned minute. VOTE? ON WHAT I NEED IN ORDER TO LIVE? Death was the only answer. I became friends with a well-known female impersonator who wouldn't even help me with information about a doctor who might see me. She would tell me to forget about doing that—that I would be ruining my life with that procedure. WHAT LIFE? WHAT WAS THERE TO RUIN? MY BODY WAS RUINED FROM BIRTH. With her trying to talk me out of my life, I truly believed there was no hope for me.

Then, one day, an obvious male-to-female crossdresser I worked with came out of the blue with this comment. "Honey, I'm gonna tell ya, you need help. You look too much like a boy. Act like a boy. Here." Slipping me a piece of paper, "Here's the address and phone number of my doctor. Make an appointment and mention my name. I'm sure he'll help you." I heard harps. I saw birds with wings and the word PEACE stretched across them in big bold letters. I'm telling you that I was a sight to gag on, I was so happy.

My first visit was difficult because the doctor actually sat back in his chair and laughed in my face. "Why do you want to do this? HUH? You're beautiful! You can stay a lesbian. There's nothing wrong with that. No, I don't think that would make your life better. There are sometimes damaging side-effects. People may not accept you."

"Please, doctor, help me. Please. You don't understand. I NEED help. THIS IS FOR ME. MY LIFE. I don't care if anyone EVER accepts me in a relationship. It doesn't matter. I'M A WALKING LIVING HELL."

It took him about an hour to realize that I was neither joking about death, nor having a life with his help. Every week, he still shook his head in disbelief at my happiness.

Years later, I finally found a doctor who was willing to surgically remove my excess chest. I had been working as an auto mechanic for 4 years—working with 13 other guys, wearing a gruelling brace to flatten me down AND a tee-shirt under my uniform to conceal the brace, this for 13 to 16 hours a day in the heat of Texas temperatures.

Do you believe he still made me wait a month before he would surgically correct my physical torture? Even as I was on the operating table, before I went under, he looked at me and said, "Now son, you can change your mind right now if you want." I just looked up at him and said, "Let's do it."

When I woke up in recovery, I acted as I had as a child. I touched my chest ever so slowly, but this time with tears in my eyes. I could feel my agony was over. "They" were gone. Finally I had the chest of my dreams—flat. Body and brain were now one.

Tell me I'm not a happy-to-be-alive individual. I'm so "me" that people have actually had to see my scars to believe me.

Thank you for letting me tell my story and for trying to explain that if you really, really want something, no matter what, if it will give you 100% satisfaction without causing harm or damage to someone else, listen to no-one and go for it.

Michael Palmer.

EVERY BREATHING MOMENT



P E A C E

SCOUT

Women, my sisters. I see women walking down the street in skirts and high heels, dress slacks and a pair of comfortable pumps, designer sweat suits and pink-topped Reeboks. Somehow, this is a source of constant irritation to me.

When I see these women walking down the street I feel as if I could be watching them in a zoo for all they seem like women. Their garish makeup and wild clothes makes them look like some exotic species from another planet. Don't they understand that boys never have to wear makeup to look better? Don't they understand that shaving your legs makes you look prepubescent forever? Don't they understand that the sturdiest pair of flats will never match the power of my combat boots?

I was at the office the other day; one of my co-workers said I looked like a boy, then another one said I wanted to be a boy. This confuses me. I don't want to be a boy. I know I must look like one; people laugh at me almost every time I try and go into the Ladies bathroom. But it doesn't have anything to do with boys. I know I don't want to look like a girl. I'd hate to have every little turn of my clothes, my speech, my actions to be carefully handcrafted to be less competent, less assured, less powerful than any boy's.

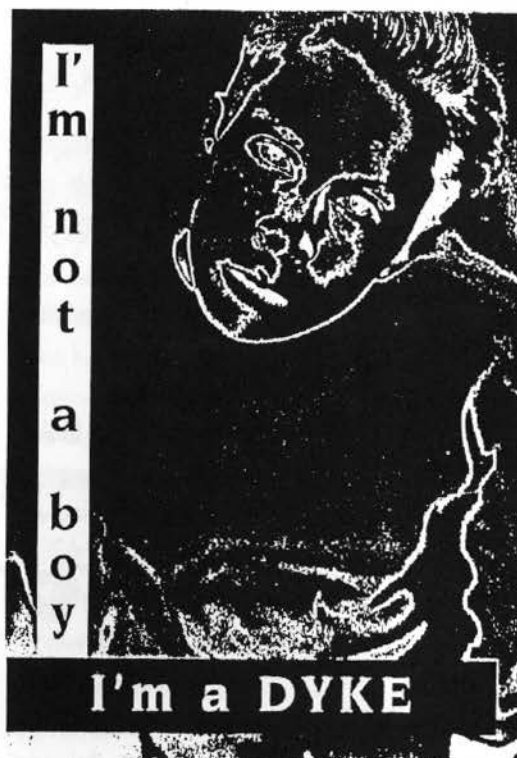
Last Tuesday I was at a party. Jenny and Maggie and Zoo were talking about drag queens. Many dykes don't like drag queens, they think they make fun of women. But sometimes it seems to me that drag queens see women the way I do. And everyone's always laughing at them.

I just keep thinking that my view of the world is right and everybody else is just a little off-base. I know one day I'm going to turn some corner and, all of a sudden, every woman I see will look kind of like me; every media image I see will be one that I can relate to. And then I'll know that I was right all along and that everyone else was a little bit confused.

But for now I'm the one that's confused. Who wants to be a boy? And I just don't understand it. In my world everybody looks like boys but no one wants to be a boy, not even the men.

Scout Weschler

This text is from a performance first presented as part of Bait and Switch, and later in *Gurlene and Gurllette's Summer Camp*, both at Club Lower Links in Chicago.



Graphic courtesy the Women's Caucus of Act-Up Chicago.



My Life With the Thrill Kill Kilt

by Lester Brodzik

The inversion, transversion, conversion of thought linked to inner thoughts, wishes, fantasies, sexually prompting ideas and outward environment, disappointments, escapism and longings in relation to, also, tactile feeling. A myriad of experiences that is some days pleasant, but often emotionally and otherwise painful and lacking fulfillment when affecting relationships which lack understanding of one's particular dilemma or enigma in sexual acts and/or expression, when one takes on attributes within the so-called realm of the opposite sex. If you include identifying as an artist and rocker, life becomes more complex and confusing than it usually is for your basic average transvestite.

Yes, being dressed-up, having a woman-being form of mood, is a type of performance whether seen by others or not. The theme of this issue is 'drag'. Sometimes the term 'drag' indicates homosexuality and it is argued that 'cross-dresser' is the correct term for a heterosexual person who dresses as the opposite sex, so I've read. I'm not going to presuppose that I understand myself, but the only way for me to respond to such a theme is to chronicle some episodes of my life that may stick out; or, perhaps give some general opinion, thoughts of cross-dressing, some experience while going in and out of the mode of recurring depression.

Some time between the ages of 3 and 4, my parents are walking me down the alley behind Wood St., so that I could stay at my Grandmother's (Busha) overnight. With me was my entourage of stuffed animals, "Tiger" and "Tootsie" the teddy bear, even "Crusader" the rabbit. My Grandmother had a doll in her dining room which was the same size as I was. It was adorned with a



white, cotton, embroidered bonnet. When there was no one around, I took the bonnet off and tried it on. This is my first recollection of trying on an article of female clothing.

There were thoughts of female customs of the eighteenth century while under the Polana Puchina on Saturday mornings, before getting up to watch television. It seems that it wasn't until age 12, while away at a summer cottage, that, after swimming, I wrapped a towel around me like a skirt or dress and put on some lipstick. It was in my teens that I actually started to buy articles of women's clothing, such as panties. Later, by the Mid-Seventies, I would experiment with full outfits. Once, a girlfriend brought one of her dresses that would fit me along with her make-up. I had long hair and we went to a hotel. While dressed, she undressed me and made love to me.

Sometime, at about age 24, I was living in a basement flat. I contemplated a sex change after dating a beautiful Catholic girl who dumped me because I would not promise to stop taking LSD and wearing panty-hose.

I experienced various women in the male mode also, and eventually married—but at a late age, 31. I went through a period of insisting that we make love only when I was 'dressed', experiencing the being of more totality. Near the end of my

marriage, I attended the dance halls often in punx female attire. I met a cute young girl...The punk to hardcore life with The Thrill Kill Kilt took my life to a turn.

Now, some dudes on the scene get jealous, telling women I date that I desire boys. This is enough to threaten the relationship, which is sad because up until and including the present, I have remained heterosexual. I haven't had a relationship for at least three years. I get crushes, spend time with women I am attracted to, but they do not seem to desire me so. Sometimes, I feel they are quite foolish. Often, I remain a friend, for female companionship and other social attributes.

The process and up-keep of dressing is time-consuming and expensive, considering irrational compulsion to buy those things. The time it takes and all the details required makes the process a ritual rather than a full life-style, like living as a woman full-time.

Dressing can be a substitute for loneliness. Yet, the disappointments in relationships seem to lead me to dressing less. It's only within a strong relationship, which is open to me being in that mode, that I feel more secure and willing to dress more of the time, when I am not at my 9-to-5.

It is simply amazing how people, otherwise considered liberal or avant-garde, are in the dark about cross-dressing, and can not accept it. I've read that some heterosexual transvestites become homosexual, out of desperation due to a lack of relationships. I had a friend tell me cross-dressers are "in." But it appears that each individual person is different. When I used to go to TV club meetings, I couldn't relate to

continued on page 30

Liquid Mayhem

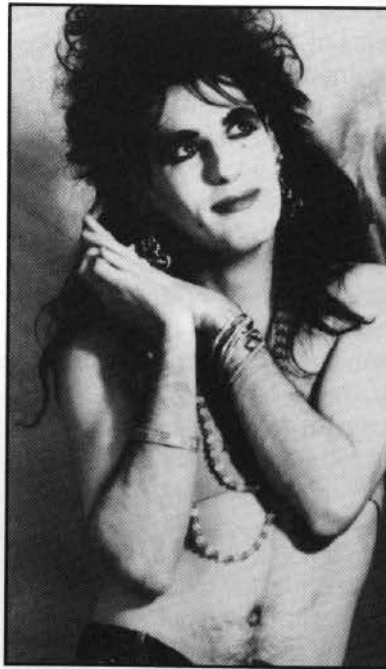
(a song of praise)

by Gurlene Hussey

♥ **It** all started a little over two years ago. Gurlette and I were here in Chicago, hanging out in this seedy joint—Rainbo Club by name. I elbowed Gurlette, now drooling in her aperitif, and directed her attention to the rather striking man eyeballing us from the bar. Gurlette slurred, "Cheap Trade." I thought, could smell more—our meal ticket to fame. Eyelashes fluttered "Hello" as he schmoozed his way into our booth. He (a cross between Klaus Nomi and a Baron von Gloedden postcard boy) introduced himself: Lawrence Steger—performer and impresario. He could work magic he said, and before long (after a late night contract negotiation between Larry, Gurlette and some cab driver) the Chicago stage was ours.

♥ **How** did this Husseyfire madness come about? Humbly I declare that more than our verve, our inflated belief in our ability and our own modicum of talent influenced this meteoric rise. Startling I know! I must first praise those who have created their own artistic, critical and curatorial vision on the Love that had Dare not Speak (Till Now). Flash Back. He's brilliantly sinister in Isherwood's Berlin lowlife drag: Larry. She's painted blue, measured and full of vinegar: Iris Moore. He's cold and erotic in that way that short bald men can

be: Hudson. Both leather clad whip wielding Divas – shifting the butch/femme: Beth Tanner and K.B. Daughtry. Erotic and playful words spiced with courage: Vernita Gray and Donna Rose. Neurotic stroking of the sexual nerve: Jeff Abell. Distinctly unique and blessedly Queer, they form my constellation! I must further praise them for having the where-for-all to accept a missing ingredient to this homophillic performance soup—the radiant Gurlene and Gurlette Hussey.



♥ **The** effect is Liquid Mayhem: hairy, horny, tattooed, shameless, saucy, mischievous. Our drag is not meant to titillate. Nor does it remove looking at what is a man or woman by biasing passing impersonation. Our drag hopes to laugh and heal—offer advice—counsel one's sex life—celebrate the no-difference between the sexes. Dragging as clowning is, well, nothing new. I recite a long litany of Foremothers: Jose Serria, The Cockettes, the Angels of Light, This Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Ladies Against Women, Ethyl Eichelberger, Divine. Their spirit reached our tender ears as faint hums and murmurs back in Altoona High and screamed out our panties and through our

Peek-a-boo-black-lace-Emma-Peel-eat-me body stockings – the very same outfit that inspired one fan and former hole to remark that it made my penis look like a squirrel caught between a door and a screen door. Yes, we too are not immune to interpretation. Our own dear boy toy Travers called us "Paragons of the Contrary", while Jennifer Fink, in her bouquet of lies, wrote that Gurlette & I were the "Performance of Rage...here again clothed in femme." The Goddess Iris once quipped: "The Husseys neither need nor deserve any introduction." What more could I say about us that hasn't already been rumored.

♥ **But** babies to speak from my heart is all I wish—and my heart feels that being a solitary drag queen would be the unnerving of the century. My Visionary method is to see the Drag Queen in Belonging. Many Drags become strong—a force with which to reckon—Killer Queens. My joy has been communing with my sisters in gender struggle: Joan Jett Blakk, Fraulein, Marci Dunkin', Blossom, Viva, Fritz and Wayne Neutron. My sustenance is seeing myself through other eyes as well, reflecting back confused and liquid.

GURLETTE HUSSY, BOLD, BEAUTIFUL AND BLOND

"What the world needs now is love sweet love, it's the only thing that there's just too little of"

These words have always moved me and been a motto through out my life. As a young drag queen, I was moved easily, with only a suitcase of clothes I could move and be out of an apartment in no time. But now I am a drag queen of age, and I say that proudly, because a good drag queen will age like a good cheese, the older it gets the stronger it gets. And like a good aged cheese, it is only appreciated by those who know cheese and have a palette to love only the finer things in life.

At this point, I can proudly say that I am a "good piece of aged cheese". Camp and Drag have long been a desire, both sacred and profane, in my life. Being a natural blond all my life it was hard to get people to see my true passion for deeper things in life. To understand that going past the truly beautiful exterior there is an equally beautiful interior.

"If you could read my mind now, what a tale my thoughts could tell....."

Yes, If you could read my thoughts, but isn't that kind of what your doing now....anyway....



To be Gurlette Hussy is a very important thing! For me its the past remembered, But not to be explored like some history book or to make some intellectual statements to justify what I do, but to carry on the art of camp and not needing to justify it!



GURLETTE'S DRAGSTORY

Let me tell you of the story, about the great drag queens,

they come in different sizes, some plump, and some so lean.

I know not how long ago the dress they were donned

I haven't got the info, you know that I am blond

But here is one tale I was told, to me when I was young

of those beauty queens of yore, whose song that goes unsung

There was no glamor of the stage, no lights or music blare'n

but just to fool the ones on the street, with the dress that you are wear'n

The men would play to please themselves having fun was where its at

drag fever would hit and off they go, even to the laundermat

And then one day in a little bar some one must have been thinking

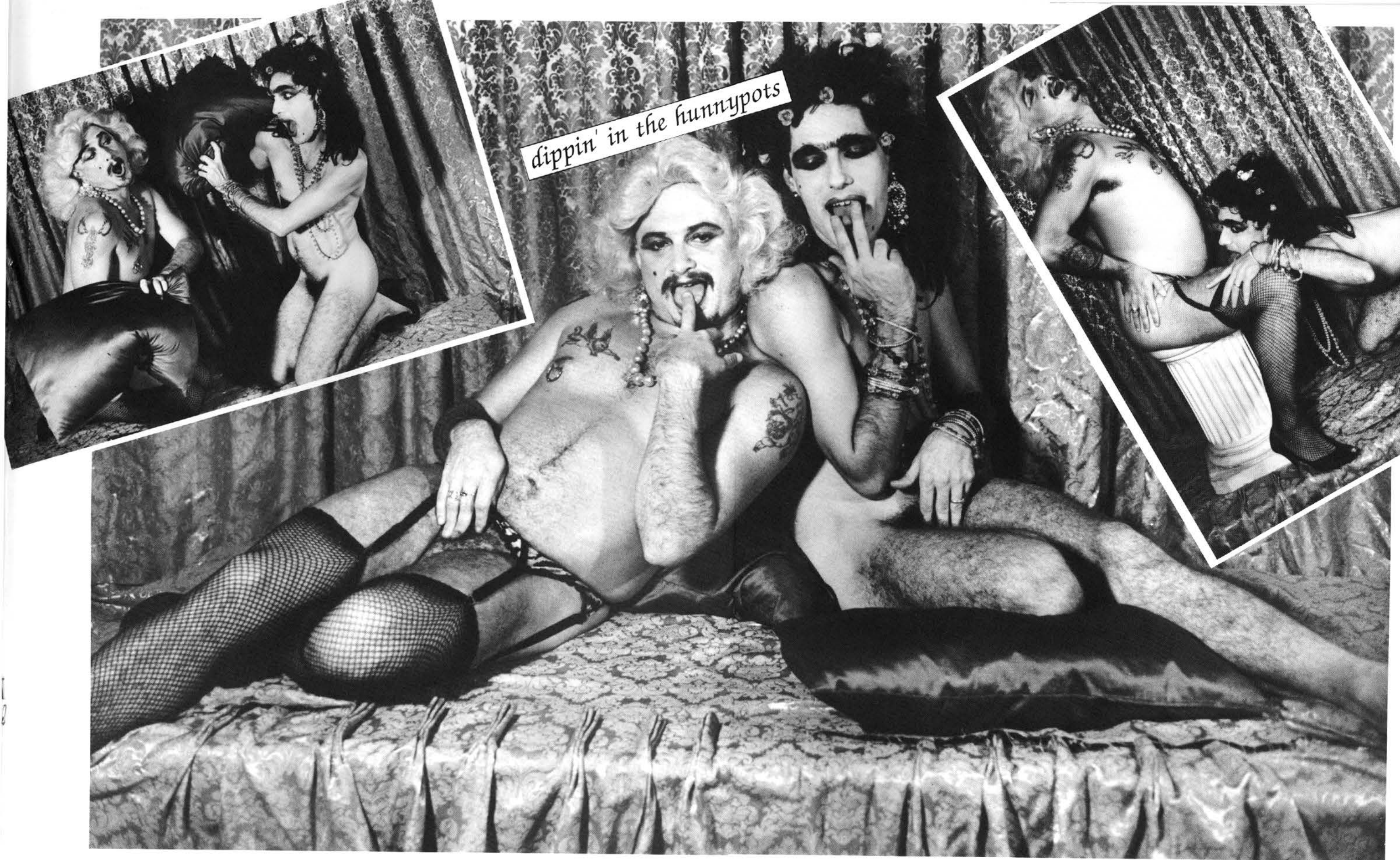
to have some men in dress entertain while everyone is drinking

The concept caught on it grew like mad, it flew from bar to bar

the news it spread, the people they came, they came from near and far

And to this day drag she lives, the thought just makes me wet

thus concludes the history poem signing off, is your truly, Gurlette



dippin' in the hunnypots

Gurlene & Gurlette Huss(e)y

*Momma Hussey always said you can catch more flies
with hunny than you can with vinegar*

Reviews

CAPRICHOS

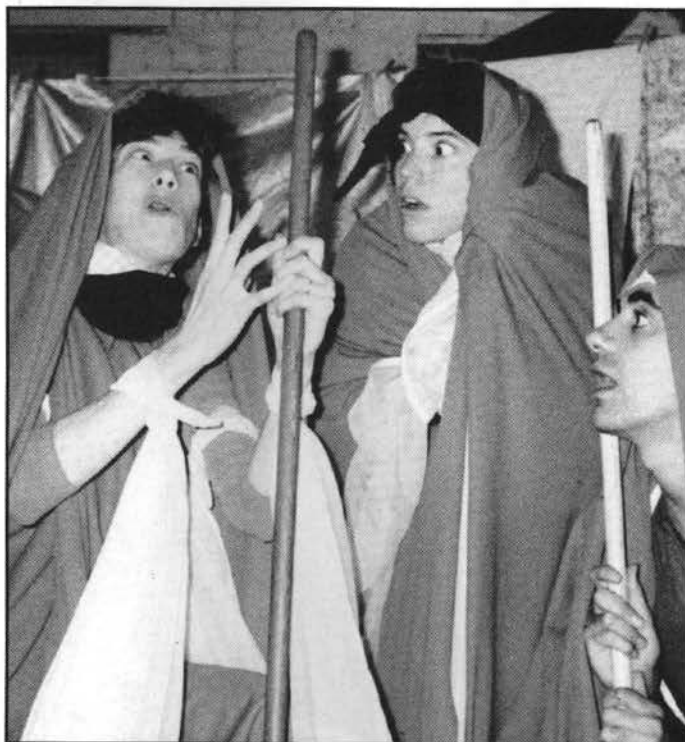
Directed by Sigfrido Aguilar

Mexican Fine Arts Museum
1901 W. Barry, 2nd Fl.
Chicago, IL

May 24th & 25th, 1991.

When most of us consider mime, a vision springs into our mind's eye with nimble alacrity. This vision is of a mute mover, complete with white-face make-up and a black leotard, standing on a street corner satirizing passers-by. Doubtless for Sigfrido Aguilar mime encompasses much more than this limited field of reference. *Caprichos*, as Aguilar described in the performance's program, was conceived as "an original mime theater piece inspired by the work of Francisco Goya," and was developed in conjunction with the *Partners in Mime, Inc. Ensemble* during his residency at the **Mexican Museum of Fine Arts**.

Unlike traditional mime, these performers employed sound to augment their actions using both taped music and voice, which formed a strange mixture of chirps, whines, giggles and growls and whose emotional meanings seemed universally understood. Similarly, instead of creating objects out of thin air, the performers made use of various articles of clothing and fabric, hung within easy reach on a clothesline behind them. This fabric, with surprising economy, served as both costume and prop. In one instance, a robe became a scale in which liberty weighed the heads of two performers; in another, it became a cocoon that



Teigh McDonough, Karen Hoyer and George Fuller in *CAPRICHOS*. Photo courtesy *Partners in Mime, Inc.*

wrapped around the limbless body of a rolling imp.

This fabric, along with pantomimed gesture, also served to emulate the positions of characters pictured in Francisco Goya's *Caprichos* print series (1799), in effect transforming the two-dimensional into four dimensions. Yet this is where the similarity ends. Although *Caprichos*, the performance, did play with the notions of irrationality and chaos explored by Goya, the psychological and ideological complexity of *Caprichos*, the series, was somehow lost in translation.

Goya's prints, of which *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters* is probably best known, couple humor with a dark sense of foreboding and provide a biting commentary on the lives of his contemporaries. In con-

trast, the performance provided only vague concepts of human struggle, barely scratching the surface of Goya's intricate world. While Goya's prints juxtapose caprice with avarice, the performance maintained a tone of joviality throughout and offered only a shallow caricature of the human condition.

If Aguilar was indeed inspired by Goya's prints (which seems evident since xeroxed copies of the series were hung outside the theater), it seems that his inspiration sprang from the formal, that is, how they looked, rather than the conceptual, or what they said.

Caprichos will be performed again at the **Blue Rider Theater** on November 10th.

Tobi Johnson

EXTREME NEUTRALITY

Katherine Chronis

Lower Links
Chicago, Illinois
August 23, 1991

Unlike the one-note performances of artists like Karen Finley and Lydia Lunch, Katherine Chronis is a versatile fresh performer with the star quality of a young Patti Smith.

During an evening at Lower Links Katherine performed four vignettes: *T.V. Traxx* by Joe Larocca; *Culinary Bitch*, *Ode to Bobby* and *Fragment* written by Chronis herself. *T.V. Traxx* is a surrealistic eight-track play-back of all the nightmarish and bizarre television news and programming fare that bores us to tears and yet appeals to the imp of the perverse in the American mind. Chronis delivers this litany while seated with a remote control, collapsing into different positions in the chair, to which she seems to be chained, a captive of the video bondage. The titles and situations described in this piece are as outrageous as four hours of *A Current Affair*.

Culinary Bitch is a satirical monologue of the tortured artist stuck in a dead

end job as restaurant manager trying to create great literature while directing an off-stage underling in the intricacies of being a waiter. Dirty underwear and abusive relationships are the substance of the quasi-writing being spewed out by this tragic figure, however, recognizable as one of your artistic friends or enemies. Chronis is marvelously understated and witty.

Ode to Bobby pitches Chronis into her most industrious persona, that of a star-struck obsessive compulsive, entertaining an imaginary correspondence with Robert DeNiro. The tough sensitive girl Hamlet obsesses about her analyst and the fact that DeNiro isn't responding.

Fragment, the most straight forward and poignant of all the pieces, strips away the comedy to reveal a truly delicate sensibility. The piece encompasses the fear and alienation of modern society. People are depicted as rhinos with hides as thick as their animal counterparts. Colors are alternately flashy and garish seeking the fecund warmth of black, the security of pessimism

over the harsher happiness that is short-lived and unstable. Chronis delivers this in a subdued and objective sadness delineating all the ennui and disappointment of a character in very real turmoil and contradiction. She is superb.

Jacqui Disler

WHY ISN'T HE ON MTV?

Lee Groban at Peacefest

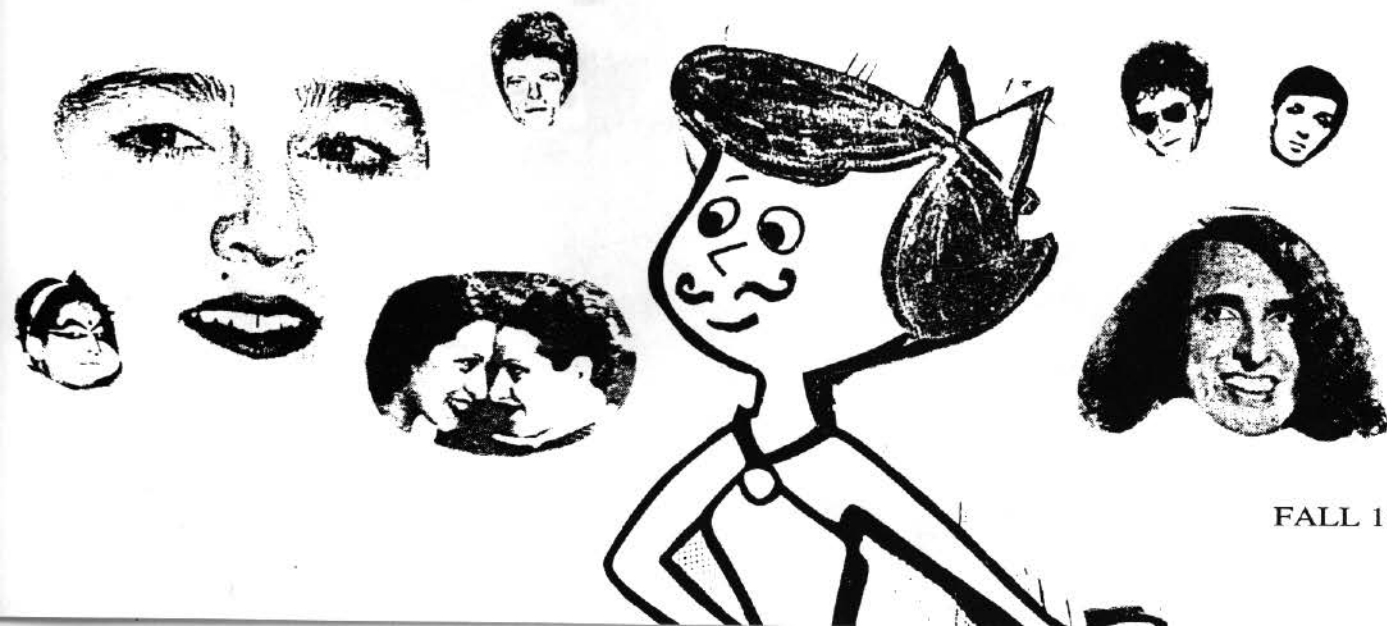
Chicago, Illinois
July 21, 1991

Lee Groban has been a pillar of Chicago poetry for at least ten years. It was about that long ago that Frank Garvey filmed Lee loping through the banking district reciting the exquisite, infamous "it's a drag." So being witness to another Lee Groban performance, albeit as cover for the equipment exchange between Alabama's *the Gerards* and homeboys *Spies Who Surf*, was a distinct Peacefest pleasure.

And despite the pastoral Peacefest lazy picnic scene, Lee Groban's performance was superlative. Physically noticeable as a lanky character, Lee started with a stage patter that was a nod to his erudite tendencies. I've

noticed his scholarship runs towards the anthropological, with a density and attention to detail which is nothing other than a brain pump. But with a stage savvy belying increasing Groban professionalism, he jumped into a poem about unemployment. His delivery consisted of two voices: his own, and a screeching falsetto which got members of the very laid-back audience into a responsive screaming that no band could elicit. And unlike other Lee Groban performances witnessed, he did his thing and got off the stage with crack timing.

Do not underestimate this man. The energy his one poem generated was not matched by any other poet that day. His audience was more responsive than just about anybody's during the last day of Peacefest. When asked, after the fact, about the poem, Lee Groban's comment was that "it's based on a true event." He was also willing to talk or not about his latest research, stopping the topic abruptly when his sensitive ears picked out the inability of his coterie to wack up the ginger for such



stuff while hanging out with the guatemalean pulsara dude. Do not miss a chance to catch him in action. Lee Groban is a unique voice on the scene for sure.

SuZi

PARIS IS BURNING

Jennie Livingston, director
National Cinematic Distribution

I remember a discussion in a performance class: there is a drag tradition of leaving one wrong element such as a moustache, a deep masculine voice, etc., to call attention to and foreground the facade, the ability and necessity to deceive. This seemed truly deconstructive gender-fuck, as opposed to mere female impersonation, whose desperate glamour reeked of misogyny and emulated heterocentric patriarchy. These careful delineations of politically proper and improper variations on a subcultural phenomenon collide in *Paris is Burning*, Jennie Livingston's documentary film on New York voguing balls of the late '80s.

Ed. Note

I pledge myself...to try to observe the generally accepted social rules of dignity and propriety at all times...in my conduct, attire and speech.

Membership Pledge for the Mattachine Society, earliest large-scale American homosexual rights organization, founded 1950.

I was obsessed by images that challenged conventional ideas about gender, race and class.

Jennie Livingston, interview with **Bill Stamets** for *Windy City Times*, 8/15/91.

I want to be a household...product.

Octavia Saint Laurent, featured performer in *Paris is Burning*.

Bitchy homage and witty camp are reworked as social critique.

Bill Stamets

The Mattachine Foundation has made it policy to move cautiously and function without spectacular display.

The Mattachine Movement, *One* magazine, January, 1953

I'd like to be a spoiled white rich girl. They get what they want, when they want it.

Venus Xtravaganza, featured voguer in *PIB*.

The Society... is in the process of developing a homosexual ethic... disciplined, moral and socially responsible.

Mattachine Society Mission Statement

The [voguers] in *Paris is Burning* go against the ideological grain of outsiders. They can appear pathetically old-fashioned, yet strike other observers as brilliantly empowered post-moderns.

Bill Stamets

The balls used to be about what you could create; now they're about what you can acquire.

Dorian Corey, legendary ballwalker featured in *PIB*.

Anyone can steal.

Voguer whose name I did not write down in PIB

The Society, founded upon the highest ethical and social principles, serves as an example for homosexuals to follow and provides a dignified standard upon which the rest of society can base a more intelligent and accurate picture of the nature of homosexuality....

Mattachine Society Mission Statement

Leather and muscles are defiled by a sexually feminized body, although...the macho male's rejection of his representation by the leather queen can also be accompanied by the secret satisfaction of knowing that

the leather queen, for all his despicable blasphemy, at least intends to pay worshipful tribute to the style and behavior he defiles. The very real potential for subversive confusion in the joining of female sexuality...and the signifiers of machismo is dissipated once the heterosexual recognizes in the gay-macho style a yearning toward machismo, a yearning that, very conveniently for the heterosexual, makes of the leather queen's forbidding armor and warlike manners a perversion rather than a "subversion of real maleness." [author's emphasis]

Leo Bersani, Is the Rectum a Grave? AIDS: Cultural Analysis/Cultural Activism, p. 207. Douglas Crimp, ed. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1987.

[The height of achievement among voguers is "realness," passing as a real woman, real executive, real Air Force cadet, etc. - avoiding being recognized for what you really are. Yet the balls are created to recognize these accomplishments, noting those who are least noticeable.

Ed. Note

A major purpose of the Mattachine Society is to pro-



vide a consensus of principle around which all of out people can rally and from which they can derive a feeling of 'belonging'.

Mattachine Society Mission Statement

It's about wanting to belong being more important than wanting to be a fabulous individual.

Jennie Livingston

My liberal, post-modern ideals of voguers do not survive *PIB*. The legendary Harlem queens snappin' and throwing shade still thrill my white suburban tweedy soul. Pepper Labelja up there on the big screen makes me gasp and fawn the way I always felt I was supposed to over Bette Davis. But no one in the film really seems to give a shit about deconstruction one way or the other.

Ed. Note

If you shoot an arrow into the air and it goes up real high...well, good for you.

Dorian Corey

D. Travers Scott

Interview with Miss LaThing:
Clark and Diversey, Chicago,
Summer '91

What is burning?

Each and every one of us?

What is performance?

Is drag performance art or is performance a drag?

Who is in the kitchen with Dinah?

Does everyone need 15 minutes of Genderama, or is drag a Warholian 15 minutes of Performance?

If the queen is more or less going through PMS, she is very much la femme. No lady in her right mind is required to be 100% during this time.

Drag ladies love to flirt, swivel, skip and play.

The pout is deliberate. Some gals want to be middle-aged and straight either like moms, or church ladies with blue hair. Growing up. Secretary Chic.

We like life, movement, laughter, and feeling good. Queen M said it along with ladies Salt and Peppa: "Express yourself, its gotta be you and only you."

Genderama
Glamourama
Ramarama
Dingdong

Who's flashing their titty at me?

Do men really love women and need to copy them?

What kind of needs are these?

Why does society put these restraints on gender?

Do we need to identify ourselves according to a given or giving role?

Beehives: are they more phallic on men than women?

Perhaps one needs look no further than the National Enquirer's 'artist rendering' of Moammar Qadaffi in drag.

Would the lack of a beehive hairdoo invalidate this?

In lieu of the beehive, is lipstick the common *icon provocatif*?

Are Drag Queens more feminine than real women?

Are Drag Queen's men's images of women?

In drag, is woman's image superimposed upon man's conception and subjugated in performance?

To answer this would one feel compelled to bend his/her gender? If one has a gender to take on a bender, is one's drag more or less likely to be considered performance? or art?

Who's on stage and who's hanging out front?

In drag, is the dynamic betwixt a painting and it's frame as performance is to art on the street?

If a piece is to be performed, does the performer need to know he or she is performing?

Does a queen need to consider her audience as an audience?

In many forms of performance art, the audience knows that it is the audience, and, wittingly or not, 'they' sometimes become part of the performance. But, in drag, the audience knows and intends to become part of the performance—or never knows that 'they' are the audience. So, is that a difference? Would an interview with a performer shed some light?

us: Miss LaThing, is that your real name?

Miss: Is it important?

Senor Gareth y D. LaWinston

A POETIC APPRECIATION OF SUMMER CAMP

Various Artists
Curated by Gurlene and Gurllette
Hussey
Club Lower Links
Chicago

June 9 – July 21, 1991

Thanks to Doug Stapleton and Randy Esslinger (aka *Gurlene* and *Gurllette*), I developed an appreciation of what drag is, and as this muscle of cultural appreciation has gotten bigger, so



will drag get bigger and better and the consciousness-mode of *Queer* will get bigger and better, scanning the red-hot gender-fixated anti-philosophy of the chilly American mainstream like a radar lawn mower. The pipe of the Q spinning, mowing down skyscrapers of dead dead dead ideas of masculine/feminine. Drag is the laboratory breathing in that airtight space of ideas where the traditions of tomorrow's societies are conceived.

Gurlene and Gurlette's four-part variety show has little to do with the vulgarity, outrageousness, pathos and alienation that mainstreamers think of as "drag." The sort of pink, hairless, slimy-as-birth femaleness suggested by a revue at the **Baton Show Lounge** is replaced by a rapturous spirituality of being 2-dimensional, splashing in a dry pool of images free from the stinking guts of space and time.

There were many images that stand out for me like living photographs, like when John Darmore as *Fraülein*, lip-syncing to disembodied



Paddy Waxx and Blossom in GURLENE AND GURLETTE'S SUMMER CAMP.
Photo by Gurlette Hussy

voices, reading from a book of "tips" by a definitely disembodied *Helen Gurley Brown*, became an enchanting ghost — like all these guys were — enchanting ghosts of women that don't even exist anymore — if they ever did outside of old commercials. Who was the special guest in an unearthly blue who floated around syncing to *Julie Andrews' "I Enjoy Being a Girl"*?

Like television, a lot of summer camp was deliberately bad — old, old cheesy theatre-hand gestures as the songs were sung, tired jokes, but that's the other great thing about it — the joyous finger up the nose and ass of a critical standard, a celebration of cheesiness which boldly states that simply to create something — anything, is good enough — a concept that is too simple for some over-educated people

to grasp. An art critic once said that "the purpose of a critic is to kill bad art." But who's going to kill the bad critics?

Of course, *Joan Jett Blakk* is the coolest. She goes beyond he/she to become a glorious IT — the new Drag, like the new *Queer*, pushes gender aside as it clambers onto center stage, and is as much a heterosexual phenomenon as a homosexual



one (or will be as Queer becomes to the '90s as Peace was to the '60s). Writer Bill Stamets defined Queer as "Radical Self-Representation" and the breeder mainstream, released from the fear of being, will plunge into the image-pool of dry water with as much gusto as those who may have paid a high social tax to do so. The show I saw at NYC's **Pyramid** had a man and a woman, both dressed in equally cheesy, flashy, rapturous outfits, singing to *David Bowie* – it's like *Joan Jett Blakk* singing to classic rock songs or whatever she damn well pleases because she's *Joan Jett Blakk*. I haven't mentioned a ton of performers who were really great, but like a Christmas tree, like a religious carol used to advertise the **Money Store** (or vice versa), or a hockey game seen through a telescope, the dry pop of a camera flash sending down a waterfall of dry image rapture over me gave birth to a warm happy feeling in my gut. Thank you, *Gurlene* and *Gurlette*.

Thax Douglas

THE 15TH SPECTACLE

Stuart Sherman

Randolph Street Gallery
Chicago, Illinois

April 13, 1991

What goes where? Stuart Sherman knows, and he puts the things in their place. The place where they go. April 1991 and Stuart Sherman came to Chicago for a show at **Randolph Street Gallery**. To start, we were shown an endless reel of short films which appeared to be made over a long period of time. Stuart appears in most all of his films and we can date the films by the age on his face. They consist of interesting little bits of experimentation and imagination. Monumentally small. We see Sherman examine the realities of film and the common thread is Sherman's unique sense of humor. The films are funny but we do not laugh, we smile deeply. There is a slight sense of squirm in the audience as some people laugh out loud and others strain to find anything funny at all. The films tickled my intellect like a feather. They

are like Dada exercises in absurdity, but they are also not unlike entertainment. There is the sense of someone who has grown up under the gaze of television and movies, *Ernie Kovacs* and *Soupy Sales* come to mind, but there are no jokes. Punch lines are thrown, but there is no connection.

Eventually the projector broke down and the films were cut short. But there was not that feeling of missing something. It seemed that everyone had gotten the idea and that some people were relieved that it was over. After a short break we were introduced to Stuart Sherman and the performance part of the program. Sherman refers to his live presentation as table-top spectacles: there were 35 in all and they were all listed in the program by title. They shared the same sort of irreverent absurd attitudes of the films we had just seen.

Sherman enters the space, the stage is set with a TV table and two suitcases. He checked the notes in his pocket, put the suitcase on a small stand, removed specific contents from the suitcase, arranged them on the table, performed the prescribed action, discarded the props. There was this formula of movement and actions that accompanied each piece which lasted anywhere from 45 seconds to about 4 min-

utes. I'm not quite sure if it was physical comedy or the lack of physical comedy that we were watching. The stumbling person that he became did not appear contrived or acted out. He seemed to have genuine hardship executing some of his own routines. His manipulation of the physical presence aside, we were definitely confronted with humor. After seeing this piece I actually looked up the word humor to see if I could use it in referring to this piece [that quality which appeals to a sense of the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous]. It was precisely that which we saw.

Most of the spectacles were silent but the title was proclaimed after the props were in place: he set up a music stand, put a fake wig on his head, "Misconduct of a Conductor . . ."

There were references to many familiar performing conventions such as magic, con games (three card monte), clowns (balloons), rituals. As art, I thought it was very funny. Like watching children play but in a formal presentation. The ideas behind the actions seemed to be the meat of the matter. At some points you could cut the audience-tension (in the air) with a knife. No one laughed with anyone else.



Reviews

Enjoyment was where you found it and I enjoyed it a lot.

Brendan deVallance

SECRET SECRET

Bill Kelley

THE HEARTH

Elise Kermani

DiverseWorks Art Space

Houston, Texas

June 8, 1991

Quirky, implied narrative spun out in fresh manner, low-tech resources imaginatively used, and engaging concepts clearly realized, marked the premieres of two music theater works by young Houston-based composers. Bill Kelley's *Secret Secret* and Elise Kermani's *The HearTH* called upon the talents of a diverse group of musicians and dancers (both trained and untrained), as well as visual and video artists. Each work seemed to suggest a familiar, universal tale; each was cast in the form of a present-day, personal story.

The music of *Secret Secret* is a rich seamless montage of contrasting sounds produced by human voices, various synthesizers, midi drum set, and a collection of homemade instruments. Included, too, are pre-recorded sounds—among them voices from Chinese TV soap operas—that are processed in a variety of ways. The overall form of each of the four movements is generally one of accrual: one thing begins, another joins in followed by yet another, and so on until a steady sound state is reached. The textures achieved are complex, lively and pristine, and, in spite of the music's being highly improvisational in nature and only rudimentarily scored, the overall effect is of precision and clarity.

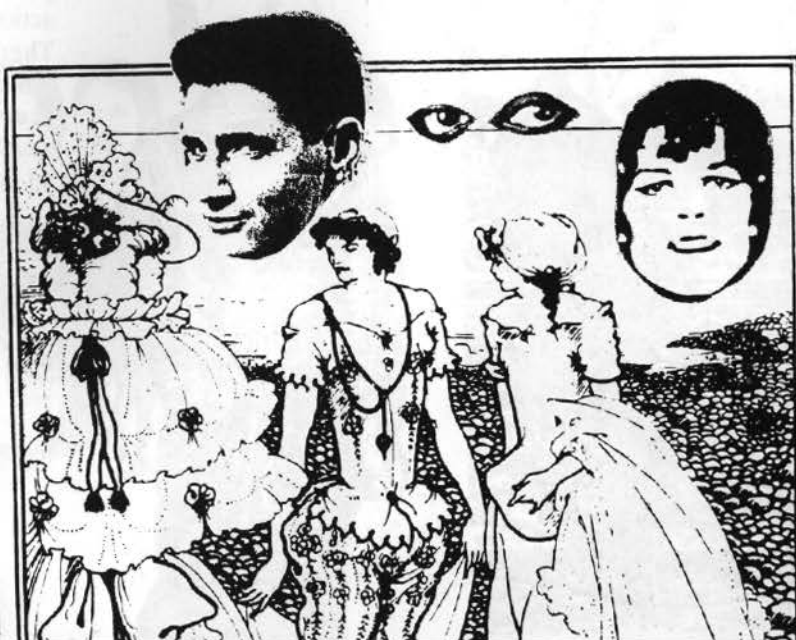
The visual aspects of *Secret Secret* are as rich as the music. Throughout the piece's 30-minute duration, 4 video monitors mounted on the rear wall of the stage pro-

ject images—created by George Langworthy in collaboration with the composer—which relate to and expand on the live actions and sounds being performed. For example, in the second movement rice falls from a heart-shaped object strapped to the chest of one of the 3 dancers featured in the piece, and later from the rafters over the stage into a brightly spotlighted cone. This is echoed on the monitors by streams of falling rice which are turned sideways so that they appear as abstract, rushing patterns rather than literal ricefalls. A large sphere, created by sculptor Nestor Topchy, hangs on the right side of the stage throughout the performance. It too is frequently echoed in the video images as it rotates, ascends and descends, and, in the end, is covered by a viscous, blood-like substance, which is also seen on the monitors at the end.

Meaning and significance in *Secret Secret* are multifaceted. It is perhaps an environmental story with overtones of doom (the sphere/earth covered at the

end with blood). Or perhaps it is a story of creation and nurturance (the rice as the giver of life) and, finally, of hope (the male dancer tries to wipe the blood off the earth to make everything right). These things are not spelled out in any obvious way and the audience is given considerable freedom to draw its own conclusions from the highly suggestive materials of the work.

Kermani's *The HearTH* seems to be much more precise in its message, at the same time employing a similar breadth of musical, visual, and theatrical vocabularies. The narrative had to do with memories of an idealized childhood—the hearth/home, the work's chief protagonist, is presented throughout by video images of the midwestern house in which the composer grew up—counterposed with the live reality of a considerably less than ideal household portrayed by 2 live musician-actors. Texts, commencing with the fairy tale *Once Upon a Time*, recall homes from the speakers' pasts. They are punctuated by Kermani's singing in





Bill Kelley's SECRET SECRET
Photo courtesy the artist

extended vocal techniques, which she uses to considerable effect during the course of the piece. This she does to comment on the unfolding story and to accentuate the mood of the proceedings, not so much as an active participant as, perhaps, in the role of the chorus in ancient Greek drama.

The piece, which lasts about half an hour, is in several loosely strung together sections.

The first has to do with a frustrated attempt at building a house. The male character, Chad Salvata, piles bricks

one on top of another until they finally topple over onto the floor. The building and collapsing sounds, along with others added along the way, are all collected, processed, fed into a reverberation feedback system to create the dramatic sound tapestry of the piece. Meanwhile, the female character, Kelly Scott Kelley, stands center-stage at a table covered with a white cloth. Cleaver in hand, she begins to crudely chop a bloody hunk of beef and to peel and chop large onions while all these sounds are fed into the system. A wok is brought out and the roughly hacked food is put into siz-

zling oil to cook. Again, these sounds are added to the sonic stew.

After attempting to consume the unpleasant meal--the whole thing accompanied by the silent bucolic video images of the perfect home--the characters set ritual fire to the table in a Valhalla-like purging ceremony. In the closing moments of the work, they again begin building a house at the side of the stage, this time with twigs and sticks. When they finally succeed in finishing it, they move in and, while

the table burns itself out, the male figure watches pensively over the woman as she quietly goes to sleep.

The HearTH is not exactly a celebration of domestic bliss, but rather a commentary on domestic disorder. The wholesome solidity of the house--brick in the video memory and brick in the aborted first attempt--contrast with the live stage action in which things go very wrong. Sounds, theatrical events, and strong visual images all combine with the video remembrance of a dreamlike, perfect past to create a powerful statement in music theater about domesticity in an imperfect present.

Charles Boone

BAIT & SWITCH

Lower Links
 Friday, March 8

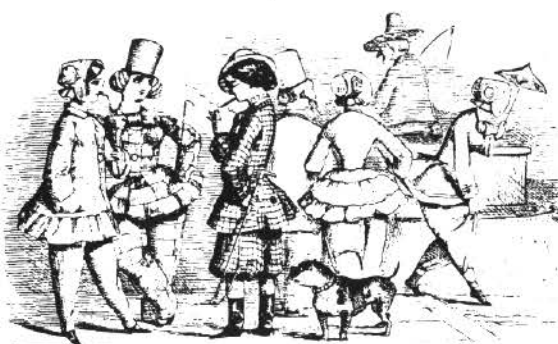
0) *In my world, all of the girls look like boys; but no one wants to be a boy, not even the men.*

SCOUT WESCHLER

And, for you neophytes out there, we've compiled a small vocabulary list to help you navigate the murky waters of lesbian behavior.

1) **MILQUETOAST BUTCH**--a 70's phenomenon which utilized jeans, flannel shirts and hiking boots to mask femininity whilst shrinking from an attitude of masculine posturing.

2) **SEX-POSITIVE PURITAN**--a lesbian who speaks against penetration until she meets the girl of her dreams who has an impressive dildo



FALL 1991

Reviews

collection,

3) *PACKING A PISTOL*.....

DANGEROUS PLEASURES

Our stage/host the irrepressible image, **Suzie Silver**, D.R.A.B. in a *David Crosby* hair crime, sideburns a modest moustache and complete with pistol (see #3), an impressive bulge exciting the line of otherwise neutral trousers. From a warm leatherette, his hand wrapped around a beer. And co-hostage, the haunting Ladyvision **Iris Agnes Moore-Head** appearing, boss-dressed in an outfit borrowed from her T.V. neice *Serina*: close-fit black-spandex flare-jumpsuit, cut low, criss-crossed, studded around the breasts, holding a crop high on lick-my-clit platforms...so *Emma*-appealing. Later, *David* struck the male (im)posture--on stage, his sexy man/handling of the *Lady I*. proved that the gun was loaded.

D.R.A.B.--dressed as a boy. Some performers served up standard fare, the modern-classic cross-dressed lip-synch. These entrees were medium to well-done. **Mary Brogger** IS *Nick Cave* in a three-piece polyester number which explored the lit cigarette and the Peavey amp as onstage penile projections. **Dani K.** dished a vanilla rap as *LaCoolJay* (see #0). Tun-

ing in on a casio machine, **Nancy Bardawil** nervously covered (not a lip sing) *I Got You Under My Skin*, her petite frame inside a Tall Man latex skin molded in full male nudity. The chrysalis metaphor suggests girl trapped in boy-body, though her slow, dirge-like rendition was perhaps a comment on women captured as mummy, tombs of phallos-centre.

Hester baby **Reeves** en/shroud, a portrait of the *Lizard King of the Jews*. Bare chested her breasts painted delicately articulating: twin peak angels a-bounce, mouthing along *Jim Morrison Spy in the House of Love* like the *Supremes* trio. **Reeves'** Anglo-Saxon features were tucked into a scruffy wig; bearded, she was a dead ringer for the face of *Turin's*, reminding us once again that 'Our' Lord really was WASP. This piece was a monument as a male im/persona/tion per his royal badness, *Andy Soma*.

The Doors open, let us brave travelers enter out for a pass. Close your eyes to see: *Jesus* as **Hester** doing *Andy* doing *Jim* who's *Christ* as *Dionysius* im/personifying HERSELF perhaps the Goddess-head or? *Jesus* was an early drag queen. *Daddy's* good boy, little boy dressed up to play Mommy for Dad. You see, Mother was murdered/married, and this quaint NAMBLA scene

'tween the boys vainly tries to feed a need for Her. You see, Mother was *Marry!* is what all the queens called her. The *Messiah Massa* was a prohibition era *Dionysus*; *Jim Morrison* worked the crowd (control) as well as any prophet or rockette.

Marcia Wilkie presented, with warmth, a funny character/ature of **John the Baptist**. This delivery, as *John* stood barefoot in a basin of water, shed new light on the meanings of *Stand-Up*. This piece held up a great mirror, mirror image to **Hester's** *Jesus-James*. Like **John** said, with a head on his shoulders, he was always in the shadow of his identical cousin--like *Cathy Duke* and *Patty*, whose only seen the sights a girl can see from Brooklyn Heights.

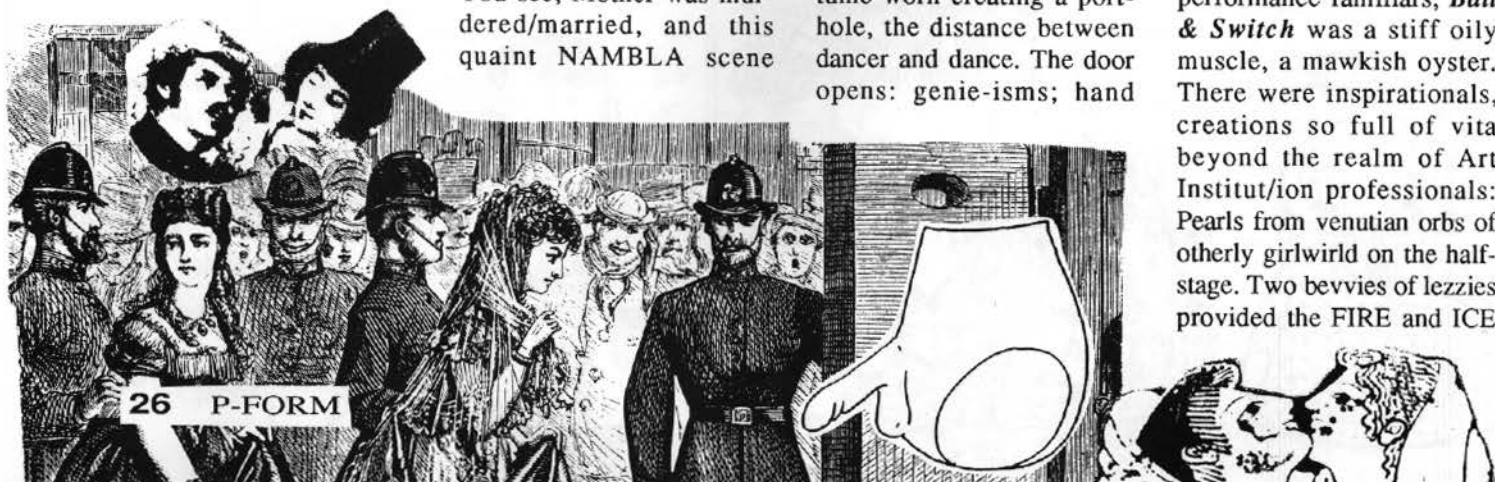
JENNIFER FINK IN HIGH HOLY **D.R.A.G.**

Deep Inside Her Desiring, unveils the fetishized as fetishist: reveals an 'object' woman as 'subject' of/to the pleasure in her objectifying 'act/ions.' *Deep Inside*, the exotic, the eroticized gestures of ritual religious dance/prostitution trance/form into an incestuous drama of *Lesbo* play between two sisters: a day-dream of *I Dream of Jeannie*. Dark as night. These women wear/share the same desiring veils, a costume worn creating a port-hole, the distance between dancer and dance. The door opens: genie-isms; hand

claps, feet snapping, eyes blinking to the clim/act, a cinamyn bond(age) pleasuring both bound and binder. The spectacle is taken from the eye of the gazing and seen in the hands of the performer, empowered by her collusion in and pleasure from its construct. Wrapped with/in the layers, the lies, the truth is this is a traveling lady: a feminist lesson in having fun caking on the "make-up." The underside of the innerplay negotiating a self which can mean death, but might bring freedom or release like orgasm. This gal works her lipstick like a plug-in dildo, magic wand in the hands of a *Faerie Queen*.

Sylver Celeste is another song and dance queen from that same lesson, *D.R.A.G.* 101--women are the best drag queens. Here comes la femme...step aside please, this hunky blonde hunnypot's jus' drippin' her sweetness down them down home jean pants. Cowgirl gets the oohs and ahs of *Patsy Cline* covered jus' right in fleshy soft focus, while souvenirs go on sale at the back bar. *Sylver*, a gender renderring by **Daniel Probst**, is no one night stand--Her person/a long standing project/ion, and she appeared, as others on this bill, veteran of the stage circuit.

As a (hair) salon for art-performance familiars, **Bait & Switch** was a stiff oily muscle, a mawkish oyster. There were inspirations, creations so full of vita beyond the realm of Art Institut/ion professionals: Pearls from venutian orbs of otherly girlwird on the half-stage. Two bevvies of lezzies provided the FIRE and ICE



for the evening.

Not Hip/sophistication underground ellipse culture that we've come to expect from the lowest Link, sapph-fisticated was the **T.W.A.T.** (Theater With Alienating Tendencies) **Team.ALIEN NATION** was a right-on-sister production re/construction of the male/doma dog/ma, Pappy Politics, told in clever vignettes and unforgettable images of T.V. news culture. In special focus was coverage of that recent folly, the great Desert Scam, I mean Storm. They put on 'the hats' to suit the 'professionals': the media, Generals including Electric, and other company men.

Most effective was the movement, circular and rhythmic, jerky like Disney robots of two of the **Team-sters** in female drag. The simulacrum spread across the faces on a TEE-VEE screen. A special update was interrupted by that *Come Back to Jamaica* commercial--Media images of women were burned through our conscience by the jiggling gestures of the ever-givin, mute blackmammy dishin out some fish to the other-- a long-haired bikini babe bouncing with all the lobotomied objectivity know-how she has (see *Clarence Thomas*). Lesbians in d.r.a.g. as icons of male order bride in a version of a vacation spot ad/dressed the need to break away from self-created ugliness.

Elemental Iconography--Cold as Ice--**FREEZER BURN**, composed of **Scout Weschler**, **Rose Troche**, and **Valerie S.**, was a raw-tech diamond en ruff..They began in skit: a woman play-

ing a man en D.R.A.G (who wants to identify as a lesbian) gets picked up in a bar by a Dyke. The confusion en-gendered during a foreplay scene in which the male/member rises to the surface was funny and attended with compassion for all parties concerned. The dyke does not reject the queen, nor does she see the he/she as a shallow joke on Herself. Next, with simple beauty, **Scout**, on a riser, slowly stripped of her combat boot persona, reconstructing as an image from the social architecture of 'femme-ininity.'

She powerfully articulated how alien Her own identity was to that weak card-board cut-out supplied by the het/pat. The expression of oppression was soulful political act/ion, a bid in hope for lesbian identities (see #0), also significant in how it helped to place the she-male drag queen onto the feminist continuum. She suggested that some dykes don't like drag queens: 'nothing should make fun of a woman.' Revealing her view of the artificial construct, ('She') showed how drag queens see femininity the way she does.

Providing she-male visions, *Gurlene* and *Gurlette Hussey*, the "IT" Gurls for a gay nineties. Not classy, Smart and Sassy, forever clever these guys tore up the stage in two sharp numbers. *Eva's Evita* provided the first backdrop for mingling themes of **DRAG QUEEN HERITAGE** and **WOMEN IN POWER**. The fore-ground of the piece was a shadowplay revealing the mystery world of Gaity

beneath the glitter. The queen behind the scene: pre-creations illuminated as shimmering shadows between homosex and sisterhood. Removing the back-lit curtain, the **DRAGON** ladies came on, funkflash, worked *Don't Cry for Me* down to the bones. Later, in *LperiodOperiodLperiodAperiod*, the *Gurls* now mellow did a crack cover of a song medley/mix-ing of *Walk on the Wild Side* with *LOLA*, in legacy to pop rock andro/gynes. This groovy tributeworked a spell to ward off evil homophobia. And the colored girls go...

More fire was carried by two torch dancers; **Debbie Davis** and **Susan Seizer**, the *Flaming Love Warriors*. Accompanied by jungle drums, their exciting and sensual breast bare Amazonian other sport a display celebrating a gynergetic convergence, and inspired the attendance to keep ablaze.

The evening polished off with a fabulous fashion send-up, **Lesbians in Literature**, emceed by **Cheryl IsaBailey Rossellini**. The cast modeled some dress design/ations of lesbian past/futures, backed by some good tuning a la **Burl L'Avant**. A special addition was **Nancy Forrest Brown** appearing as *Quentin Crisp* in *Rollerball D.R.A.B.* Naturally, the *Hussey Gurls* were doing wigs and ran make-up for the Girls. Remember **Willi Ninja** teaching females feminine how-to in *Paris is Burning*?

Perhaps there is a womanifesto for this: the **Bait**, a **Switch**: dug deep in the folds of sales-girl-pockets. Let's play fish. Got any

queens? One card, an ace clue: in *Jack/Joseph Smith's* latter day revelations (see lizard king), *The Book of Merman*, (biblico biblio of D.R.A.G), where a cross-dresser finds fame & fortune in the sick and boring world of a good ol' boy's club. *Annie* gets her gun, (see Packing a Pistol) and she's a good shot, hand steady, strokes the Goddess/head to a climax: an ecstatic trance in-gendering euphoria.

ELECTRICITY

Drag Magic conjers this charge: Casts a Variance to the resistor, political fabric(ations) of masKulinity and feminAnity. Enormous energies pour into the maintenance of a machine to constantly affirm unambiguous distinction between but two separate and unequal sexes. Cross-dressing is charged by this voltage it runs against, an anti-gravity device, at the same time a transformer pumping new juice to a tired and old system.

G.I. Jill and Le
Transparent Butterfly



Virtual Circus

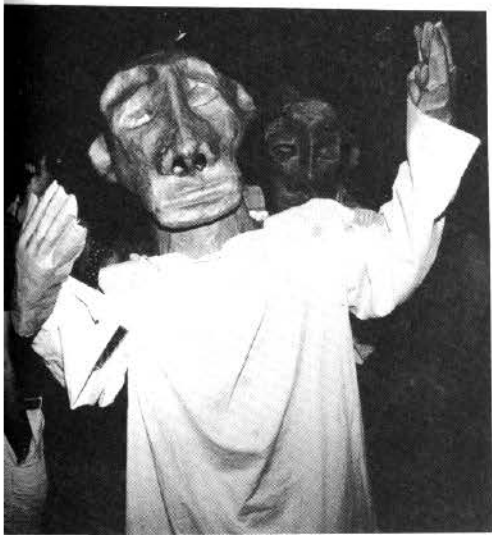
Randolph Street Gallery
July 14, 1991

P-form couldn't resist devoting this issue's pix! section to all the multi-talented, polymorphous, odoriferous, flexible and otherwise spiffy persons who helped make our **Virtual Circus** benefit an even bigger smash than last year's. Kudos to Kaja Overstreet, Michael Zerang, J. Batman, Red Moon Theatre, John Lebrand, Marcia Wilke, Heitor Alvelos, Barbara Droth, Jon Keith, Tom Pallazzolo, Penny Treat, Jennifer Fink, Andy Soma, Beth Tanner, Diamanda Gurlene, Jenny Magnus, Lyman Flook, THE X-GIRLFRIENDS, Elise Ferguson, Tiny Tina, Gurlette Hussey, Doug Hoppe, Nancy Bardawil, Matthew Owens, Lawrence Steger, Fraulien, Blossom, Arnetta K. Star, Steve Lafreniere, John Rodgers, Joan Jett Blakk, Steve Jones, Susan Sladen, MATH, Paul Graves, Meg Houston, Thax Douglas, Frank Melcori, Joe Medosch, Eric Deschamps, Deb Levie, Joan Dickinson, Fred Hickler, Matthew Goulsh, Lin Hixson, Lester Brodzik, Harvey Ball, Marla Showfer, Eric Leonardson, Rodger Pedraza, Sherry Antonini, the ever-helpful Dan, Teddy Varndell at Objects of Interest, Joe Shanahan at Cabaret Metro, everyone at Randolph Street Gallery, and many others we're surly forgetting. Thanks to all of you and everyone who came out to support us, **P-form** will be alive another year.

all photos by Debra E. Levie

For photo or video documentation of a Virtual Circus, contact P-form at Randolph Street Gallery.





CONTRIBUTORS:

Lester Brodzik is an artist-painter working as an activity therapist. Former member of the art performance unit SSPU/SXPU (1985-1987), he is known to the visual art community and local music rock scenes in other aspects, showing publicly since 1983. Developing artistic skills by isolated discovery study and formal art training, he needs commercial fine art gallery representation. A cultural enigma, Lester wonders, "Should I give up art?"

Tobi Johnson is currently completing her thesis on women's documentary video and AIDS and hopes to be finished sooner rather than later.

Charles Boone is a composer and writer. He is Interim Executive of the Dherassi Foundation in Woodside, California.

Thax Douglas is a performing poet in Chicago who hosts The Ultimate Sports Show at Club Lower Links.

Gurlette Hussy, of Altuna, Pennsylvania, and her sister Gurlene are the regular lounge act at the Altuna Holiday Inn.

Gurlene Hussey is also from Altuna, PA., where she is the brunette half of the Altuna Holiday Inn's regular lounge act

Michael Palmer lives and works in Chicago. He is actively looking for a publisher interested in more of his story.

Terence Smith is a drag artist living and working in Chicago. Be prepared for Joan Jett Blakk's recording debut, "Queen of the City."

SuZi is a writer living and working in New Orleans; previously she was an active performing poet in Chicago.

Scout Weschler was recently named Activist of the Year by Chicago columnist Jon-Henri Damski; she lives and works in Chicago.

Debi Winston is a musician and writer from Chicago who, on occasion, has received many free drinks when mistaken for a drag queen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Space and time constraints left the following information out of **Danielle Probst's** interview with **Eleanor Antin** in P-form #22: **Danielle Probst** is a writer, performer and singer who frequently appears in the persona of **Sylvester Celeste**, Country and Western singer.

Jennifer Carney designed pages 12 and 13.

Jim Ochsenreiter designed pages 16 and 17.

P-form welcomes **Carmela Rago** as our new Managing Editor. **Carmela** has no small performance and business background (see P-form #22) and we're quite excited about all the experience and enthusiasm she brings.

Lesterology collage by **Bob Whittinghill** page 31

P-form extends best wishes to founder and driving upstart **Brendan deVallance** and Editor **Nancy Martell** as they leave for New York; we promise to find some way to still drag them to meetings, nevertheless.

Collage on reviews pages by **Andy Soma**.

Front and back cover of P-form #23 by **Nancy Martell**.

Little Annie Adler contains italicized quotes from **Annie Sprinkle's** show at **Club Lower Links** October 1990.

THRILL KILL KILT

(Continued from p.15)

others because they were not on the art scene, or involved with some rock counter-scene.

My psychiatrist says that cross-dressing is a part of me. Yet, when I am out a lot, and get a crush on someone, it seems to not be a priority. He told me of a book called *Cross-Dressers and the People Who Love Them*, but I've never seen it. It seems that it feels best to dress and then to drink some mushroom tea. Sometimes, it is an escape after rejection. Sometimes, it is impossible to do when feeling hurt. Some outfits I'd be too self-conscious to wear, knowing that some people would think them too mainstream or old-fashioned or they simply hate people that dress like that.

A friend told me that in ancient or perhaps even modern India, cross-dressing is related to shamanism, and to being an Avatar. Also, that a male deity could be female but a female goddess could not be male. Perhaps that's the patriarchal view. I have had delusions, or feelings, or pretending of being shamanistic, and being an Avatar.

Lester Brodzik

Sagittarius (Nov 23-Dec 22)

Genial, unselfish, fastidious, and friendly. **THE ARCHER.** You have great driving power, and head straight to the point. You are impulsive and candid. Your ruling planet Jupiter deals with wealth, reason, joviality; you thrive on challenging ideas, are a philosopher, love sports, nature. Lucky day is Thursday; number 9. Lucky color is royal purple, gem is turquoise. Female—You don't understand why there is a sudden urge to wear motorcycle boots and go after pretty boys. Your moods begin to change rapidly, from creating photographic realism to total Action Abstracts alternating each style after each finished piece. Male—You can't even begin to understand but a sudden interest in butterfly collecting is to no avail. Running through the alleys of Bucktown you only acquire species for your stuffed mammal collection. You often relate to Tarzan and wish to make it with an ape named Teeka.

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 22)

Forceful, capable, discriminating and magnetic! **THE SCORPION.** Explosive, ardent and decisive, you have strong likes and dislikes and can be shrewd and quick-witted. Mars, your ruling planet, influences your energy, aggression; you have great endurance. Lucky day is Tuesday; numbers are 5 and 4; color is deep red; gem is opal. Women—you get obsessed with the fact that Charles Manson is also a Scorpio. You begin to doubt your sanity and have an irresistible urge to have an X tattooed on your forehead. Coming up with a myriad of colorful ideas to write and contribute to the literary scene, you become recognized and enjoyed by the other writers and poets. You put out a number of books but go bankrupt. Men—You become infatuated with a woman who came up with post modern industrial feminism and the American androgynous way of life. You get to know her very well, fall in love and decide to get a sex change. Live happily ever after.

Turn around and let's see what you
Oh my gosh.
really look like.
Richard Kostelanetz

Capricorn (Dec 23-Jan 20th)

Prudent, accurate, capricious and ambitious. **THE GOAT.** Loyal to friends and beliefs, you are conservative, reliable, persevering to reach high goals despite any obstacle. Ruling planet Saturn regulates caution, discipline and time. Lucky day is Saturday; numbers, 7 and 8. Colors are black and brown; gem is garnet. Women—You will fall in love with the man of your dreams. He's a Led Zeppelin freak. You passionately make love to him and realize his past profession as a male hooker. As luck has it you inherit one hundred trillion dollars from an ancient auntie that you love. You just about blow your mind when you are caught in oven exhaust while in a traffic jam from the back of a CTA bus. Men—You were an atheist—a real atheist not a Roman Catholic Born Again spiritual atheist, but a disbeliever. Although you had second thoughts about worshipping the goddess. You begin to believe in God again when you fall in real fucking love with a red head chick and finally after a month you realize that she loves you too!

LESTEROLOGY

Aren't you lesbian?
Only when you're trying to
seduce me.
Richard Kostelanetz

by Lester Brodzik

