

## MENU

Editorial	2
Philippe Sollers	4
Dave Godfrey	6
Sid Marty	10
Gerry Gilbert	11
Brian Edwards	12
Jean-Paul Daoust	13
Eugene Dubnov	14
Lin Osterhage	15
Brian Fawcett	16
Frank Davey	18
Brian Morgan	19
Richard Kostelanetz	20
David McFadden	21
Barbara Golden	23
Alida Walsh	24
Malcolm de Chazal/Irving Weiss	27
Al Purdy	28
Gerry Shikatani	29
Claudine Bertrand	30
Sheila Davies	30
Céline Messner	31
Paya Rohay	31
Anna Banana	32
Opal Louis Nations	36
Susan Parker	37
Judith Fitzgerald	38
Dennis Cooley	39
Rafael Barreto-Rivera	40
Marina deBellagente LaPalma	42
Melody Sumner	43
Margaret Dragu	44
Janice Williamson	45
George Swede	46
Aina Tilups	46
Karl Jirgens	47
Ernie Ernst	47
Marino Tuzi	48
Pawet Petasz	49
Alan Lord	50
Joe Revells	52
Jayce Salloum	53
John Cartan	54
Richard Truhlar	56
Chris Saletes	57
bill bissett	58
Lucien Francoeur	59
Don Thompson	59
Karen McCormack	60
Thomas Kretz	60
Guillermo Deisler	61
Joseph McLeod	61
Gabrielle Roth	62
Yollande Villemaire	63
Ernie Ernst	64
Mia Anderson	64
Bob Wakulich	65
Edward Nixon	65
John Bennett	65
Robert Buckeye	66
Ernie Ernst	68
Mark Beamish	68
Marie Clark	69
Donald Brackett	69
Paul Dutton	69
Phillip Corwin	70
Don Webb	71
Roy Click	72
Tracey Moore	73
Karen Peterson	73
Rod Anderson	74
Don Thompson	75
Alex Amprimoz	76
Noah Zacharin	77
Patti Capaldi	78
Richard Gessner	79
Contributors' Notes	80

## ÉDITORIAL

Des peintures préhistoriques des grottes d'Altamira aux vidéos rock d'aujourd'hui, la nourriture a toujours été une source d'inspiration pour les artistes. Rembrandt, Arcimboldo, Soutine, Aertsen et Bacon l'ont représentée sur leurs toiles sous toutes ses formes. Les champs de blé et les cultivateurs de Van Gogh, le Semeur de Millet, les fruits de Cézanne et le Déjeuner sur l'herbe de Manet ont tous influencé l'art contemporain.

Au cours des siècles, on a glorifié la nourriture en peignant inlassablement des natures mortes. Les écrivains ont chanté les vertus de la bonne chère et des bons vins. La nourriture constituait déjà un grand thème de la mythologie gréco-romaine. Souvenons-nous de Perséphone et de la grenade, du Cyclope anthropophage, des dieux de l'Olympe, Dionysos et Diane, de la pomme d'or, du nectar et de l'ambrosie. Dans toutes les civilisations, des dieux étaient associés à l'alimentation. Chez les Aztèques, c'était Xilonen, la déesse du maïs, chez les Inuits, Agloolik, le dieu de la chasse, au Japon, Inari, le dieu du riz, en Inde, Vishnu, sous la forme de Krishna, était berger dans son enfance. Le symbolisme de la nourriture est partout présent dans l'Évangile, de la parabole du grain de sénevé à la pêche miraculeuse, au vinaigre sur la croix et à l'Eucharistie. La religion et l'art se sont souvent rencontrés sur ce thème, par exemple, dans la Cène du Tintoret ou de Léonard de Vinci.

Pour se rendre compte de sa place à diverses époques, il suffit de lire les fables d'Ésope ou de La Fontaine, les contes de Chaucer, le traité du Courtisan de Castiglione, de penser au Panshurst de Jonson, à Falstaff dans Shakespeare, à la Modeste proposition de Swift et au Gargantua de Rabelais. Plus près de nous, il a été repris par le cinéma, dans des films comme *La grande bouffe*, *Le tambour*, *Les dents de la mer* ou même encore *L'attaque des tomates exterminatrices*. La culture qu'elle soit classique ou populaire est imprégnée de symboles liés à la nourriture.

Nous sommes des consommateurs au siècle de la consommation. Jamais l'alimentation n'a occupé une plus grande place qu'aujourd'hui en raison de l'explosion démographique. Dans certaines parties du globe, on regorge de hamburgers, de boissons gazeuses et de bière, tandis que dans d'autres, il n'existe que l'immensité du désert, sans eau et sans un brin de végétation. D'un côté, les pays riches déversent dans l'océan leur surplus alimentaires, et de l'autre, des millions de gens meurent de faim. Au Canada, on commet un génocide culturel contre les populations autochtones: les droits de chasse et de pêche dont elles bénéficient soi-disant sont une plaisanterie, vu la pollution croissante des eaux par le mercure et la destruction des forêts. Les répercussions de la catastrophe de Tchernobyl se feront sentir pendant des années dans l'agriculture des pays d'Eurasie. L'homme consommateur conduit à l'extinction un nombre incalculable d'espèces animales, perturbant ainsi la chaîne alimentaire au risque même de causer des dégâts irréparables. Le jour viendra peut-être où nous n'aurons plus le choix qu'entre le cannibalisme et la famine. Mais cela a-t-il vraiment tant d'importance puisque, au bout du compte, nous finirons tous mangés par les vers!

D'ici là, adonnons-nous aux plaisirs de la nourriture, camelote alimentaire ou fins gueuletons. Arachides, maïs éclaté, gomme à mâcher, gomme balloune, mousse, crème glacée et "revello." Hambourgeois au fromage, pastilles à la cerise, croustilles de pomme de terre au barbecue-poulet, réglisses de toutes sortes, frites à la sauce brune et au ketchup, soda mousse, amuse-gueule au fromage et bière. Ou ... champagne et caviar, légumes au cari doux ou relevé, couscous aux pois chiches et à la sauce aigre-douce, escargots de Montpellier, tresse de loup et de saumon aux poivrons doux, paupiette de sole au citron avec mousse d'artichauts et hollandaise à la tomate, huîtres chaudes à la mousse de cresson, galettes de jambon cru avec sauce aux épinards frais, brioche mousseline au ragoût fin, charlotte normande au coulis de framboises, sucrerie de Reims à la compote d'anglais, crème de mascarpone et biscuits à la cuillère, gâteau au chocolat à la menthe avec riche sauce au chocolat nappé de compote de pommes. Aaaaaahh!

Mais n'allons pas oublier les vertus du bon pain et de l'eau fraîche, d'un bol de riz ou d'une poignée de baies sauvages. Songeons aux avantages du régime végétarien, du partage et du jeûne et n'oublions jamais nos frères.

Bon appétit!



## EDITORIAL

From the earliest cave drawings in Altamira to contemporary rock video, food has been both fuel and inspiration for artists. Rembrandt, Arcimboldo, Soutine, Aertsen, and Bacon all explored the many dimensions of food. Van Gogh's farmers and their fields, Millet's "Sower," Cézanne's fruit, and Manet's "Le déjeuner sur l'herbe" have all created reverberations in the art world.

Endless still lifes with various foods have been painted over the years. For centuries, writers have extolled the virtues of fine food and drink. The subject of eating goes back to the Greco-Roman myths, Persephone and the pomegranate, the Cyclops and his victims, the Olympic gods Bacchus, Dionysius, and Diana, the golden apples, and the delights of ambrosia. In every culture there were gods associated with food; in Aztec religion there was Xilonen the corn goddess; among the Inuit, Agloolik, the god of the hunt; in ancient Japan, Inari, the rice god, while in India Vishnu in his manifestation as Krishna lived his early days as a cowherd. Food imagery is prominent throughout the Bible, from the parable of the mustard seed to the significance of fish, to the consumption of vinegar on the cross, to the meaning of the Eucharist. Often, religion and fine art have come together on this subject as in Tintoretto's or Da Vinci's "The Last Supper."

In other ways it is central to Aesop's fables, Chaucer's tales, and Castiglione's "Courtier," Jonson's "Panshurst," Shakespeare's Falstaff, Swift's "Modest Proposal," and Rabelais' "Gargantua." It has even become entrenched in cinema, as for instance in the films *La Grande Bouffe*, or *The Tin Drum*, or *Jaws*, or even *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*. Both "high" and "pop" culture is permeated with food imagery.

We are consumers in a consumer world. With the population explosion, food has never been more important than today. On the one hand we have mountains of hamburgers and cigarettes, oceans of soda pop and beer. On the other we have ever-growing tracts of desert. Powerful nations are dumping surplus aliments into the ocean while millions die from lack of nutrition. Cultural genocide is being committed against the native population of Canada. Their hunting and fishing rights are a travesty in the face of increasing mercury pollution in the waters, and other forms of poison on the land. The impact of Chernobyl will be felt for years by the agricultural community in Eurasia. Man the consumer is forcing endless species from the animal kingdom into extinction. Without them, the great food chain is being disrupted, and perhaps broken beyond repair. Perhaps one day we will face either cannibalism or starvation. Perhaps it doesn't matter, since in the end we all end up as maggot fodder.

In the meantime, let us celebrate the joys of food, the junk food and the gourmet meal. Peanuts, popcorn, chewing gum, bubble gum, cotton candy, ice cream and Eskimo pie. Cheeseburgers, pink cherry-flavoured pez, barbecue-chicken-flavoured potato chips, licorice all-sorts, french fries with brown gravy and ketchup, red dutch-cream soda, cheezies and beer. In the other hand, champagne and caviar, sweet and pungent vegetable curry, couscous for Arabian Nights with garbanzos and sweet and sour sauce, escargots de Montpellier, garland of sea bass and salmon with red peppers, paupiettes of lemon sole with artichoke mousse and tomato hollandaise, hot oysters with watercress mousse, galettes of prosciutto with fresh spinach sauce, ragoût of sweetbread and squab in brioche, apple charlotte with raspberry sauce, sugar tart with plum compote, mascarpone cream with ladyfingers, peppermint Bavarian with mint fudge sauce, cinnamon ice cream in a chocolate cookie cup with purée of apples. Aaaaaahh!

But let us also consider the virtues of honest bread and sweet water, of a bowl of rice, or a handful of wild berries. Let us consider the virtues of vegetarianism, of eating lower on the food chain, of sharing and fasting. And let us always be mindful of the needs of others.

Bon appetit!

K. Jirgen



# OR A FRUIT THAT HAD FALLEN A Selection from *Drame* by Phillippe Sollers

Translation by Bruce Benderson  
& Ursula Molinaro

Phillippe Sollers has been and remains a revolutionary figure in France as a novelist, critic and founding editor of the highly influential journal *Tel Quel* and now *L'Infini*. He is the author of numerous books including *Lois*, *Nombres*, *Paradis*, and *Drame*.

He writes:

"Nothing for us outside of here, but nothing if we let this 'here' be subjected to the outside. So I look for you inside. Little by little, I wipe out my presence, which would now force me to rely on someone other than myself, someone who would think of himself as elsewhere, namely just in transit in front of this page, namely what this page could show: no. Namely someone who would forget the question now posed by the mild (minutely mild) impact of this page (it's all there in the margin past the limits of the paper: open your eyes, look ...): no. The real story again? No. And yet that's what I'm trying to tell, the story that probably silently tells everything from the beginning. In coming back, I haven't for a moment lost sight of the ground on which I'm walking, limit, wavering (you have to go a little above it), disappearance, grazing of words on neutral ground.... Once I could do that. Once the sight of a pebble or a fruit that had fallen onto the walk reverberated with light, cancelling the rest, giving the setting its suspended weight. Then the caption was written within a strict framework. Rotting and burrowing were part of that surface breathing: nothing could disappear without discharging a sort of still, sparkling air, settling little by little, once more, on earth. Each uncovered sleep. Each forgetting at the root. Each sentence immediately dubbed. Each gesture echoed, expanded.... Maybe? But I remember and the memory comes by itself without any warning, and I am only this neutral, defenceless place, unless I speak and answer, here, indirectly."

But for him the reply and the other side and the elsewhere of that surface-response are most often hidden territory, a winter, an underground garage where he is once again surrounded by familiar figures. Then a thousand pressing problems, a thousand details: summonses, objections, third degrees, malfunctions, inspections, discussions about the evidence no matter how convincing it is, knots that won't come undone, wastes of time ending in an overall waste of time. The city is there, badly lit, a mess: repair shops, mechanical warps, ridiculous systems of priorities, complex, ridiculous projects for making very slow progress (or maybe none at all) towards the goal.... Useless avenues, errands, rides for nothing -- not a single place to live, everyone is ceaselessly caught up in minor odds and ends, some standing in the middle of the street, others sitting in basements, handling their tools, working only with one or two brief, banal, rigid formulas (disagreements or agreements repeated in the same automatic, final tone).... The way they look is also strangely stereotyped: as if they had been painted once and for all, as if the changing fragments of their meetings continued under a black communal layer, which the dream that reveals them suddenly lifts away. At this point he is almost completely taken into the scene -- but as if his shadow were becoming his main identity: he can feel it slightly distanced, resisting the depiction, reminding him that he's being cheated, prompting him that he has to cheat the spectacle in return, that he has to dodge it at the least excuse: jump over the wall or pass through it.... Which meanwhile can lead to another accident: he stops coinciding with himself on the way back up, blackout, bottomless electrical black discharge (chest invaded by black, this time the maximum awakening). Astonished quavering, tail-spin of astonishment: a non-coinciding, but expressed by being squashed to the ground, a giant inner whack against the ground -- a bottomless ground, an accumulation of discrepancy that is about to shift into low gear and repeat itself in jerks, now: me-minus-me, me-minus-me, rug pulled again and again out from under the feet of an uncoordinated character who can neither fall nor stand....

He writes:

"... Quickly. There is this movement of waking up, a reparation that affects the city outside, reverberates its presence near and far. It is there now, and has been there beyond the windows all this time: structures, avenues, a slowly changed, interrupted, prolonged mass, designed according to other projects and other aspects, a big page that never stops overloading itself, masking itself.... But this morning the harbour is outlined by a widespread clarity. In the shade, the cool streets have a more tallied, lively way of intersecting. The mouth of the basin is burning in a white and bluish mist. It is easy to see it from the lanes that end at the stairs leading up to the hills. But up here there is more a feeling of a thin, neat skyline. A neutral waiting and repeating, in place. Traces of lost time. Wasted realization. Subtle manoeuvres, subtly fortified behind this serene emptiness, silence degree zero. A tensed will that clams up. I have to pretend that I'm obeying, go with the flow, get dazed -- not face the enemy (that's just what he's waiting for so he can strengthen his hold). Pretend to be suspended in this blank absence of thought:

slow, formless wheel.... That's what the fight is like, very deep, silent.... A burst of intellect, swerved off course, without braking: since what it understands no longer has any importance, it seems bent on understanding it, on explaining it in a lyric, overwhelming style.... Insignificant points, details (a multivoiced discourse, caught in passing).... Sometimes the images that come one after the other in me -- after this blank neutrality -- are in fact so grandiosely stupid that I laugh as I go on.... This troubled stupidity produces madness, but also a special reason that suffers from itself and has no other purpose but to give in to and condemn what is denying its existence.... I fill in these squares of the game. Without forgetting the project. I always imagined that at just the right moment the real story would let itself be told.... Coming out of storage, righting the outlook.... But for now it's a matter of a hollow, muffled word that is spoken in shadow and that I can only speak here as an echo.... On this side of the windows pierced by the sun, far from the turn of the hill above, where the tar is going to melt under the heat, a turn where the half-circle of the shimmering blue basin, the docks, the steamers, the yachts are unveiled ... a humming and silent and warm turn opening abruptly on the grey and yellow, entangled, smoking city (and then the square appears like a spot of peaceful green), a halted city, neatly penned in by the smooth and suddenly cold ocean."

He becomes a still, cold echo, standing at the corner of the street, the echo of a phrase she was repeating to herself at the other end of the city. Then silence. He half wakes: bright green, rapidly flowing river before his eyes (while she stays in his vision like a black point of impact, a vertical plane felt full face). And now there is a heart beating again in a countercurrent of sleep.... At the same time, the thought that between two beats "eternity" takes place.... Obviously, insistent thought: "eternity" is "whatever is least lasting" (an instant lasts too long to represent it). Collapse, fainting, pulverization: the more you divide it up, the more it escapes you: the more confident you are, the less you are able to grasp the phenomenon. Now the pain is sharp, incessant (there was a moment when that could be clearly said, but the trap is always the same, always works with the same precision: "Why bother, it will always be there in your mind?"). Closing his eyes, he tries to let "the spring" well up "right from the source." Then a shaking that gets stronger and stronger: his whole body, but a body that has been conceived rather than perceived, now seems as if it is wavering in place, as though -- but the comparison immediately makes it skid to the side -- as though at a distance he can see the curve, the curving. Escape: everything that he doesn't want to think expressly making itself thought.... The place is reduced, a kind of hand closes over the whole landscape, rakes it together, folds it up, loosens the moorings of the whole landscape.... Invisible unfolding, warm, organic frontier in the night.... He is leaning against this threatening tapestry.... Like a cloth rolled up out of space, but only the space can speak of it, a series of useless images from this point on facing the possibility of an immediate, silent language.... It is really the "whole world" that is felt in this frail, warm shadow, in this ungraspable abode of shadow and night ... (and the night, outside, filters with the mist into the more and more silent city, while the lights persist, while the media unfold and persist within, short bulletins, snatches of music, newspapers going to press, shifts, delays that an incessant wakefulness is busy filling, comments and repetitions of confident, direct speech in broad daylight ...). And the night takes possession of him, in the end, drawing the curtain behind which he can pretend to escape the problem, although at that point everything is shifted into a parallel operation, and when he is awake again he will only be able to pull a few disguised fragments of this work out of the current ... a few insignificant stage directions for a whole text that he is sure to have read, understood, nimbly lived ... always this margin, this cut, thin, hidden imminence....

He writes:

"The problem never presents itself head on.... Its basic organization keeps us from posing it.... You move forward with me in this story, and you surprise me, the way you take the turns of this imperceptible journey, hour after hour, day after day, seemingly without losing anything, of a dull intensity, a certainty you find outside of me, zone of shadow and spontaneity (you act as if you can see beyond you, really see something, as if you are the property of something whose secret orders you follow), unfocused zone behind your face that seems as if it is asleep in a distant perpetual absorption, aside from brief nervous breakthroughs, high points to which it's impossible to make you return.... Never repeated, immediately deflected, disguised sentences that are implicitly worth "if only you knew" each time.... Half-finished gestures.... As if you have accepted the the entire imitation, the theme and variations of the piece in which you are virtually dragging me along, and if I try to question you about it, you dodge the question or answer too quickly beside the point.... And then that dark, fixed invasion that strays right to the surface of your eyes -- appeal, perplexity, silent crisis, intensity offered through me to something very great ... very cold and very great ... that makes your tensed face half smile, as if it were passing quickly, very near, without moving, behind the window (movement of your lips behind the glass, the train leaving, brief white and reddened spot in the fog and fumes of the grey morning), this is a part of an unattached, limitless story, no one will be able to tell you how you live it, alone, isolated, withdrawn into your incomprehensible life (standing in the aisle of the train that is passing into the dark trench that runs through the middle of the city, between the high lookalike façades of scenery)...."



# OTHER ENDINGS

## by Dave Godfrey

Other Endings  
Wireless Endings  
Broadcast Endings  
27C.

How, in heaven's name, had Krattjfa managed to get hold of the Gunn? To ordinary men a mere sack with rags of gold lace drifting now in the light winds of the desert, but to the priest, Amon, the golden Gunn, that sacred container, that image of the inevitable reckoning, from which, once unfolded, once shaken out (the shakers holding it by two corners, like ears, like a wild Guara dog-pup held earthward by its hind legs) would tumble -- to gasps, to wails, to a clutching of eyes on the part of the young women -- the severed head of the white-haired patriarch who had so resolutely terrorized them all since the Kasfa, the day of their casting out, the many days, each Kasfa individual, each charted in one son's mind as a pattern for revenge, each remembered in its own iconograph of shame and betrayal.

- 37.
- "Our host is very Italian," said that perpetual guest, Bernstein.
- "But four generations of the Rossetti family have lived in Mexico; in Guanajato for two generations before they fled here to the capital," replied Jarna. "Surely, Bernstein, you accept that at some time one becomes native?"
- "The Italians understand nothing of the old or the new, only the eternal."
- "They do find the accidents of history inconsequential, I grant you that. Even the Borgias didn't seem really to try. Except perhaps for Alexander and Caesar."
- "Rossetti is dishonoured by Felix because he can't understand that we Jews are parricides, while all Mexicans are filicides. In Christ, we tried to kill the Father, terrified that we might find the Messiah incarnate in a usurper. This makes sense, especially if you consider that each time a Redeemer appears, our destruction hangs in the balance. On the other hand, Mexicans wish only to kill their sons."
- "A little sweeping, perhaps," Jarna replied. "There are millions of us. More than half of us are women."
- "But what tortures you is the idea of offspring. Any form of continuation serves as proof of your degeneration and bastardy."
- "Do mothers wish to kill their daughters or are mothers not Mexican?" replied Jarna, hiding her anger in irony. Then, more sadly, thinking of Leika's madness, "But it is true, Malinche was passed from people to people, as part of tributes, until she was offered to the blond-bearded god from Spain. We are all part of her, in some way."
- Bernstein was nervous; he observed Armo across the room, smiling ironically.
- Rossetti was making his way through the crowd toward Jarna, his current lover.
- The Director General waved his hand in the direction of the wharf where the boat and the smugglers were still held.
- The President, leonine, powerful and somewhat weary, was within a few steps of Brattjfa.
- "Perhaps we are all both parricides and filicides?" Rossetti said to Jarna as he arrived, one brief moment before the gunfire.

- 27B.
- And old Hadonus, that patriarch, heaven knew, had never needed to get hold of any guts or gumption, showing in his constant rut, his riotous, enslaving, dionysian rut with the dozen or more women and their daughters showing more gumption and guts than any of the thirty-three remaining brothers and half-brothers could possibly conceive of or dream of, even Amon, the wanderer, the crazed one, the mountain walker, whose visits into the mountains of Setha had become so much more frequent since the death of his full sister Saronia in the fortified caves where Hadonus, that patriarch, the oldguy, the all-healing, the guarder of Dosokona, kept the women, and their daughters, and their young sons, and the grain and dried fish and berryfoods which they all provided for him, and for his feasts, and for his three-headed god and for, finally (with whatever remained), their own battered, joyless and slave-like existence.

- 91.
- Though history says she died of the coughing death, I am sure the one that they put in the coffin they first murdered; Guiapas, the daughter of slaves, my mother's slaves. Murdered her and gave her my name.
- Or gave her my name so they could murder her. So there were two I had to live for in one name, Ce Malianalli, both Guipas and Malintzin; and two I had to lie for, and two I had to love for.
- After you have become like silver and gold and stone yourself, after you have been object of greed and lifted from cart to cart by priests and warriors, after you have been shamed by kings, after a dozen tribes have passed you from hand to hand with the curse of the oracles hanging above you like a dark storm from the endless oceans, after all this then if the son of the Christ beyond the oceans with his beard of gold and his laughter of silver for all the gods offers you his hands, his blessed waters, and a new name, Marina, then you take them and you give the Teul in exchange what you have which is all the greed and weaknesses you have seen for fifteen years as they passed you from hand to hand and from bed to bed and taught you that the Lord of the Great Voice was nothing but the hot farts of an obese lizard.
- What do they know of betrayal? Malinche? Of course, I am Malinche as well as Marina. And they too are Malinche, walking towards Guiapas, walking with the snake-drink. Was it my own mother?
- Why is it not she who bears the name Malinche through history? Who remembers Guiapas? I tell you, all those in Tenochtitlan will remember her name. The negotiations will be very brief. The temples will be razed. We will build a new day in which the newly born will be sacred. In the Sanctuary of our Dark Lady they will remember Guiapas.

"Some wore crowns of thorns and cactus leaves upon their breasts."

"But many were simply there for the sights, and because you had to visit the Virgin, whether or not she'd answered your prayers made back there in Alcambarao, Acaponeta, or Zacatecas."

"But many wore crowns of thorns and their knees were dark with blood."

- 43.
- "Mr. Spock," murmured Uhura, "that almost sounds religious. You're not turning guru on us?"
- Spock started to reply, hesitated, and finally said, "It may be interpreted variously, Lieutenant Uhura, but recent experiences tend to make one pause before disregarding anything. What do you think, Amon?"
- Amon looked at the viewscreen, which showed first the Glavnoe Upravlenie Ispravitelnotrudovoykh Lagerei and the the globe of Gypsy receding into a vast star-speckled blackness.
- "I think, Mr. Spock, that we'd better make the best we can of this universe -- it's the only illusion we've got, and it's not a bad one."

- 27A.
- Somehow, after the death of Saronia, Hadonus had known not to carelessly take hold of gulls or guavas, knowing that some depth (staring from his good eye and his buried eye at the women around the fires), that the only two women bold enough to visit Amon after Saronia's death were Jarna, the bird catcher, and old Leika, aunt to Saronia and Amon and headwife of all the fruit-gatherer women, a head taller even than Hadonus, stout-bodied from birth and strong-tongued since children came no more to her.
- So none of Amon's skills with herbs was more than an amusement for that rock-heart patriarch who fed the poisoned gulls to his red-skinned hunting dogs, calling Jarna in to watch in the dark firelight of the inner caves as the dogs writhed and retched and bit at their stomachs until her own eyes grew slack with terror as she guessed at his intents, his tongue purple-blue with berry juice and his face dark with frenzy as one by one his strongest dogs contorted their bodies into silence.
- Waited. Let her live her days in terror. Waiting. Climbing after the nests and awaiting the arrow. Tossing nets and expecting the larger net. Running with the young red dogs and feeling the teeth. Always awaiting the stone, the spear, the angry young dogs, the guillotine, the murre's beak at her throat, the sharpened gully, the final dream, the grenade placed in her hands.

- 32.
- "After my little guignol with Jarna, I encouraged neither men nor women in any sort of intimacy; yet I have gone on being for one artist or another a symbol until I've become something of a legend myself. It is not really respectable, in Western Canada anyway, for a poet to pass thirty without having written a poem to me. I have been muse, witch, preying lesbian. I have also been devouring mother, whore, Diana, spirit of Vancouver, daughter of the tides, Dzonokwa, D'Sonaqua."
- "Charming, Lucia. What the hell's a gewee-naul?"
- "A Punch and Judy show. That does sound pompous, doesn't it?"
- "I like the rhythms, but it will be better when the winter ceremonials begin and everyone must change their names. Then maybe we will all become serious."
- "Winter ceremonials. You sound just like Sara. You know that woman was sleeping with both of them all through the trial."
- "I thought prisoners were always locked up?"
- "Not in Mexico. Or they have some kind of visiting rights. She was a mess; I don't see what either of them saw in her. Her eyes were like the tunnels in the Rockies. And her mouth was red as a stoplight, like she'd swallowed a pomegranate and was sucking a lemon at the same time."
- "Oh, Lucia; you're unbelievable. And what happened to the children? That's what I worried about."
- "She sucked them up too. What did you think? And headed for the hills with the hundred thousand. All she paid her dear lawyer was however many screws she had available for the fat little beast. Honestly, if she weren't my own sister I wouldn't even want to know any of this. He'll be out in five years and then he'll probably murder her. That's just what I need."
- "Better get yourself a good lawyer."
- "Well, I know one to avoid. That's a start."
- "Let's order something, Lucia. This is almost as bad as our discussion last week. They were such lovely children."

- 55.
- When the crash of the furious waves against the imperilled fishing boat was at its height and ragged streaks of lightning lit up the sky, they saw Amon hurl himself over the gunnel and heard his last words.
- "Knot by knot I untie myself from the past and let it rise away from me like a balloon. What a small thing it becomes. What a bright tweak at the vanishing point, blue on blue. One way or another, the negotiations will be short. One way or the other."
- 22.
- "A five-letter word, Kurt, starting with *gu*; probably *gu*, maybe *gr*."
- Thinking that it must be an error, although the *Times* never made errors: *gullet*, *guyere*, *gusset*, *guywire*, *Guinevere*; thinking of the food served on the cruise so far, of the costumes of the dancers, of the acrobats who had been promised but had never arrived.



Perhaps *thug*, 12 down, was wrong.

"Four letters. Smalltime crook. Nothing but *thug*, right?"

"Try Theo, your father."

"Ha, ha. Ha."

If yours made \$992,000 last year you wouldn't say that so easily. If you could have finished your MBA. If you had started as a restaurant manager and made your way up to where you could fire four thousand people last year alone.

"No, Kurt. Not smalltime. It takes a bigtime crook to fire four thousand men in one year; managers, even his own protégé."

She didn't listen to his sarcastic reply. An *r* in place of the *u* would make it so easy: *grand*, or *grove*, or *grave*, or *grail*, or *grape*. There was something Christian and reassuring about *gr*; she had never seen that; something that *gu* lacked entirely; *gu* was foreign, Arabic perhaps. Guttural. She barely noticed the four young men who pushed the fat Greek captain into the main saloon, barely noticed until the shots rang out and spat their way through the mahogany panelling.

"The best mahogany comes from Belize and Honduras," she said into the silence.

Kurt pulled her down to the floor. Nonetheless, she turned her eyes back towards them, seeing that they were here at last, terror in their eyes, terror in the quickness of their motions, the guns pointed slightly upwards, as though acting as a shield against some unseen force. One could spell their name guerrilla, guerrila or guerilla, she thought; I ought to be more frightened, she thought. But for the moment, she was without fear; she could not hear any thump of her heart. It was quiet, the white linens of the plump Captain made that clothing noise you usually hear only when you are alone, a swish of raked leaves, a newspaper unfolded, as he stumbled over a chair and then righted himself. Guilt, she suddenly thought. We are all guilty; it is all a guilty darkness.

19.

But how had they got hold of a Gulf Island ferry? And brought it all the way around the island? A monster, a sea cannibal that came thundering towards them in the fog while the two nervous Mounties, who had all six of them trussed in the bottom of the zodiac like so many sacrificial chickens, stared gull-eyed in horror and disbelief at the immense white hull, righting themselves out of their fear to prepare for evasive action only once they had accepted the boat that was hundreds of kilometres off course as nonetheless fitting securely into this reality, its very bulk casting aside doubts, preparing themselves to dart here or there once they saw the pattern of movement through the fog, until they finally recognized that the monster was slowing, shuddering in the fog and waves as the engines reversed and drove it back against its own momentum and Amon came out on the deck with the crew lined up like dolls in front of him, shouting:

"This is going to be a quick negotiation. One way or the other it's going to be quick."

The first bullet hit the stern of the zodiac and you could hear the hiss of air above the ever-present screeching of the gulls and murre, and the sobs of one of the kitchen crew who had broken down in fear from looking at the angry waves below and hearing the irrational terror deep in the throats of the young smugglers who held them all prisoner.

15.

How Michael Gurdus got hold of all this information was clear even to the non-technical. He monitors regularly selected news broadcasts in many countries and other wireless transmissions including air-ground communications and top-secret military messages. When the late Greek Cypriot leader, Archbishop Makarios, fled for his life in 1974 and broadcast for help on a makeshift transmitter, the message was not heard by any military listening post. The alert Mr. Gurdus, however, picked it up and his notifying the British authorities led to the Archbishop's rescue.

He heard the young boy crying in the gulch. He heard the hunter father wail as the boar's tusk gored gut and spleen and rib-bones. He heard the three-headed god sing the death song of Hadonus.

He heard the last breaths. He heard the agony calls of Krattjfa, younger half-brother of Sarona, birthson of Jarna. He heard the boar speared in its killing thrusts.

He heard silence through the night as the two bodies stiffened. He heard Krattjfa's new knife saw through the spine where it shapes the neck, the gut-skin where it joins to the testicles. Did he hear the blood?

He heard the gunny-sack unfolded, the head scooped up, the god enclosed, the child-retching of Krattjfa. The fire lit against darkness. The first steps taken over the rocks towards the outcasts.

17.

The guiniad, the white-fleshed salmon which Sarona cooked with delight, had lived in the lakes since before memory. The gutter-trees had shaded the lakes even longer. The bony gurnets or gumards she fed only to the red-dogs when they were at the sea-camps in the calm of summer. Gumbo was the dark wife's word for okra, which thickened her soups, which strengthened her sons, which did nothing to hide the bite of red guinea-peppers she said were the seeds of the sun.

All this she would teach to the children; they were too afraid of the world. They played a game called panic. They jumped up on the sofa and screamed, "Missile attack, missile attack." Their faces were flushed with delight.

They were young; she was not. They held something that was forever gone from her. She must become wary. They hid their heads and bumped into one another until all tumbled down. Then Sofie said, "All clear!" and they jumped down.

Then they ran somewhere else and screamed, "Earthquake bombs, earthquake bombs." They stood on chairs and their friends shook them until they tumbled down and then they exchanged places and did it all over again until Sarona said, "All clear!" This was to indicate that they were bored. They would do this for hours. Their heads held a catalogue of terrors.

How to take the colour from the red resin of the gumbo-limbo. How to make the dance-spirit with hand and stick and guiro; how first to carve the rings into the dried calabash so that the tool knew your hand. How to net young guans in the forest.

The quick rhythm of the knife on avocado flesh so that only small pieces go into the copper sieve that she kept for guacamole. The thrill of the chase after guanacos; where to make the first cut; how to hang the young males, bleed them, peel the fawn-brown hide from the flesh so that the least blood darkened the soft fur. What soil Leika had said would grow the richest guavas.

"Everywhere the ground bursts," Leika chanted within the cave after the women had brought home the drained, stiffened, headless memory of the body and fear and protection that had been Hadonus. "The light of day breaks through the cracks into Tartarus and frightens the king of the deep and his wives. Everywhere the ground bursts. What new evil is born today?"

The thick yellowish milk of the Guernseys had always made the best cakes. How to leave alone in all seasons the guilemots, the guides of lost fisherwomen; the messengers of Leikana. Where the guerezas chatted in the mountains of Abyssinia, stealing fruit, fouling the ground beneath their home trees, but amusing in the way of their tribe; they had lived in those trees since before memory. The trees had shaded the river even longer.

How to sharpen your eyes to see the guacharo, the night bird, before letting the arrow fly through the darkness; how to store its rich oil. The gullah wife, darker than Leika, taught them how to milk the guaco for its poison against snake-poison. Taught them, with flourishes and spells that Jarna found a little too much, the chants to use with that milk-white antidote she said was the lovejuice of the moon. Sarona would have known a better word.

1107.

I understood now why it was that the Duc de Guermantes, who to my surprise, when I had seen him sitting on a chair, had seemed to me so little aged although he had so many more years beneath him than I had, had presently, when he rose to his feet and tried to stand firm upon them, swayed backwards and forwards upon legs as tottery as those of some old archbishop with nothing solid about his person but his metal crucifix, to whose support there rushes a mob of sturdy young seminarists, and had advanced with difficulty, trembling like a leaf, upon the almost unmanageable summit of his eighty-three years, as though men spend their lives perched upon living stilts which never cease to grow until sometimes they become taller than church steeples, making it in the end both difficult and perilous for them to walk and raising them to an eminence from which suddenly they fall among the guisards.

"Where will we hunt today, father?"

"In the hills beyond the camp of the outcasts, Brattjfa."

"What will we hunt today, father?"

"Wild boar, my son. It is the moon of the mountain boar. Soon the tusks will grow in you. According to the mother of Leika, I have seen five births of this moon. I don't really give a shit, myself. Never trust people who tell you they have a direct line to god. If he wanted us to be on his PBX, he would have wired us in directly."

"Yes, father."

33.

The walk to the outcasts with the terrible sack on my shoulder was a painful business, as was everything else that happened to me afterwards, but when, on the many such occasions I find the key and look deep down into myself where the images of destiny lie slumbering in the dark mirror, I only need to bend my head over the black mirror to see my own image which now wholly resembles him, my friend and leader, my Ernesto Guevara, my deceiver, my father, murderer and spoiler of my sister, Sarona. By what right does Amon control the memory-times for Sarona?

13.

At first, Amon made rites to hold us together and the death was great enough in all of our minds to put away thoughts of women, but over time what could you expect when we had no political science and little philosophy, no Woodrow Wilson Guthrie to sing us solidarity songs, no Guy Fawkes to sell us dreams of eternal life, no Gustav I and II to mould us into a northern dynasty against time? What were his Gunn and Sarona and Akasfa against all that time without love?

We all got hot, thinking of what we'd never had. We all began to strut around like duster birds, thinking that women would come dancing into our territory and head for the middle ground.

Amon taught us all to dream and gave us each a bird or animal to hunt down for a great feast. The boar he hunted himself, with only my help. Then we were all forbidden to eat our own name-being at the feast and the women too played at Amon's game, or Leika's game, who could say whose it was after all that feasting and dancing?

All of us were forbidden to eat the boar, but on the second night, led by Amon and Leika, talking wildly with the xataa in our bellies, we devoured something that looked very much like that boar to me, although in the moonlight who could really say and by the next morning light who could really remember anything of the past?

The future lay bright before us, like the bottomless green lakes that lie beyond the mountains. Soon we must move; there are already too many of us now. My own children hardly believe our tales. I myself, Krattjfa, the slayer of Hadonus, hardly believe some of what we sing. The memory of life is one salmon in the torrents, soon to die. The ache for anything is a thick dust in the heart.

# CHANSON DU DEJEUNER GRATIS by Sid Marty

"Où est le parapluie de ma Tante?" --  
A. B. Tenant, French Language Instructor  
William Aberhart High, 1958

Ice shuts up the creek  
A steer goes skating out  
It falls and stays, as if to sleep  
or contemplate the trout

Soon one eye's welded to the ice  
The other's frozen to the sun  
The main course has arrived  
Prime Alberta beef  
Let the meal begin

*La vue de mon fenêtre  
aujourd' hui, il est unique  
Avant de mon atelier  
sur les pins, les pins sauvages*

*Et moi, je suis enchanté  
À cause de la scène rustique*

The diners blow in on the breeze  
arrayed in formal black  
One quickly lights upon  
le bouvillon, sur la glace

*"Monsieur Bouvillon," il dit  
"Je vous en prie, pardon  
Je déclare le bistro ouvert  
Le menu, il est toi!"*

*"J'ai faim, et je demande  
un biftec, très cru  
Et vin du pays, rouge!"*

Oo la la, the cheeky thing!  
See how it folds its wings, then  
digging with its beak  
plucks out an eye -- *tout de suite!*  
(*Pour un apéritif, sans doute!*)

*Mais, merde! Voici les autres!  
Why, they're acting just like vultures!  
Tabernacle! I'm gonna call  
Le Ministère de l'Agriculture*

*Allô, Ottawa? Parlez-vous Boeuf?  
Cette Crow Rate est impayable  
mais le corbeau taxe -- incroyable!  
Je proteste aussi them interest rates....  
Écoutez-moi -- hey, wait!*

*Monsieur le Ministère  
il ne répond rien  
Il va chercher son déjeuner  
parlementaire again*

Jeez, them coyotes sure ain't thin  
Come a moseyin' to the din  
First they sniff around the a-hole  
Now they're tunnelling on in

'Cause they are wild and born free  
I swear that steer might almost rise....  
Billy *donnez-moi le .303*  
(Each pelt is worth \$135)

*Mais les petites loups, ils chantons  
Un miracle commence  
À la musique farouche  
Le bouvillon, il danse!*

Bill, forget the gun  
*Mon Dieu, quel brouhaha!*  
They're having so much fun  
*Je vais chercher ma camera*

But from some frozen hive  
come rambunctiously alive, the magpies!  
Just in time, to sing their grateful tunes  
to the guts of the afternoon

*Bon appetit, old pals  
Lard up, it's all on me  
C'est un bon pays, je pense  
Pour les déjeuners gratuits*

# 4 POEMS FROM "SEX & THE SINGLE MUSHROOM" by Gerry Gilbert

**Week**  
i was sitting in the sentimental cafe last night  
licking at the pat of butter  
that had fallen off my knife  
like a preposition  
into my mushroom soup  
& when it was all gone  
into me  
amen  
i said to myself  
oh  
woman  
i say to you  
i taste you  
every time i talk

**Chilled Grease San**  
not too big a deal  
your knocking off the fly we were playing with  
easy to decide  
you got more going than any bug  
flies survive winter  
hands attract dirt  
you drive a hard moon

it isn't heaven until we're all dead  
it isn't the classless society until we're all broke  
in the meantime one ear screwed up with wax is useful  
when the rushhour starts scoring your dream against you  
memories howling at intentions down blind alleys of belief  
the temperature of blood

the first reader & the last word  
tongue licking at the swelling where the idea will appear  
the starving publisher sniffs at the teeth in the mug  
the market for eggrolls excites the chickens into extinction  
imagining by instruments lets you forget about colour

you is just a figure of speech  
hit the silk & follow the sun down  
which lines grew above this as inevitably as a mushroom  
there & fore wakes up here & after

play at first  
fuck at second  
eat at last

by the way  
love only makes it when you're incensed

third world lucky

**Slap**  
make a marinade of vinegar, soy sauce, crushed garlic & slivers of ginger  
slice tofu into it  
don't even think about granola  
slice an onion & a couple of tomatoes into the skillet with butter or olive oil & fry  
set them done on a platter of brown rice  
i cooked the raisins with the granola once & they turned back into seeds  
fry the tofu with some grated cheese on it in the skillet  
slap it on top of everything on the platter  
garnish with freshly toasted sesame seeds, as long as they don't remind anyone of  
granola  
a nice thing about slap, it won't remind anyone of meat  
i haven't been able to make pancake soup work yet  
but if there's any hot dog buns left in the lurch, bananas & peanut butter make nice  
cold cats

**From Year One**  
you got mustard  
i got mustard  
all god's turds got mustard

paradise for breakfast  
dialectic for lunch  
freedom for tea  
the whole world on the same time for supper  
win yr race & embrace yr ancient self for snack  
smash the upppest class for nitecap

i go to double bills with a noisy bag of stewpot popcorn sprinkled with maple syrup &  
3 days later half my major lower molar turns to food  
& a thermos of old coffee & your favourite mug  
& sit at the front enjoying my farts alone hoping they never pull a posthumous pink  
panther outa my off moments

you there & it's you  
me here & it's me



# HONOURED IN THE BREACH

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF DÜRER'S "MEMORIAL TO A DRUNKARD"

by Brian Edwards

Tributes to the fine art of drinking are exceptional not for their frequency alone, proof of a practice which is sometimes, as Hamlet observed to Horatio on the subject of Danish carousing, "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

### A SHORT SURVEY

Homer's warrior Greeks were wine connoisseurs, Plato regarded wine as a truth serum and official ritual observances came twice a year in the Attic social calendar; a little later, Romulus pardoned a wife-murderer because the woman had drunk her husband's wine, the elder Pliny devoted Book 14 of *Historia Naturalis* to vines and their produce, Horace claimed a most catholic thirst, testy Juvenal reviled the selfish drinker and Petronius introduced Trimalchio; biblical injunctions are rife of course and they go either way, Ecclesiastes observing that wine was created to make men joyful, and not to make them drunk.

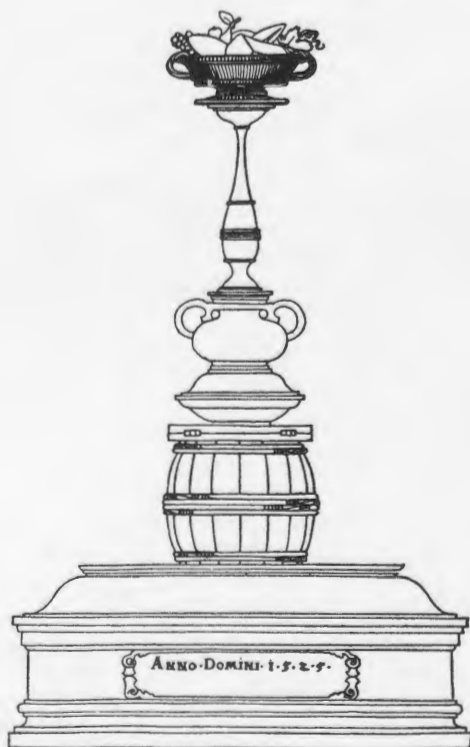
Though to catalogue the rest would be tedious, and unnecessary (the literature is vast, and Bunzel's well-known paper of 1946 introduced a flood of anthropological research), it might be noted that there is a three-thousand-year-old Chinese imperial edict titled "The Announcement about Drunkenness," that drinking to oblivion was mandatory at Aztec festivals lest the gods be displeased, that although Falstaff is the figure of centuries of British tipping "Irish dissipation" fully deserves its exclusive chapter, that Australia's first legal pub -- The Masons Arms -- was built by a French Londoner transported for stealing a silver tankard, and that there remain drinking songs enough to fill more volumes than a scholar would care to read in a good month's work.

### DÜRER'S MEMORIAL

But what of Dürer's "Memorial to a Drunkard?"

Amongst his last works, and designed as an instructional text in solid geometry and perspective for his country's youth, for embryonic painters, goldsmiths, sculptors, stonemasons and carpenters, Albrecht Dürer in 1525 published *The Painters Manual*, "A Manual of Measurement of Lines, Areas and Solids by Means of Compass and Ruler," dedicating the work to his mentor Pirckheimer. Included there in Book 3, between the "Monument to Commemorate a Victory over the Rebellious Peasants" and "Construction of a Tower," is another monumental column -- his design of the "Memorial to a Drunkard" (Fig. 1). This from the old master of religious and royal iconography! The grave is dated 1525; it is topped by a beer cask, draught board, two dishes one face down on the other, "weit niederträchtigen Bierkrug" -- a wide-mouthed common beer mug, inverted beer glass and a basket of food. The figure is exemplary, a study in perfect symmetry, a source for "learning about measurement with ruler and compass." It is also, one concludes, a witty joke, at the expense, perhaps, of all commissioners of commemorative columns. Who, indeed, would see this project through, situating the parodic structure in a cemetery or park -- the drunkard, the drunkard's family, a forgiving patron, the State? Is the "Memorial to a Drunkard" an impossibility, then, designed "Haec delectationis causa" (Scheurl's 1932 Latin translation), for amusement's sake only, as Dürer suggested?

Even so, mindful of Pataphysics but a speculative philosopher ever reluctant to concede the completely impossible, and despite total failure (so far) in my correspondence, archival research and visits to European cemeteries (confirmation I agree of the current scepticism about empirical studies), I shall continue (Fig. 2). If not a drunkard's friend -- a loyal drinking companion -- then maybe a widow in jest or an enemy in malice has used this design. Besides, Dürer's influence is not confined to Europe, there is Australia, Trinidad, Japan, the whole of North America....



## ANIMAL STORY par Jean-Paul Daoust

L'animal  
his arms wings of love in erection  
action

Vous savez n'est-ce pas que les animaux ne sont pas tous  
dans les zoos

But you know of course that they eat any time  
The heart is the best part

Even the toughest one is tender

Comme la peau autour de l'âme

Mais les mots sont difficiles à digérer

Ton coeur prisonnier de la plus belle cage qui soit

J'ai peur le voyeurisme peut tuer

When the animal understands that you don't he eats you up

L'animal n'a pas de temps à perdre  
le temps c'est sa vie  
le temps c'est lui  
le temps est le sang

L'animal est toujours étonné de vieillir  
DÉJÀ?

L'animal aime l'eau  
le soleil  
les plantes langoureuses  
les parfums érotiques

L'animal hait ce qu'il n'aime pas

L'animal dévore ce qu'il aime/hait  
READER BEWARE

Dans la neige dans la jungle  
L'animal est roi comme toi dans mon coeur

"Aie! Tu m'fais mal  
À mon coeur d'animal"

J'aime sa peau de tigre fiévreux  
ses yeux de hibou jaloux  
ses jambes de girafe léopard

ses lèvres de koala sage  
ses cheveux de plantes carnivores

Love good food very spicy  
You let me try your recipe

J'aime les animaux savants  
J'aime son grand corps de dinosaure  
FOOD ILLIMITED

La planète est un animal aux formes multiples

Mais mon animal est spécial

Love is far from Pet Shop

Animal je rôde autour de toi animal toi-même

S.O.S. LA RAGE

L'amour s'overdose

À chasser les papillons on finit mangé par un lion

And Bugs Bunny said to Road Runner that just felt over the

coyote: "Donald Duck is cooking Mickey Mouse!"

Mais c'est connu

Quoi de plus humain qu'un animal



# THE FOOLPROOF GENIUS, or "How I Became Immortal"

by Eugene Dubnov

translated from the Russian by  
Peter Winn and John Heath-Stubbs

I had been waiting by the entrance since 8 a.m. and had almost given up hope when at last he appeared. "A very humble good afternoon to you, Your Genius-ship!" I called, both obsequiously and mockingly, attempting by flattery to ingratiate myself with the Genius and by sarcasm to gain the sympathy of passersby. The Genius looked up with eyes swollen from lack of sleep, glanced indifferently in my direction and stood still, sunk deep in thought. He probably took me for just another of those dogs with instructions from higher up to hound him. Well, even geniuses make occasional mistakes. My task came, indeed, from higher up, but in the metaphysical, not political, sense.

Meanwhile things had begun to get lively. A few idle spectators who just happened to be near the house became interested. A well-dressed Young Promising Talent, in a hurry to get somewhere, also halted; he had that blissful look which is only found in newly-weds, madmen and Young Promising Talents. "Hey, that's him, the talentless revisionist!" he hailed the Genius and left, adding a supercilious expletive.

"Bread and circuses!" What other notion -- apart from immortality -- exerts such power over the human imagination? Crowds of people, attracted by the spectacle (which, unlike bread, was free), started to bait the Genius, with but mediocre success. Everything was going according to plan. I set to work on the next stage. Forcing my way back through the crowd of amateurs (who in their enthusiasm had already managed to push me away) and coming face to face with the Genius, I hurled the most dazzling abuse at him, each word of which had been lovingly and painstakingly prepared over a period of months.

A sudden hush came over the crowd, followed by a murmur of admiration. Then, with complete assurance, I led the people to the main square of the city. Pressed from all sides, the Genius was compelled to move along with the mass. On the way the procession increased and multiplied. "Whom are you going to string up?" eagerly inquired the representatives of the intelligentsia. "Jews and Geniuses: to protect the people," men in plain clothes helpfully explained.

Having reached the square, I stopped. The crowd gathered around us and gave us room. Here, raising my right arm, like the figure on the monument opposite, I spoke out in regard to the current drought, bad harvests, starving herds, threats of foreign imperialism and, last but not least, the rising prices of certain national distilled liqueurs. I held the Genius responsible for everything.

The people, driven to ecstatic excitement, roared. The windows of the government buildings surrounding the square opened and graciously smiled down upon the proceedings. Finally, heralding the climax of my oration, I accused the Genius of ontological Geniusism and, amidst the panting mob, having calculated the distance, stepped five paces back, rushed at him and bit into his hip, holding on like grim death.

The Genius jerked and, regaining his balance, swayed like a camel through the gasping crowd, while I like a wine-skin dangled at his side.

Yes, that is how our life together -- our symbiosis, as I prefer to call it -- began. My final destination still lay before me, but already on my way I had tasted all the sweetness of the nation's rapturous homage. The Genius, in his turn, gained the attention of an even greater public because of my efforts and at the same time a certain immunity from what might otherwise have befallen him. That was how we got to know one another: the Genius, ever immersed in his incomprehensible thoughts, and I, habitually hanging at his side, never unclenching my teeth in public. It was always the same thing: introductions, toasts and applause for me and the appropriate abuse for the Genius. I must say that, as time passed, this life of mine became almost bearable. My only solace was the Genius, with whom I developed an intimate friendship. Like brothers, we ate, slept and even performed our bodily functions together.

Years went by. The Genius grew old and feeble, and whatever health he had once enjoyed began to fail him. And I myself, to be honest, was no longer that brave, energetic young fellow-me-lad that I had been back in the square. From the constant strain my teeth had worked loose, some had even fallen out, and it was obvious that very soon I would no longer be able to bite into the scrawny haunch of the Genius and hang on. And, as if all this were not enough, another worry was added to my list of tribulations. The thing was that the longer we went on, the more the Genius began to doubt his genius. It became a part of my mission to encourage him.

"Listen to me," I patiently pleaded. "Even if you don't believe in yourself and you question your talent, at least have some faith in me. Do you think I am a dilettante in these matters? My choice could not have been erroneous. Long years had I been on your track; through hundreds of names had I sifted in search of the Foolproof Genius -- until, at last, on the happiest day of my life, I sniffed out in this world so reeking of mediocrity the quintessential odour of your spirit. Wait then, endure but a while longer, and together, side by side, tooth to hip, we shall enter Immortality."

Thus I appealed to the Genius, and his confidence was restored, and he carried on.

And so, as everything in this life sooner or later draws to its close, for us, too, the final hour arrived. The persecution of the Genius had reached its apogee, the political circumstances were most favourable, and at a glance one could tell that he would not last the coming fortnight.

"Right," I said, trying to cheer us both up, "the time has come, old friend. We have to discharge our duty and do you in."

More trouble again. Not with the Genius, oh no! If anything, he wanted to be helpful -- for the love he bore me. The problems lay in finding the right motive and working out the *modus operandi*.

Since I had no talent whatsoever and had never in my whole life created anything, artistic jealousy was ruled out straightaway. Taking into account the Genius's age and his lack of attractiveness to women, *crime passionnelle* was also out of the question. Finally, I hit upon it. The murder was to originate purely from ideological fervour and class consciousness.

As to how we were to do it, I suggested that, having accused him of being an imperialist-capitalist hyena, in a public place, I should leap at his throat and bite into his jugular. This seemed to me the best idea, but the Genius voiced certain reservations: he objected on principle to physical violence and he could not stand the sight of freshly spilt blood. And so we decided to employ a deadly toxin -- a method somewhat less spectacular and original, but at least reliable and sanctioned by tradition.

Even now I find it painful to contemplate his final moments. He made his last will and testament in which he referred to me as his assassin. Then, so as not to aggravate my suffering, he himself mixed the poison and, turning away, quickly drank it. I cried like a baby, but the Genius looked at me with eyes full of compassion. "My gentle toothless cur, you know that you will not need my coat-tails to carry you into Eternity."

With this he died. And at the moment of his death a voice spoke forth from Heaven, welcoming him to Immortality. Immediately after the Voice there came a strange and ever-growing clamour. Everywhere, as far as the eye could see, like the waves of the ocean at high tide, endless human multitudes were surging forward. Irresistibly they moved towards us, and only one word thundered and rolled above them: "Immortality."

"Immortality!" Assorted enemies of the Genius trumpeted like excited elephants, shoving and jostling each other.

"Immortality!" His playmates, school-bullies, roommates, casual acquaintances and even the Young Promising Talents and the gentle people in plain clothes muttered anxiously and righteously.

"Immortality!" wailed the postmen who neglected to deliver his letters, and the fellow-lodgers who opened those few which reached him; the scroungers who cadged drinks off him and the barmen who short-changed him. "Immortality!" pleaded the women who never loved him.

All this mass pinched, tore, bit, kicked, hissed, cursed, swarmed, and, mobilizing its last resources, caught up with and overtook its own self.

I did not have the slightest wish to linger. I knew that I had my rights. And as the shadow of the crowd fell across me, I stood still and erect, and waited.

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT by Lin Osterhage



During the next few months, I have decided to reconstruct my autobiography. I need your help.

Do you remember any time we might have shared dinner, lunch, breakfast...? Tell me where/when (include the year, month, time of day, other friends who might have been there, important details, etc.). Any mementos of the occasion -- photos, menus, bills, amusing anecdotes?

Please send me your memories of these happenings.

This information will help me a great deal, as I am exhausted dealing with the past as I know it, and rather than live in the future, I want to create a new past.

Include your name and return address, along with your part of my autobiography, so if I use it you can receive a copy of the definitive version. The compilations should be together and available by this time next year.

Thanks for your time and assistance.

Lin Osterhage  
1804 Industrial Street  
Los Angeles, California  
U.S.A. 90021



# UNIVERSAL CHICKEN

## by Brian Fawcett

You've just pulled your car off the freeway into one of those new service-station complexes. You've been driving since dawn. You're tired, the car needs gas, and you're mildly hungry. It's just past noon, one of those horrible days that seem more frequent now than they used to -- no sun, no rain, just dull cloud from horizon to horizon, like having no weather at all.

As you coast up to the pumps, stop, and shut off the motor, you experience a sense of unreality. You can't remember where you are. You look around you, but you still don't know where you are because there's nothing here you haven't seen somewhere else. Your entire body is numb from sitting in the car, from your toes to your ass right up to your brain. For a moment you suspect there's an exhaust leak and you've been bonked by carbon monoxide. Then you realize that the poison that has gotten you is of a different disposition.

Your mind is worse off than the rest of you. It's utterly entangled in bizarre patterns of iconographic images: Gulf, Pepsi, Speedy Muffler King, Burger King. You must have seen twenty or thirty sets of Golden Arches since you started driving this morning. Yet you can't quite focus on what it is you've been taking in, because your ability to connect one thought to another, and to formulate the words that build them, seems to have been replaced by an unpleasant buzzing in your head. You shake yourself, as if to unlock the aphasia, and the motion allows you to glimpse, for just a second, what has caused it.

All morning you've been driving through a kind of anti-memory device. In the middle ages they called these devices "theatres." They were pictures that helped people to remember who they were, what and where they were, and what connected them to other people, to nature and to God. What you've been in is the opposite. There are no gods, no nature if it can be tarmacked, and the people you see are encapsulated the same way you are inside their cars or their commercial identities. Instead, the device keeps pounding images into your head that tell you what to buy or what's fashionable. And while it's doing that it wears away your sense of who you are, where you are and where you're going by convincing you that you're just like everyone else and that all places are the same.

It's Planet of the Franchises they're putting you in, and the images you see are for product outlets for everything from places to sleep, to food, to gasoline and parts for your car. But you're not responding the way you're supposed to. You feel a craving for something that human beings have done that is singular, something slightly inefficient, something that has no head office and no profit-taking trajectory -- something, anything that is solely and only *where* you see it. You've seen so little particularity this morning that an anaesthetized sector of your mind actually questions this your craving for it.

The villain, you decide, shaking off the self-doubting question, is the freeway. No, it's larger than that. The villain is wraparound North America. And you understand, with a helpless sensation, that it is closing in on you and this small planet.

Every day now it gets worse, more total. When you pull into a motel tonight, you will probably fall asleep watching the same television spectacles that merchandise millions of others into temporary oblivion after a full day of being assaulted by the franchise products that have been assaulting you all morning. It's a subtle assault, of course. At least until you recognize that you're being colonized and controlled by it.

You're told that this is the new wave of democracy -- everybody gets to have the same variety of products. Somehow, the commonality of it isn't very comforting. Isn't democracy supposed to be built on differences and a respect for those differences -- the more the merrier? Being one of *The People* doesn't send the chill up your spine it once did. The only things you can share with your fellow citizens these days are consumer preferences. Once, you remember, you shared a similarity of values and an outlook toward life and experience. Or maybe you just thought you did. Whatever it was, this world you've seen today is one that isn't shareable. And it can't be experienced. Experience is a two-way process; you affect what affects you. That's how democracy is supposed to function. But if you try to affect your television set or your Big Mac, it doesn't work. You can only consume or refuse those things. Anti-democracy, anti-memory.

There you go, right? You're not even out of the car and already you're ranting. A wry grin crosses your face. Your family and most of your friends accuse you of always having to criticize something. Lighten up, they say. You think too damned much.

Mostly you've been proud to be spoken of that way. But today, thinking is a burden. It was always the singularity of the material world that made thinking pleasurable, and here there's nothing of that to attach a thought to. Instead, there's the freeway behind you and in front of you, and there are the franchises: being, being, blip, blip.

Your logical allies -- the architects, planners, university theoreticians, the anarchist avant garde -- aren't much comfort. They seem to want the world cleared of uncontrolled singularities just as much as the corporate accountants and ad men who are perpetrating this desert. They all want to see a billion self-motile universes, each in its own sealed-off vacuum. You curse your allies for giving up, but they just sneer and accuse you of being a dinosaur.

A uniformed attendant is advancing toward your car with a friendly franchise grin on his face. You climb out of the car and turn your back to him, stretching your cramped muscles as you tell him neutrally to fill up the tank. Then you lumber in the direction of the main building of the complex, half-wishing that you were Tyrannosaurus Rex but understanding that you're rather less than that. You're one of those nameless duck-billed herbivore dinos without teeth, and you're probably looking for a quiet pond full of lily pads to munch on. You're depressed and you're depressing. You might as well get into the role.

You've stopped here because there's a restaurant in the complex, and you walk to the restaurant door, open it and step inside. In the last few days you've seen this restaurant at a dozen places along the freeway. You even know what's on the menu, but when you sit down at one of the tables you ask to see one anyway, because you're an optimistic dinosaur.

No luck. You reluctantly order a dish that consists of blobs of dessicated chicken pressed into uniform lumps and deep fried. Chicken Delights, they call them. Or NuggetzaChicken, Chicken Strips. Who cares what they call it? It's Universal Chicken.

The chickens you'll be eating died months ago thousands of miles away in an anonymous processing plant. The birds were raised in commercial grow-pens without ever seeing the light of day. When they reached the appropriate size and weight they were thrown, machine-gutted but still twitching, into a vat of acid that dissolved the feathers and loosened the bones. Then the carcasses were ripped apart in a huge machine that separates flesh from bone with remarkable speed and efficiency. Your dog may be eating the guts right now in your kitchen at home, and the fertilizer made from the reconstituted bones and feathers is probably on a boat headed for a Third World country. That or something equally dechickenizing and gloomy.

You smile gloomily at the witticism, and you smile gloomily at the waitress as she tells you, with some pride, that your chicken will take less than five minutes to prepare. You're not impressed. You know how it's done. Each prepackaged portion will be taken fresh from the freezer and dropped into a boiling mixture of deodorized pre-processed beef fat and oil pressed from corn. Those identities also obliterated.

You look around for the washroom. You'll have enough time to pee and to wash up before the chicken arrives. Good. There it is.

But as you approach the washroom door, a tall burly man wearing a mackinaw coat intersects your path. He seems to be angry about something, and for a moment you wonder irrationally if he's going to beat the shit out of you. Maybe he's one of those whacked-out ex-marines you've read about. Or maybe he's been reading your mind and he's decided that he doesn't have to stand for your depressing crap. Or maybe it's just that you're a stranger. You make a swift defensive calculation: the man is a little bigger than you are, but you're younger, and, from the look of it, in better shape despite the awful day you've been having.

He doesn't attack. Like you, he simply needs to pee. Quite badly, you decide when he shoulders in front of you and slams open the washroom door. There are two urinals in the washroom, and you're soon standing shoulder to shoulder with him as both of you unzip. Perhaps it is the commonality of your intention that causes it. Whatever it is, neither one of you can go.

Actually, you know why. There's a strange phenomenon that sometimes occurs when men use a public urinal. It derives from a very simple visual principle: an object viewed from directly above appears smaller than it actually is. This quirk of human visual perception has been the source of all kinds of idiotic male behaviour. *Everyone has a larger one than you have.*

Some men respond by becoming violent. That's why so many bar fights start in the vicinity of men's washrooms. Other men, however, are able to suppress the instinctive resort to violence. They simply freeze. That's what you usually do. And that's what you do here.

The only part of you that freezes is your bladder and the small part of your brain that unlocks the bladder. The rest of you is doing just great. In fact, it's operating at twice its normal rate. You're twitchy in at least thirty locations, none of which you are willing to scratch right now. For two or three seconds you refuse to let it get to you. But you're up against history and biology together, and no matter how you struggle to out-smart yourself, you can't go.

Naturally, the guy next to you always knows about your struggle, and is laughing at you, quietly but contemptuously. He empties his own bladder without a hitch while you listen and squirm. As he leaves, you must bear his snigger of derision.

But this time, the guy next to you, despite his mackinaw and his Marine training, isn't doing any of those things. The two of you stand shoulder to shoulder as the seconds tick by, vibrating like irrigation systems with airlocks in their pipes. It becomes a race to see which one will be able to go first, and you both stay in position, straining absurdly, the veins in your necks and foreheads swelling with the effort.

Nothing doing. You're stuck. But your competitor isn't doing any better, and the situation strikes you as funny. This is, of course, partly tactics. If you can relax enough to laugh, you might be able to break the freeze. On the other hand, if you laugh too hard, you risk peeing on the wall, or on your competitor, or worst of all, you risk causing him to think that you are laughing at him and his self-perceived undersized equipment.

You therefore marshal all your will and cunning, and laugh for yourself alone, silently. No dice. You still can't go. The elusive triggering mechanism is up there in your head somewhere, like it has been since you were a small boy. It's making fun of you, actually. But hey, you're not a small boy anymore. You're a man. You don't believe in the game it is playing with you, for Christ's sake, and with a wild burst of mature and non-sexual energy you quit the game. You simply walk away from it and from the urinal. To hell with it. You zip up your fly, and leave the other guy standing there, still straining. You move to the sink, wash and dry your hands and stroll out the door. You're feeling truly adult and in control. You didn't need to pee in the first place. You may never have to pee again.

You return to your table and sit down, still sure of yourself. Right on cue the waitress appears with the Universal Chicken. It looks just as it did when you had it in Seattle or Winnipeg or Akron, Ohio. It tastes so bland you feel more like you're taking on fuel than eating.

Ahah! That's exactly what the fiends who invented Universal Chicken are supposed to make you feel. They are trying to convince you that you're no different than a machine, an automobile. That's what this whole goddamned complex is designed for. You're no dinosaur to these people, you're a 1956 Buick. The bastards find some way to turn you into a mechanical device of one sort or another at least a dozen times a day. And in that gloomy future you're driving toward, the self-conscious mental activities you engage in to defend yourself will probably be thought as irrelevant as fins on a car. Or as subversive. If you aren't both those already. Probably the computer police are piling up secret dossiers on disaffected consumers like you. Consumer cynicism, like free memory, is too capricious and anarchic. Those who are infected by it are enemies of self-management, socio/economic organization, and the auto industry. God, you're boring.

That last thought turns what began as a polite dinner argument you were having with yourself into an ugly brawl. You begin to toy with the blobs of Universal Chicken. Look, you say, pushing one of them to the centre of the plate, they're after everything that isn't standardized. They want to break them down because uniqueness is a neural stimulus. It makes people think. Instead of having order neatly externalized (and therefore manageable), free-thinking human beings create weird internal habits and clarities that make them inefficient consumers of merchandise. And you, you're the worst sort. The only things you enjoy are those that are somehow substandard and screwed up. You only like apples with spots on them, you like wackos too much. You prefer poor service and winding country roads. You're going nowhere.

Sure. That's why you're here, sitting in this service-station restaurant partaking of the homogenized, blenderized humiliation of materiality. The deep-fried turds of Universal Chicken in front of you are unrecognizable except as a slick new variety of primeval animal soup. And you're gobbling them up like the rest of the consuming suckers. Some threat you are.

You finish that thought and your second piece of Universal Chicken at the same time. You're now in a state of near-suicidal despair, and you're looking for some way to fight back against this overwhelming conspiracy to remove your imagination and will. All you can manage is to refuse to eat the last piece.



You push it off your plate, poke it across the table and onto the floor. When you look up, satisfied with your small act of protest, the waitress is gazing at you with a puzzled expression. You ignore her, and your eyes search the restaurant once more for some missed particularity -- anything single and unique will do: a cracked window, a flaw in the plaster, anything at all.

There's nothing. The waitresses are uniformed, the pump jockeys are uniformed, the whole place is designed to create dull familiarity. Every damned thing you can see in this scene is empty, except your gas tank and your stomach. And, ahah! your bladder.

Your private argument with yourself has shifted the stresses, and you feel a sudden urgent pressure. You pay the bill, pocket the receipt, and swing through the washroom door, ready to unzip and let fly in the same motion.

*The guy in the mackinaw is still standing at the urinal.*

A wave of delight passes through you, sweeping your gloom away in an instant. In fact, it is so profound that you nearly lose control of your bladder. You move in next to him, stifling a giggle. You chance a peek at him, and see that he's exhausted, his face lined with now-epic tension and effort. He turns to look at you, his eyes filled with shame and utter hopelessness, and you are overcome with compassion for him. For the first time in your life you are able to speak to another man while standing at a urinal.

"Lousy out there, eh?" you say, staring carefully at the wall in front of you.

Before he can reply, you let fly, and, unable to suppress your sense of well-being, you turn to your companion and grin right in his face. Damn the consequences.

With a groan of relief, he too begins to pee. He smiles back at you gratefully. After all, you've saved him from the unspeakable fate of having to spend the rest of his life standing in front of a washroom urinal in the middle of nowhere. Then, as sweet relief returns him to normal consciousness, he returns his gaze to the wall.

"Yeah," he replies coldly, "it's a pisser."

## INDIA POEMS by Frank Davey

### Liquids

Drink lots of hot liquids. Drink tea, coffee or, when sick, scalded milk. Go to the bathroom immediately before leaving your guest house or hotel. Go at every convenient occasion thereafter. Drink lots of bottled liquids. Avoid all urges to totalize. Drink beer, drink mineral water, drink soft drinks at most roadsides. Avoid the washrooms in bus and train stations. Make sure the bottle of mineral water is opened in front of you. Always consider your stomach. Avoid salads, fresh fruit, tomato chutney. Brush your teeth in boiled or sterilized water. Avoid aspirating or ingesting water when showering.

### Flies

Posterity admires photographs. Near the Delhi zoo a family of beggars dwells in the tomb (red marble) of an 18th-century Mughal courtier. In the Dharwad market the black cuts of meat turn red when the vendor waves back the flies. Some tourists take photographs of anything. Moslems prohibit figurative art. Some beggars have cut off a hand to win the sympathy of the wealthy. The wise tourist will respect the values & customs of the land she visits. A rusting cola sign reinforces the roof of the dead. Some tourists take photographs of old forts & tombs, of columns rising out of dry fields with crops in them, of children with or without crops in them. Some tombs have been extensively renovated. Tourist buses are air-conditioned & their windows kept shut to exclude flies.

### Food

In Udaipur try the chicken biryani at the Lake Palace Hotel. In Bombay you can get excellent spaghetti in the basement of the President. It is illegal to prepare beef for sale anywhere. In Delhi dine at Gaylord's, or in the Madarin Room of the Janpath. The hotels of Bombay package what you leave on your plate and re-sell it to the poor. In Jaipur have lamb kebabs at Nero's. Breads are the necessity of a poor man's meal and an agreeable complement to yours. Always wash fresh fruit in a weak iodine solution before eating. Order curds with all Indian meals to cool your mouth of hot spices. Purchase saffron only in government sealed containers. You'll love tandoori chicken. At the Faculty Club in Dharwad you can get an interesting dish of liver, onions, and fried tomatoes. In Kashmir, a Moslem gathering will secretly butcher, cook, and eat a cow overnight to celebrate a wedding. Continental breakfast is delicious and inexpensive at Bombay's Taj Mahal.

## THE BURNT CORN MANIFESTO by Robert Morgan

The distinction: Kernels of corn in a jar unify the object. The idea of displacing these kernels by putting them into an aluminum container and applying heat so as to transform their appearance as a multiplicity becomes a concept. Popcorn unpopped in this sense is a concept.

Popped popcorn implies a method. The implementation of a specific method becomes the process by which the kernels as a concept of popcorn unpopped becomes transformed in appearance. The process of sound is important in order to identify this transformation. Popcorn popped implies this process given the condition of the stated concept.

The existence of concept in relation to process begets a work of art. The result of this co-existence may be perceived and/or eaten which has nothing to do w/ art.

Burnt corn is represented and therefore imagined thru sound -- the moment of impact when heat (energy) transforms the materials (kernels) and thereby engendering the process of its existence.

Use tape recording of popcorn popping.

Photograph popcorn before & after metamorphosis -- same amount -- to study process.

Spread popcorn on gallery floor w/ observation platform.

Fill swimming pool w/ popcorn and dive in or jump in.

Make a bed out of popcorn.

Stuff it into clothes.

Fill bathtub w/ popcorn, toilet bowl and sink -- show environmental effects of popcorn.

Popcorn -- a filler for all cavities not in use.

Make popcorn furniture using wet shellac -- affix it to tables, chairs, bookcases, lamps, window frames.

Hang a popcorn dummy in effigy w/ sign on chest "Pop Corn." Relate to a political figure.

Do drawings of popcorn, paint w/ gouache.

Space drawings of popcorn.

Do enormous drawing in ink using a calligraphy brush.

Build a plaster model of popcorn. Bronze cast.

Build wood floor drain -- fill sluices w/ popcorn.

Pan for popcorn in sluices -- popped or unpopped.

Serve unpopped popcorn at a movie house.

Slow-motion film of popcorn floating in interstellar space w/ music by Brahms, Vivaldi or Johann Strauss.

Photograph place setting for 6 people w/ popcorn in glasses, cups, saucers, bowls, platters and plates as well as evenly distributed over surface of table.

Popcorn on snow, on carpet, on linoleum.

Film of people eating popcorn. Dogs eating popcorn.

Fill panty hose w/ popcorn.

Burn a bonfire and toss in handfuls of unpopped popcorn.

Feed it to the birds. Fish. Butter it.

Make popcorn balls w/ molasses & invent a game to play.

Play baseball using popcorn balls.

Make popcorn sandwiches. Add lettuce and tomato if so desired.

Do papier-mâché popped popcorn kernel.

Fill this typewriter w/ popcorn.

Compare structure of popcorn w/ a rose.

Fill refrigerator w/ popcorn.

String a popcorn necklace and eat it off my neck.

String two necklaces -- one for Janice, one for myself -- and eat each other's necklaces. (Use thread for dental floss.)

Stuff a row of glass phone booths at Park Street subway station w/ popcorn.

Do acrylic sketches of popcorn.

Spell corn w/ a K.

Korn.

Devise a grid to show relation between average kernel and dimensions of popped corn. Determine this from average-size bowl. Find average size piece w/in bowl.

Stuff a mattress w/ popped corn.

Write concrete verse about popped corn.

POPCORN \_\_\_\_\_ POPCORN  
popped \_\_\_\_\_ unpopped

Polarization of popcorn w/ red and blue line.

Devise painting technique using structural surface and space integrating directions on process (i.e., "How to Make Popcorn" or "How to Get Your Kernels to Pop!")

Draw a grid showing 16 popped kernels (actual size) -- one kernel to a square.

Cover a scarecrow w/ popcorn.

Cover a lawn or roof w/ popcorn (where birds are abundant).

Count number of birds at outset, then count again in 5 days, 15 days, 30 days.

Cover the floor -- aisles and under seats of a Golden Eagle Continental Trailways bus w/ popcorn. (Level of popcorn should be equal over the entire surface of floor, about a foot high.)

Stuff suitcase w/ popcorn and sent it to the U.S. Treasury.

12/71 -- 11/72



# WASTING

## by Richard Kostelanetz

Note: Richard Kostelanetz will have a new book out with Atticus by the time this issue is printed. Keep an eye out for this superlative edition entitled *Prose Pieces/Aftertexts* (Atticus Press, 722 Heber Avenue, Calxico, CA).

When I was born, I was twenty-two inches long and weighed nine pounds.  
On my first birthday, I was thirty-four inches long and weighed thirty pounds.  
On my second birthday, I was thirty-nine inches high and weighed thirty-eight pounds.  
On my third birthday, I was forty-two inches high and weighed forty-two pounds.  
On my fourth birthday, I was forty-five inches high and weighed forty-six pounds.  
On my fifth birthday, I was forty-seven inches high and weighed forty-eight pounds.  
On my sixth birthday, I was fifty inches high and weighed fifty-one pounds.  
On my seventh birthday, I was fifty-one inches high and weighed fifty-four pounds.  
On my eighth birthday, I was fifty-two inches high and weighed sixty-four pounds.  
On my ninth birthday, I was fifty-four inches high and weighed seventy-two pounds.  
On my tenth birthday, I was fifty-seven inches high and weighed eighty-five pounds.  
On my eleventh birthday, I was fifty-seven inches high and weighed one hundred pounds.  
On my twelfth birthday, I was fifty-eight inches high and weighed 117 pounds.  
On my thirteenth birthday, I was sixty-four inches high and weighed 140 pounds.  
On my fourteenth birthday, I was sixty-eight inches high and weighed 150 pounds.  
On my fifteenth birthday, I was seventy-two inches high and weighed 133 pounds.  
On my sixteenth birthday, I was seventy-three inches high and weighed 165 pounds.  
On my seventeenth birthday, I was seventy-four inches high and weighed 180 pounds.  
On my eighteenth birthday, I was seventy-five inches high and weighed 190 pounds.  
On my nineteenth birthday, I was seventy-eight inches high and weighed 198 pounds.  
On my twentieth birthday, I was seventy-nine inches high and weighed 202 pounds.  
On my twenty-first birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 221 pounds.  
On my twenty-second birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 237 pounds.  
On my twenty-third birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 262 pounds.  
On my twenty-fourth birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 281 pounds.  
On my twenty-fifth birthday, I was eighty-one inches high and weighed 311 pounds.  
On my twenty-sixth birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 269 pounds.  
On my twenty-seventh birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 247 pounds.  
On my twenty-eighth birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 226 pounds.  
On my twenty-ninth birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 192 pounds.  
On my thirtieth birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 169 pounds.  
On my thirty-first birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 161 pounds.  
On my thirty-second birthday, I was eighty inches high and weighed 157 pounds.  
On my thirty-third birthday, I was seventy-nine inches high and weighed 151 pounds.  
On my thirty-fourth birthday, I was seventy-nine inches high and weighed 144 pounds.  
On my thirty-fifth birthday, I was seventy-eight inches high and weighed 132 pounds.  
On my thirty-sixth birthday, I was seventy-seven inches high and weighed 111 pounds.  
On my thirty-seventh birthday, I was seventy-six inches high and weighed ninety-seven pounds.  
On my thirty-eighth birthday, I was no inches high and weighed nothing.

# THE ILL-FATED RANDY PALMETTO VISITS THREE TORONTO RESTAURANTS, ALL ON THE SAME DAY

## by David McFadden

### 1. STEAM BEANCAKE STUFF WITH SHRIMP

Randy Palmetto went back to University Avenue and sat on a bench by a fountain in a long thin park that ran along the middle of the street with patterns of tiny white and red begonias, ornamental trees and statues of angels, and read some magazines until lunch time. Then he got up and went to Kung Moo's, a restaurant that displayed in its window illuminated photos of the featured meals, the colours sun-faded into stomach-wrenching grotesqueness. There was a black couple at the next table. The woman, loaded with jewelry, was in a foul mood and the man was suffering patiently, shoulders hunched.

"I have absolutely no interest," the woman kept saying in a Jamaican accent. Randy couldn't hear the man's reply. "This is just not good enough," she said. "Where's our ginger ale?" She called the waitress over and complained that they were almost finished their meal and the ginger ale still hadn't arrived. The waitress, a young Chinese woman with a troubled look accented by serious acne, brought a couple of cans with straws.

Randy picked up a pair of chopsticks and absent-mindedly clicked them together. The black woman looked over at him and smiled. "He's got Chinese chopsticks," she said. She was wearing two gold necklaces, one with a cross and the other with an astrological figure. She had four gold rings on her fingers. The man was wearing a grey cardigan zipped up almost to the neck, a blue sports shirt and navy pants.

Randy put the sticks down. "That's all right," the woman said. She was glaring at the man by now. "You have the keys to my apartment but I don't have the keys to yours." The man seemed quite browbeaten. "Aren't you going to eat?" she said.

Randy tried to remember everything he'd eaten that week. Then he heard the woman's voice again, saying, "That wasn't sudden."

"Yes it was," said the man, quietly.

"If you want to call that sudden then go right ahead but it wasn't sudden at all. Not a bit."

Randy's "Steam Beancake Stuff With Shrimp" arrived: two rows of four beancakes each, all eight shaking like jelly in a watered-down soya sauce and each topped with a little scrunched-down load of shrimp, the whole thing topped with long thin Chinese greens. He scooped a few of the cakes on top of his rice and started eating. "If they going to do a Caesarean section they going to open her uterus up and find two babies there," said the Jamaican woman.

A Chinese couple and their two kids took the table behind Randy, and the Jamaican woman said, "Chinese people, they have the best religion on the planet."

"Daddy, help me, help me," the little Chinese boy was saying. He meant he couldn't figure out the menu.

"You want fish?" said dad.

"Um ... yes, fish. Seafood."

"You want lobster?"

"Umm...."

"You want crab?"

"No!"

"You want meat?"

No answer.

"You want fish or meat?"

No answer.

"You want fish or meat?"

Still no answer. The father was so patient. It was inspiring.

The mother and little girl were also chattering away but Randy couldn't listen to everything at once. Then suddenly the little girl's big-sisterly voice came through: "How about sweet and sour spare ribs in Cantonese sauce?"

The little boy thought for a moment then said, "What's Cantonese sauce?"

Peripherally, Randy thought he saw a waiter, standing in the middle of the dining room, pick his nose then wipe his finger on the seat of his trousers. He came and took away Randy's plate then brought a small plate with a quartered orange and a fortune cookie. Randy broke open the cookie immediately, his hand shaking ominously.

There must be a new generation of people writing fortunes for fortune cookies. "Oh heart," it said, "how could I ever have forgotten you?" A Chinese Rilke! The suffering of the world drifted into Randy's mind, lulled as it was by the unexpected thought, making him momentarily ashamed of his own overestimated, highly exaggerated suffering, but proud of it too for without it (as minor as it really was) he wouldn't be as sensitive to the sufferings of others. Suffering leads to the end of suffering. Suffering breeds compassion.

As Randy left he heard the little boy say, "And for a beverage I want grape juice."

### 2. NEW ZEALAND LAMB

"Don't have it," said the barmaid at the Barmaid's Arms when Randy Palmetto inquired about stout. "Couple of guys used to drink it all the time but they don't come in any more so we don't get it any more."

"It's nice on days like this."

"I wouldn't know, I never tried it."

"About the only thing she hasn't tried," said a man a few stools down.

A thin black woman came up from the tables in the dimly lit dining room and stood at Randy's side for a moment, silently, a thin woman with dozens of long deep scars on her arms. "Hello, Winnie," Randy said. On the night of Alf's party at the Royal York he'd given her a story of his to read. She reminded him now, then started giving him a little lecture about his writing, and he listened avidly. In her deep and elegant English accent (she'd never been to England) she warned him of his treatment of the banal, as she called it. She'd shown the story to her sister who didn't like it because she didn't like reading about the banality of life. But Winnie thought her sister had missed the point.

"Don't stop writing about the banal, but always make sure your readers will know that you're doing it with a lot of holiness."

Randy was touched and told her so. She smiled sleepily when he asked if she were still cutting herself. "No one understands why I do it," she said. She rolled up a sleeve and showed him a freshly bandaged arm. "I really painted the walls with this one," she said.



He looked into her eyes. "Why?"

"Some people try to interpret it in religious terms but I just laugh. If you're not into self-mutilation it's hard to understand someone who is."

Randy suggested that most people find some way to mutilate themselves, usually a less obvious way. She nodded inscrutably and left.

The people at the bar were talking about the superiority of Ontario lamb over New Zealand lamb. It was impossible to anticipate what people will be talking about in any given bar. The incredible richness of our lives. One guy said he'd ordered New Zealand lamb in a restaurant and "it was dry and tasted disgusting."

The barmaid had been there twenty years. She was about forty, with a slight German accent. Randy asked what was the funniest thing that happened in all that time.

"I got older."

"That's not funny."

"And fatter."

"Neither is that."

"Yes it is, I gained forty-five pounds."

There was a sign behind the bar reading IN HEAVEN THERE AIN'T NO BEER GOTTA DRINK IT HERE, a framed autographed photo of Ernie Whitt and a City of Toronto plaque with a gold-braided postcard of the city hall. There was a toy traffic signal with the green light on and it said BAR IS OPEN. Someone was talking about Mexican food.

"I had Mexican food once," said the barmaid. "I was gulping water for three days after."

The guy next to Randy had a Cockney accent. A young woman who looked like a model for a Paris fashion house came up to him as he was trying to explain how to get to Paddy C's, his favourite Mexican restaurant, and he became distracted. Her name was Norma.

"You look wonderful," he said. "Usually when I see you you look three sheets to the wind."

"I quit." She looked pleased. She wondered why he was in so early in the evening. The rain had given the night a head start.

"My wife's working. I just came in for a quick meal. I like that kind of meal," he said, winking, checking to see if Norma caught his drift.

"I imagine you do," she said, coolly.

"I'm going to see my mistress in a minute," he said.

"Oh sure."

"I am."

"Does your wife know about this?"

"No."

"Come on, buddy, wake up. The wife always knows."

"Not mine." He leered. "And what are you doing later this evening?"

"I'm going to be trying to get into my apartment. I locked myself out this morning."

"I'll help you."

"I've already called my brother. He's going to help me."

### 3. FRENCH FRIES AND GRAVY

It had been raining hard, with lightning and thunder, but now the puddles were evaporating on the sidewalks of Dufferin Street. Randy Palmetto's heart did a little spin for there was a beautiful woman sitting sweetly in the window of an Italian hairdressing salon, obviously one of the hairdressers waiting for a customer. Arrows from heaven struck Randy in the heart. This young woman was full of virginal passion and magic and she had been waiting there for all eternity for Randy to appear. Would she remember him from previous incarnations in Egypt before the Pyramids, India before the Aryan invasions? Randy went into the restaurant next to the salon, ordered French fries and gravy and proceeded to think about this latest development.

He thought his forays through the subway system were a kind of quest, romantic and mystical as well as literary. Why shouldn't he draw up a list of interesting questions to ask interesting-looking people he encountered? He could stop people anywhere and explain to them that he was working on a book and would they mind being interviewed about their lives. He wrote out a list of unusual questions, not the sort of questions you'd expect to be asked by a stranger, questions so strange and personal you wouldn't know whether to be offended or flattered, questions that, coming in the middle of an ordinary routinely boring day, would suddenly make your brain catch fire, questions you've been waiting all your life for your closest friends to ask and here they were coming out of the mouth of a perfect stranger just coming up to you on a day otherwise much like any other. He wrote out a list of ten before finishing his lunch and vowed to try them out on the lovely hairdresser.

"God, you don't know how many times we almost got killed!"

Snatches of conversation drifted from a nearby table where three greasy and silly-looking teenage louts dressed in filthy black leather were guzzling beer and trying to look tough. Two guys with filthy red hair and a dame with filthy blonde. Herpes sores all over their faces. Disgusting. Randy Palmetto decided to listen in.

"You know that tape I have of the Teddy Bears' Picnic?" said the blonde. "Did I ever play it for you?"

"What are the lyrics?" said one of the guys.

"You know, the Teddy Bears' Picnic?"

"You mean, 'If you go out in the woods today'? ..."

"That's right, I knew I played it for you. Good, wasn't it?"

"Yeah, it was, kinda."

Randy turned to say something to the waitress, something about how good the gravy was, and when he tuned back in they were still at it, the vermin. These slimy scumbags don't know how lucky they are, Randy thought. They're damned lucky we decent people of the world don't round them up and put them in concentration camps.

The blonde was talking about something she'd heard on the radio, something about the Hamilton Cultural Society, whatever that may be. That's all these kids have to do these days, listen to satanic radio stations. They don't realize they're dupes in a subtle atheistic Communist plot to subvert the last remaining shred of decency in the world. We Christians, we decent white people of the world, must not be afraid to speak out, especially when they make fun of Lawrence Welk, as they do, Randy had actually heard them.

"In this interview they asked this guy what he thought of Hamilton culture and you shoulda heard what he said, it was a riot!"

"Well, come on, what'd he say?"

"He said see that guy over there, the one picking his nose? That's Hamilton culture. He actually said that right on the radio!"

Randy added another question to his list and one of the teenage creeps said, "Remember Antoinette?"

"Sure, we remember her. At least I do...."

"So do I. I really remember her. What about her? What's she been up to?"

"Well, you see, this guy comes up to me see and he goes like this, are you still going with that blonde? So I says to him I says no. So he goes what's her number?"

Much laughter.

"Did ya tell him?"

"Sure. And then I saw her last week and she comes up to me and goes hey, did you know I'm not going with Vladimir any more? And I goes uh no I didn't and she goes well I'm not. Do you wanna go out with me again?"

At that point one of the guys got up and went to the payphone inside the front entrance and made a call. In the middle of the conversation he cupped his hand over the receiver, stared directly at Randy or so it seemed and said, "Hey Randy, come here!" Randy started to get up then stopped and thought wait a minute how does this guy know my name? Then the other fellow at the table got up. His name must have been Randy too. He gave the real Randy a funny look as he went to the phone.

The two hollow-eyed teenage zombies had a long private chat leaving the girl alone at the table picking her sores. Suddenly she became upset and went into a rage. "I heard what you said, you bastards!" She started screaming at the two guys at the phone, and crying. The guys looked startled.

Randy walked out.

When Randy looked again through the window of the beauty salon next door hair-lined cracks pinged across his heart and a squadron of Canadian fighter jets flared low across the sky, skimming the rooftops. Randy's madonna, the naked soul who had been patiently waiting for him for millennia, was occupied with another man. It looked as if her boyfriend had dropped in, her fiancé. They were holding hands, voltage leaping across the eye-gap. They looked as if they were planning their wedding reception.

## BOLINAS by Barbara Golden

Fri Night August 30

At the beach now and jst about numb, anesthetized. Feel like I'm in Europe, fun to be alone in a weird way, went right to the liquor store bought vodka, grapefruit juice, nuts, turkey, bread, mayo, pesto, banana. Came back, read and drank on the porch, fought off the dogs, drank, read then slept 15 hours. Dreamt about canoeing and swimming and was at Wayne's concert, he played a 2 piano piece, then this doctor was examining me slowly all over, it was great, he made me put my hand down his trousers and hold his hardon.

The radio show ws really swell, tons of people phoned in, not the usual drunks and wankers, and were enjoying. Toyoji phoned in and gave a recipe for chicken and we had him on the air. People from Thacker Container phoned in on their graveyard shift, they were enjoying the raunch. Played Pauline Oliveros, Maggi Payne, Nick Collins, Bob Ashley's Automatic Writing.

Sat Morn Aug 31

I think now that D might have herpes or something because he kept saying "let's do this in 2 weeks" etc But it's over. Think that with P things are quite over in another way. Waal, time to go to the bakery for coffee, juice, and a cheese danish. Yesterday stopped at the Pelican for lunch of bangers and mash, good thing I went. Pint of ale, light coming in through smoky windows.

Sat Aug 31

So here I am in my blue bikini bought with Kenny in the Dolomites last June. At Bolinas town beach now, fairly sparse, sun absolutely blazing, surf lazy and gorgeous, brought me in a tiny colour TV, people in wet suits, the water must be fuckin frigid. Haven't cracked Pauline's book yet, might even not. Woke up at 9, slept 15 hours, Mark phoned with news that W and J might break up, she fell in love in Tibet, I doubt she'll leave him. Almost too bright to write. Found some earrings that I love have a new haircut too, the sides are real short and the top high, an adult mohawk. Guess I'll be alone the rest of my life. It's not all that bad.

2 pr earrings	8.00
1 blue jumpsuit	1.50
1 red nightgown	.50
1 blk & gold shirt	.50
3 dessert plates	.50
3 paperbacks	1.00
1 tank top-red	.25
	11.75

Drank alot of vodka. The beach good. Talked to Mary. Will my life go on? Am I a failure? L has guns over his bed! Bought some weird stuff. Miss being with someone. Will I ever not be alone?

Sun.

Dreamt about hot fudge sundaes and coffee with chocolate and sweets. Feel sick and disgusted. 2nd rate because make no money. Very afraid for the SFAI gig, what if it is a real bust?

Must finish the Baboon Benediction.

Noon Sept 1

At the beach, the tide is coming in, white surf, rushing tumbling, never still, the sound like the wind with an intermittent heavy wave breaking the rolling relentlessness. Dogs, people strolling, surfers, families, druggies, hippies, millionaires, sun and light dazzling glare! ALIVE! Pelicans fly overhead in a vee.



# POUND-OF-FLESH PROJECT

## by Alida Walsh

### INTRODUCTION

The Pound of Flesh Project is a multi-facted production-event utilizing sculpture, performance and video art to make a major statement about survival -- and the buying and selling of flesh in our time.

Years ago human beings were intimately familiar with the life/death cycle, and survival meant actively taking part in that cycle. More often than not, the man who ate meat had killed the animal he was eating and the process was such a natural part of his own existence that there was little separation between the man and the act, the man and the animal.

Today of course this is history. Most of us are totally separated from the killing of the meat we eat. Still the basic process hasn't changed and, in spite of the neat plastic wrapping that covers our meat today, we are vaguely aware, on some level or another, of the great similarity between ourselves and those packages in the supermarket.

The Pound of Flesh Project speaks to the basic connection between human beings and nature, and the power inherent in the fact of flesh ... nothing less than the power of life and death.

This unique multi-discipline project includes the creation and exhibition of a major sculptural work, the presentation of original works by a select number of artists at a special performance event, and the production of a video documentary. In addition this project involves a most innovative method of fundraising and development. The artist will design, print and present, in a public offering, "stock certificates" representing shares in the project. The dividends on these shares will be "paid out" the night of the performance event and include a "Limited Edition Video Print" of the documentary "Pound of Flesh."

The Pound of Flesh Project is a work of art that will attract and involve the public on many different levels, from the personal interior response of an individual in a gallery to the joyous collective celebration of enlivening performance. We invite you to be a part of this extraordinary event.



### THE SCULPTURE

The central focus of the Pound of Flesh Project is a ten-foot-high human form, sculpted in raw meat, encased in a twelve-foot-by-twelve-foot refrigerated unit made of glass, spotlighted and transparent. The sculpture will be made of a steel frame skeleton structured from welded metal and meat hooks, forming the "bones" of the human figure.

The meat will be procured at the Fourteenth Street meat market in Manhattan, cut and mounted on the welded metal frame to create an apparent musculature. After construction the piece will be transported to its exhibition site where it will be on view for a period of four weeks.

The sculpture will be displayed in a dark gallery space, the only light source coming from the vertical cube case itself. Initially viewers will see the figure from a distance. As they approach, and it becomes apparent that the sculpture is actually formed of real meat, the full effect of this powerful piece will be realized.

### BENEATH THE SKIN

In creating this work the artist is drawing on a rich history that includes the technical beauty of anatomical renderings, from the great works by da Vinci to "How to Draw" textbooks for visual arts instruction; the paintings of Arcimboldi and Soutine; the hanging meat piece of Rembrandt; all are antecedents to the Pound of Flesh Project.

This sculpture takes one step further the time-honoured tradition of the visual artist and the nude. In going "beyond the skin," the artist addresses the question of essence and appearance, stripping away identity and differences. Anatomical rendering becomes more than a pictorial curiosity or an exercise in technique, it becomes a powerful evocation of essence.

### THE EVENT

At the end of the exhibition period the "Pound of Flesh" sculpture will be moved to Area in Lower Manhattan where it will form the centrepiece of a performance and dinner "art-event."

The audience and guests will see the sculpture dismembered and cut up in a spectacular manner by a number of professional "Benihana Sushi-type" chefs who specialize in carving and preparing foodstuffs with flourish. Minus the meat, the sculpture will now consist of bare "bones" and meat hooks, resembling Duchampian ready-mades.

While the meat is being cooked and dinner prepared (a vegetarian alternative will be available for those who wish it), performances will be presented.

[additional info and specifics on performances should go here, as it becomes available]

### THE DINNER

After the performance dinner will be served. This dinner is symbolic of a very basic process -- a process that the Western world tends to ignore, to deny, to avoid if at all possible ... the life/death cycle.

The power of the "Pound of Flesh" sculpture lies in its evocation of this primal process. The sculpture becomes a totem for our collective fears. When the meat is cooked and eaten we consume the totem and with it our fear.

In taking raw meat from the human form and transfiguring it into a harmless entrée on a nouvelle cuisine menu in the midst of a dinner party celebrating art, the artist diffuses the fear, taking away the terror. The dinner becomes a metaphor for the process of transformation (and has of course many and various antecedents throughout history, the most obvious being the sacrificial lamb and The Last Supper).

In its ideal form this transformation becomes a celebration of thanksgiving in which human beings gather together, acknowledge their vulnerability, and take comfort in one another (the celebration part has to do with surviving to eat, rather than being eaten).



### FUNDRAISING PLANS

Fundraising plans for the Pound of Flesh Project will cover each of the standard areas of art support -- public and private sector funding organizations and individual contributors. Within this last category the artist has developed some rather innovative plans.

In seeking funds to underwrite the costs of the project the artist will design and print "stock certificates" in limited editions to be sold in a "public offering" advertised in the local media. These prints will be designed in the form of actual stock certificates and will give the purchaser/patron a "share" in the project.

Both "common" and "preferred" stock will be sold. A common stock purchase entitles the "shareholder" to attend the "Pound of Flesh" dinner while a preferred stock purchase will include the dinner and a copy of the Limited Edition Video Print -- a cassette copy of the video documentary "Pound of Flesh." (Please see supplementary material for more information on the video production.)

In addition the artist sees this event, and the sale of shares in it, as addressing the issue of consumerism in the arts. Since the value of art is, for the most part, set in terms of the marketplace (like other commodities in which we invest or trade), the artist has decided to raise a portion of the needed funds in these same terms. It is hoped this will encourage the idea of "investment" in art and spotlight the importance of the individual patron-contributor (in this case, "stockholder") to the production of art.

The arts will be working with a professional-development consultant to cultivate this group of individual contributors.

One of the most interesting aspects of this project lies in this particular feature. When a patron/stockholder purchases a share in the project, they will then, at the dinner, actually eat their share. The ecological efficiency of this concept is worth noting.



POUND-OF-FLESH VIDEO

"Pound of Flesh" -- a half-hour video documentary about packaging, marketing, and media manipulation, and how these things affect our relationship to flesh -- our own flesh, the flesh of others, and the flesh of animals -- MEAT.

The selling of flesh (be it meat or athlete, model or mignon), has become so omnipresent it is accepted widely as a matter of style rather than a question of conscience. Our food is packaged, our bodies are packaged, and we are packaged, packaged by fashion. The real connection between food and muscle is obscured in plastic wrapping, and we are isolated from (and therefore unfamiliar with and afraid of), the power that exists in the fact of flesh ... the power of the life-and-death cycle, of nature and of animals, and the question of survival.

This video documentary will use interviews, surveys, responses and observations, combined with artful production techniques, to present an assemblage of ideas and opinions on the subject of "survival" (what it takes to get what you need in the world), and how people feel about the connection between meat and their own bodies.

It will describe the historical development of anatomical renderings in the visual arts, including da Vinci's musculature masterpieces, the paintings of Soutine, Rembrandt, Guiseppe Arcimboldo, and the work of Eadweard Muybridge (as well as illustrations from "How to Draw" texts revealing the similarity between human beings and animals beneath the skin).

It will look at our society's fascination with food, from fad to fetish, diets and food diseases (anorexia, bulimia, etc.) and will culminate in footage of the assembly, exhibition and consumption of a sculpture made of real meat. This sculpture, designed to evoke an awareness of our connection to meat/flesh, and the power inherent in that connection, is part of a project that includes this video piece, a public feast and performances. (Please see supplementary material.)

To help underwrite the cost of this video production "stock certificates" will be designed, printed and sold to the general public. The purchase of a certificate entitles the contributor to a "share" in the project and to a copy of the video piece which will be presented as a "Limited Edition Video Art Print." Our intention is to encourage participants, supporters and the general public to consider this video work as an art object, produced in a numbered edition and signed by the artist.

In addition the tape will be distributed through the standard exhibition channels and made available for broadcast.



CONCLUSION

The question of survival, of eating or being eaten, is a primal issue. While today, in "polite society," the most accepted form of this basic process is acted out in the corporate merger, that primal fear is hidden in all of us. It is as real as ever, although in our world it is hardly visible in any direct way.

Everything we do is geared to avoiding the idea of death (which is the fact of our flesh, of our lives, of our need to eat). In avoiding the idea of death, in denying our basic fears, we lose something very important. We lose our familiarity with the process of life, with the fact of our flesh. In so doing we lose the tremendous power inherent in that familiarity, in that reality. We are uncomfortable with this power and we miss our chance to understand it and to use it consciously ... which, of course, would change absolutely everything we do.

There is little that is as powerful as the conscious acceptance of our own impermanence. We do not live in a society that encourages this acceptance and so our understanding of that power, and our ability to use it, is perverted.

This work of art is an effort to raise this issue and to evoke some thoughts and feelings about these questions and their implications.

# SENS-PLASTIQUE

## by Malcolm de Chazal

Selections from *Sens-Plastique*, revisions from the 1979 edition or newly translated by Irving Weiss, the authorized English-language translator.

22/1

There are all kinds of food we can learn to love but strange fruit makes us either shudder or surrender.

58/4

Animals lick their chops when they see food. We tend to do so only for dessert, when the main meal is over and the sweet course comes. But this visible shift of attention actually marks a profound change taking place in our whole table system, the same one that occurs on a vast inner scale every time tart, sour, spicy, salty, or caustic sensations flash by our palate in one and the same dish. If our sensorium weren't always licked clean for each new inner "course change," the different sensations would cancel each other out on the palate, and practically everything would taste the same. Taste doesn't orchestrate its instruments, it plays them in solo file. The swift succession seems orchestral because of the "persistence" effect, like the illusion of movement in films.

59/3

Only liquids can be tasted by the underside of the tongue. As the bonbon begins to liquefy, the back of the tongue gradually stiffens, becoming rigid just as the chocolate cream melts completely.

59/7

At the beginning of a meal the sense of taste lends capital to the sense of smell, which smell pays back with interest in the supersaturated and sickening odour that all meals have when the dinner is over.

59/11

The more man becomes civilized the less he eats with the back of his mouth as his ancestors did. This progressive displacement of the mouth's dining room toward the front of the face is due as much to the spices which the front of the mouth enjoys as to that deplorable habit we now have of closing our mouths when we eat, thus imprisoning the tongue and preventing it from extending itself to fullest activity.

59/12

Like the kind of pastry that rises in a hot oven but deflates unless you eat it immediately, kisses you have to wait for seem to come from flat lips.

60/1

Total sexual pleasure would make us capable of tasting in *her* palate. What an impossible ideal and conclusion!

90/2

The front teeth guillotine food. The incisors put it to the sword. The molars massacre the survivors like waiting thugs. Nothing looks more vulgar than eating with the back teeth only.

109/5

Some foods taste too sweet, others taste too salty ... but nobody ever got too much of an orgasm.

121/4

In eating, the lower lip turns into a perfect bib, the upper lip into a napkin. It's because babies are so unaccustomed to using their lips that they fail to catch the dribble properly and try to chew with their "bibs."

122/3

Tartness constricts your sense of taste and makes your lips feel as if they were curling up. Your wires get crossed in a flash whenever you bite into a tart piece of fruit, and your lips and the fruit keep turning into each other by jolts. Tart fruit makes your sense of taste lose its bearings so that everything you eat afterward seems to taste pretty much the same.

123/7

The taste of mint comes from two sharp tangs of taste crossing at right angles. Change the angle of intersection and the taste is more hot than cool. Taste lies on a rosette of sensations.

125/8

Salt and pepper give body to the taste of food. Without them taste leaks out in all directions and the tongue droops to the floor of the mouth like an exhausted figure with his arms hanging limp.

181/6

Saliva wets your taste down smooth. When your mouth is dry you taste in slabs and sections.

221/4

The tip of the tongue is the antechamber of tasting, like a table set before a meal. The tip of the tongue puts all flavours into separate dishes. Gourmets, those analysts of enjoyment, eat with the tip of the tongue and savour liquids as well. Indeed, the more disagreeable we find a dish, the more we regulate it to the back of the mouth. One literally swallows medicine, whether solid or liquid. Food eaten without appetite is quickly bolted, but when the senses are acute one even sips sauces.

233/3

Bitter foods invert your sense of taste, the flavour rising from the throat instead of going down. A bitter taste on the tongue slips and slides off the food with no place to hold on to as the whole palate founders.

245/4

The taste of vinegar goes up your nose as it spreads across your palate, just as its odour equally reaches both organs. A persistence of vinegar will revive a tired sense of smell. If you want to enjoy the perfumes in the rest of your lover's body, cleanse your sense of smell with her underarm odour like an animal who starts with the purgative grasses before beginning to browse seriously. The sting of acid in your lover's breath sweetens the smells to come: vinegar bringing out the whiffs of delight buried in the salad.

268/2

The sense of smell is unrivalled for the way it speeds through its "courses" with completely new settings and a fresh cloth laid for each dish.

285/1

Fruit looks at you without "saying" anything. Even when its shape is most regular no fruit can tell you what it's looking at.

285/2

Fruit, egg, and an explosion of light have instantly total fields of vision, they are all "look," their seeing is flush with their being. Fruit, egg, and light-dazzle telescope into time. Glance at the fruit on its branch, the egg lying about in the farmyard, the flash of light over your shoulder: they have all been calmly looking at you already. Your surprise is their awareness, like a hole yawning for your step to stumble into or a stranger's eye that catches you off guard when you thought you were exploring the psychological moment of seeing without being seen.



# THE HIGH GODS OF SERIOUS THINGS

by Al Purdy

*The following is an excerpt from the unofficial introduction to Al Purdy's Collected Poems to be published this fall by McClelland and Stewart. Here, Purdy describes a visit to Hiroshima, his encounters with beer, and his experience during a journey in the Canadian arctic. He combines these with alternately sententious and light-hearted observations on his development as a writer.*

I wrote a poem called "Necropsy of Love" quite a few years ago. I'd been working on it in late evening. After going to bed I'd think of still another line or phrase, get up and write it down, then go back to bed. My wife, predictably, did not appreciate cold nocturnal drafts in the bedclothes, risings and fallings of bedsprings at unpredictable intervals. Especially she did not appreciate my enthusiastic renderings of poem-fragments that kept jumping out of my brain.

Earlier that same evening the television set had blatted out a commercial about Success Wax, and how "it shines like a good wax should shine day after day after day." And that commercial kept running through my head along with the poem, Success Wax mixing with the absolutes of love and death. My conscious mind had to tell my unconscious mind sternly: stay the hell outa my poem. Or was it vice-versa?

I spent most of the summer of 1965 on Baffin Island. After flying from Montreal to Frobisher Bay by Nordair, I hitched a ride on a mining company charter to Pangnirtung off Cumberland Sound. The regional administrator at Pang arranged for me to go along with an Eskimo family, travelling by canoe to their home base in the Kikastan Islands.

I was completely equipped with what the well-dressed arctic explorer should wear: parka, heavy clothing, tent, sleeping bag, Coleman stove and groceries. The Kikastan Islands' location had been pointed out to me on the map. Jonahsie, my personal Eskimo hunter, was a crack shot and highly regarded by the administration at Pang. But Jonahsie had no English, and I knew about two words of Eskimo. When we landed at a big humpbacked rock in Cumberland Sound in late afternoon, I knew this was not one of the Kikastan Islands. But I couldn't ask Jonahsie what the hell was happening to our travel schedule. It made me a little nervous: was I being kidnapped and forced to read William Blake to a northern audience, like Evelyn Waugh's hero read Dickens in "A Handful of Dust"?

There was a blind dog in our canoe. I helped Leah, Jonahsie's wife, get the dog onto the beach. Several other canoes were there already, their owners farther inland on the hilly island. Rancid pieces of fat, gnawed bones and dogshit littered the gravel beach. The sea surrounding our island was like the concentrated essence of all the blue that ever was; I could feel that blue seep into me, and all my innards changed colour. And the icebergs! They were shimmery lace and white brocade, became my standard for the word *beauty*. How could one ever think that a malignant relative of theirs once sank the *Titanic*?

All through early evening the hilltop hunters fired their guns at seals far below in the flaming blue water. During lulls in cannonading other hunters in canoes picked up the bodies. I had thought bodies of dead seals were supposed to sink, but apparently not in this instance. Even when rifles stopped firing, weird echoes bounced back from mainland mountains. Close to midnight the sun balanced on the horizon like a crimson egg; light turned grey, changing the landscape to skull-like desolation.

I was curled up in a sleeping bag, feeling lost at the world's edge, bereft of family and friends. As the tide went out, icebergs stranded on the beach. With water support removed, they would collapse on themselves with a crash whose echoes kept repeating themselves. A dog would howl, and others join in, a bedlam chorus. Old Squaw ducks moaned about how awful life was, an OUW-OUW-OUW dirge for the living. And all these sounds repeated themselves, as if some mad god were howling from distant mountains.

Somewhere in my head a poem began. One of the lines was about those ducks, the loneliness and defeat the birds signified: "I think to the other side of that sound": I think to a place where uncertainty and loneliness are ended, to a happier time. But think again, I say to myself now: I was never really happier than when I was lying on a sleeping bag on an arctic island, listening to those noisy ducks at the top of the world and writing a poem.

Next day we reached the certified actual Kikastan Islands, Jonahsie's home stamping grounds. I set up my tent, and wrote some more poems.

I was lucky on those islands; sometimes poems do not get written so easily. Inner recesses of the mind are not at your beck and call. Perhaps there are small elves in the head, privileged guests living there and continually busy with their own affairs. The only connection the conscious mind has with them is when they permit a collaboration, which perhaps neither conscious nor unconscious was capable of alone.

You watch them, those little elves who are your guests. You try to familiarize yourself with their habits and how your actions will affect them; how your own thoughts might meld with theirs. You say of them: they prefer strange things, they like high drama and soul-stirring events: then find that something quite trivial means more to them than wars and headlines. You try to predict their thoughts during the sun by day and the moon by night; then discover they have their own infernal moons and suns.

Their appearance I can only imagine, but I believe they love to dress in odd costumes. I think they look at themselves in a mirror sometimes and admire what they see. Of course they are very old. I think it's probable they have been around since human time began and even before that. I'm sure they were hiding somewhere in the heads of those small shrew-like mammals who preceded humans.

For all my efforts, midnight searchings and dawn questions, I know little more about them than when I first decided they actually existed. And it's only when I forget about them entirely that they gently intrude into my thoughts. Gently, but with something sardonic about their attitude to this human with the ludicrous pretensions in whose head they reside.

They were never more or less present and unaccounted for than when I was in Hiroshima, Japan, in the early seventies. I landed in Tokyo, took the wrong train to Hiroshima, got into the wrong car on the wrong train for the trip, bumped my head on both exit and entrance of the train. But I drank Japanese beer with a Japanese passenger and joked with him, neither of us knowing the other's language. I wandered the city that was bombed nearly out of existence in 1945; developed sign language and facial expressions to the point where an anthropoid ape would have thought me insane; watched television, drank beer, and cooked food in my hotel room.

Once a little Japanese girl walked up to me on the street, and asked the time in delicious but recognizable English. I told her, then she went back to her friends. They smiled their admiration for her daring in approaching the large barbarian from beyond the eastern seas.

But I didn't fit the country physically. Too tall. I kept hitting my head on something or other. The jeering and pounding must have been terrible for my resident elves. I didn't like it much either. After I wrote an unspecified number of poems, they stopped collaborating. No more got written despite all my efforts. Or perhaps it wasn't the bumping and jeering by themselves: for when I was asleep the ghostly shape of a mushroom cloud hovered over my head. My collaborators must have seen it too. It frightened them, and no one does what they do best when they are frightened.

Such travelling has almost been a way of life for me, especially in the last few years. Strange landscapes and foreign climes have produced a feeling of renewal, the earth itself given me a sense of history, stimulation from the original event carried over in time and entering my own brain. Mircea Eliade, a kind of social anthropologist, has some interesting theories about myth and legend: primitive peoples re-enact that original event in repeated ritual, and each time they do so is for them the first time. And thus they negate huge areas of time itself.

I know what Eliade means, or think I do. And travelling in Peru, the Soviet Union, South Africa, the Galapagos Islands, Greece, Mexico, etc., has evoked excitement in the plunging blood like a small stain of colour derived from the original event. And so one lives many lives, condensed like a compacted millennium, waiting to spring outward at the trigger-moment in your mind.

I suppose I owe most for my own development to D. H. Lawrence and Irving Layton. As examples, not tutors. And perhaps Milton Acorn gets in there somewhere as well; I learned from him both how to write and how not to write. Very few people can teach you opposite things at the same time.

Really bad poems can be instructive as well. In my high-school texts there was a little-known poem, "The Private of the Buffs." I had to memorize it for my sins, and still recite it on festive occasions. This wonderful neglected poem is probably the worst ever written. It's so bad it comes out on the other side of worstness like those Old Squaw ducks and becomes truly glorious....

At first it was some kind of a game, this playing with words. I got a dollar for the first poem I ever wrote, published in "Spotlight," the Trenton Collegiate school magazine. As a 185-pound lineman at age fourteen on the school football team, I heard the whispers, "He writes poems," and did not cringe. But when Wilson MacDonald visited our school to recite his own poems, and I was ushered solemnly into his presence as the school poet, I began to regret my versifying proclivities.

Years and years of writing monotonous doggerel, imitating every bad poet who ever lived. Six of those years in the RCAF, where I met John Gillespie Magee who wrote "High Flight" ("Oh I have touched the surly" et cetera). When he was a trainee at Trenton and I a security guard corporal, we read each other's poems and were not impressed. It was only when I graduated from Chesterton, Stevenson and W. J. Turner, becoming fascinated by Dylan Thomas, that I realized how bad I was. And consciously set out to change. Not like a body builder or long-distance runner training to be champions; just so I wouldn't throw up on the page when I read my own poems in a locked telephone booth.

Steve McIntyre, a notably unsober Vancouver bookseller, aided and abetted this opinion of my badness. He said, "Purdy, you ain't read nothin' yet" -- meaning Great Books. So I read Great Books until they came out my ears. And McIntyre said, "You'll never make it." After Curt Lang and I met Malcolm Lowry at Deep Cove near Vancouver, Lowry remembered Curt's name but not mine. This opinion of my badness seemed to be unanimous. It accounts for my shy and retiring demeanour.

But if I am permitted to be sententious, it is a long haul, this writing lifetime. I think I've learned from everyone I've read, chewed their stuff and digested it and forgot it entirely when I was writing myself. That is a debt which all of us who write must acknowledge: we owe everyone. I have enjoyed being alive and writing a great deal, being ashamed and prideful, making mistakes and stumbling on answers before I knew the questions existed. In a world so abundant with both good and bad things, in which my own unique lighted space of human consciousness burns and flickers, this moment at which the past and future converge to a pinpoint now, at an age when the body says, "Slow down, you silly bugger": there are still important things in my life and poems I want to write.

Which is a very long sentence; it makes me thirsty for a beer or two. And it occurs to me that if I were aboard a rowboat and floating in the middle of all the beer I've drunk in a lifetime, I'd never be able to see the shore.

At which the high gods of serious things throw up their hands in horror.

## THE PAINTED GARDEN

by Gerry Shikatani

They are then, those gestures behind doors, the balance of colour and form (force) of such scale, when the light discretely shines what imagination paints. The shallots or peaches, the rippled cloth tumbling out of its basket, that taste of cracked walnuts. When we enter, there are chairs in the corners of our view, a napkin has been placed, and with, an Oriental print waxed with dirt (beneath our fingernails).

The difficulty in capturing the exact tone of pain at the moment of entry, for just at such point when tossed in the night while asleep there was this dolorous wounded voice. Soft. Soft tension of magenta pressed into powder, the flesh of the hand. To walk off the boundaries in this field of night, counting, to turn with preposition, as splinter, guided by penetrating form, chairs in the corners even closer in our view, into the new subject, the outstretched perspective's thumb, the table leg, the knife, the nut-cracker, unrelinquishing in their painted pattern.

When she holds up her fan, the light is cast out -- a kind of undressing (dictionary on the table, a knife to cut, the flesh of its blade) (the sound of an exotic leathered emotion) beneath the dark dress, eyes mount the words, the vocables surface: wet worms. And the cool moon. Enter this night with a stare.

I can remember then, the precision of that meal, when the proprietor had ushered me to the corner, the corner table, and I ate by candlelight, the wax dripping off-line, onto the cotton cloth. Eggs, hot, yet still liquid and yellow in their sweet warm cream, the tureen to fingers was hot, I would taste and inhale the odours into me. And the crisp, almost smoke salt skin of a duck confit in its soft giving sauce, a tableau of puréed carrots fanned with ridges, and those sweet white potatoes, still vegetable crisp, speaking of their presence in the earth.



# L'HISTOIRE DU P.D.G. DU COIN

par Claudine Bertrand

Le péquenaud du coin mène une vie de patachon en PDG et son parka sent le patchouli. Il entre pakété chez son parrain et le parodie de manière paroxysmale. Ce partouse et de parutions pakistanes. Parvenue sur le parvis de Parkinston il pagine le mot de passe, à pas-de-géant dans le passage passager du jour pascal, où il essaie de rencontrer une passante dans les parages du passé en jouant au passe-boules ou au passe-partout. Il use du payant droit de passe-passe et de passe-pied pour passer son tour de passe-poil, et aller chercher un passeport en passant par-dessus son passe-temps favori qui est le passe-montagne. C'est un patapouf pantelant, passif et passionné de passionnette, passible de prison pataphysique et patati et patata.... Pataugeant dans le patchouli et les pâtes de son pantalon patenté pour épater son paternel, il est pâteux dans le patelin pathétique au périmètre pathosphogène pathologique. Patienteux pour le patin ou la patinette sur le patio il mange ses pâtisseries sous son paletot. Il patrouille patoche et patraque chez le patriarche pantagrualesque qui s'ennuie de sa patrie à l'abri de la patine du temps. C'est un patriote parti pour la gloire qui pandicule dans les pattes du patronat sans patronyme. Il se promène en pédalo dans le paysage paganique avec un air pédant de PDG en pamoison. On le voit partout passer avec son odeur de paprika et ses pâquerettes à la boutonnière. Il piaille sous son patchwork et patente ses palabres par-ci par là. Peut-être qu'un jour il passera par la Pensylvanie ou bien par chez-vous avec son pastis. Patientez en pouffant de rire dans le pâté chinois pompiers pédants aux pompons pendants.

## PETIT SIRAH by Sheila Davies

The younger one she LIES, CHEATS and STEALS. The older one she PICKS on her. The younger one SHE TOOK up with a Spanish sailor and they left together for a big CITY on the California coast. The OLDER one she got married to a man STRIKING THE RESEMBLANCE of King Kong. His name was Eben. He drove a shiny thunder-black FLATBED truck and painted electric flames ON the hood. THE YOUNGER ONE SHE SETTLED NICELY INTO CITY LIFE WITH HER BANDIT MAN. The two had fine tastes which took them often onto the sleazy BOULEVARDS and CRUISEWAYS. They were inseparable. They were such a subtle pair THAT they lacked enthusiasm. When they separated on A street corner, when she went to work and he went to HUSTLE, they didn't PRESS hands or KISS or WAVE goodbye or even TURN around. The older one she was a car mechanic. She SPECIALIZED in brake jobs. WHEN she came home at night she cooked Eben a sumptuous meal, FRIED CHICKEN, creamed corn, FRUIT SALAD in sour cream and PLENTY of soft WHITE bread. The YOUNGER ONE she thought the OLDER ONE was as common as pig's tracks. Their mother used to always say that in tones of foreboding. Their mother was a sad and proper woman who had a Kentucky BACON voice. THE OLDER ONE SHE THOUGHT THE YOUNGER ONE was the devil's daughter and an independence day sparkler of irregular passions. THE younger one she worked in a COMB factory on the river's edge. She took combs from a CONVEYOR BELT SLIPPING them into static plastic bags. She ate her lunch by the river away from people and CHEWED HER CHEESE sandwich slowly and determinedly. Then she thought about her bandit man Dax, wondering about the love and direction beTWEEN them and then she crunched the white lunch BAG into a BALL.

The older one SHE SUED Eben for divorce. THE GROUNDS WERE CRUELTY. The younger one she WAS CYNICAL when she heard since it was the older one's SECOND MATRIMONIAL MISADVENTURE. The older one she sued EBEN for CRUELTY because of the night he got out of hand IN front of dinner guests. HE grabbed THE crock OF creamed CORN, pulled OPEN the NECK of HER angora SWEATER and LET the YELLOW gruel SLIME its WAY down HER breasts AND stomach. The younger one she walked home after work every night and ate an elegant meal with Dax of cheese and scallops and EXCELLENT wine. Dax wore A sailor cap. He convinced her TO quit her job TO GO into THE business OF stealing WITH him. She reminded him of his CHEATING and LYING. The older one she sued Eben for cruelty because the dinner guests went quiet while he flopped her with his FAT KING KONG HANDS OVER HIS KNEE. With undisguised pleasure he slid down her ELASTIC WAISTED pants and spit all over her bottom and then SOPPED IT UP WITH WHITE BREAD INTO HIS MOUTH. The guests were mortified. The younger one she quit her job. She went with Dax to the big supermarket. They filled A SMALL basket with EXPENSIVE cheese and wine and olives and HEARTS OF artichokes. They walked out of the door with the merchandise and ate HEARTILY at home. The older one she slapped Eben across his cheek AND nose AND eyes after the guests departed. Eben asked her if he could PAINT little ELECTRIC flames all over her body. The younger one she GOT caught SIX WEEKS into her thievery by a PLAINCLOTHESMAN. The supermarket hired the PLAINCLOTHESMAN especially because of HER and DAX. Her basket was full of cheese. Dax was at home DRINKING PETIT SIRAH from a cut glass wine GOBLET.

## FOOD FORFAIT par Céline Messner

Du granola power au sacro-saint McDonald, de la "Grande Bouffe" au "Charme discret de la bourgeoisie," du frigidaire vide à la soupe qui déborde sur le feu, rien à faire, on ne s'en sort pas vivant. *Food Forfait* pour capitalisme surfait, il n'y a plus de fantaisie dans l'alimentation, manger se fait maintenant à la chaîne sans nous amener pour autant à la production idéale, loin de là.

De votre première crise de caca aux couches jetables de votre petit dernier, du tube digestif sous-alimenté à la scatologie la plus primaire, des appartements aux salles de bain surrénovées aux toilettes à pédales françaises, manger et évacuer demeurent des préoccupations omniprésentes, envahissantes, symptomatologiques.

Symptomatologiques en effet. Il y a des périodes pires que les autres; quand votre chèque de Bien-Etre Social est en retard, par exemple, et ceci n'est qu'un seul exemple puisque mille autres raisons peuvent vous éloigner honteusement de votre marché d'alimentation préféré, un deal de dope manqué, une crise de délinquance avortée.... Tout cela n'est rien dans l'univers des repas ratés, des factures non payées, des généreux pourboires à 1.25% (et encore, en petite monnaie!), des plats au four qui ne résistent pas à la chaleur, des recettes faisant appel à des ingrédients introuvables, non non non, cela n'est rien. Le Food Forfait par excellence, celui entre tous, le voyage à l'année pas cher, payé, dépenses incluses, par votre chaîne de télévision ou votre poste de radio habituel c'est: LA FAMINE.

La famine, en Ethiopie ou ailleurs, où Dieu le veut, d'ailleurs, et généralement là où le Pape se rend et se vend, la famine demeure la préoccupation globale, animale et patriarcale de tous nos instincts alimentaires de nord-américains, mal, mais trop nourris. Enfin, un Food Forfait de grande occasion, achetable, revendable, négociable, rentable à tous les niveaux -- à n'importe quelle saison de l'année, en dépit des marchés boursiers et des oranges victimes du gel en Floride.

Vous pouvez vous procurer la "touné" qui va avec votre culpabilité, en anglais, en français, en québécois, vous la fredonnez chaque fois que l'envie vous en prend et vous êtes sauvé tout en devenant sauveur. Cependant, n'essayez pas de vendre un show au forum sur le thème "famine en Ethiopie," car vous risquez de vous casser la gueule (sic).

Ne soyez pas déprimés. Continuez à manger avec la même vérocité qu'avant. Au fond, manger est un acte créatif, bien des écrivains/nes avant moi l'ont prouvé. Cessez de culpabiliser et de vous imposer de grossières ulcères d'estomac qui ne soulageront pas votre anxiété sur la question. Food Forfait vous offre une solution hors du commun, la famine de nos jours est un bon moyen de gagner sa vie, et puis, vous économiserez sur les frais de route et sur les "lunch" avec des individus qui vous répugnent.

*Food Forfait* est à la mesure de votre poésie intérieure, mettez-y de l'émotion, vous y gagnerez en consistance intellectuelle....

## DEFLOWERING by Paya Rohay

It was her twenty-fifth birthday and I called her. We laughed in familiar tones like true lovers, like two trees. Our voices were indifferent to the lives that we kept, and it was almost as if we were still there, awakening together in the old house. My father had painted the room a deep shade of red and ever since I can remember, I lived in that room with my older sister. The colour was unlike any I had ever seen, and to this day have never been able to match. I always thought it was the colour that flowers would bleed if they could express their pain in getting snatched. It never seemed fair that everyone always picked the most perfect flowers, killing the blossom and leaving the roots to live on.

When we were small, she used to wear boy's clothes and her hair, usually covered by a baseball cap, was cropped real short. I thought she was trying to live up to the image of that perfect son that never quite arrived. He died on his birthday, and although our parents tried to hide us from exposure, their dream never did vanish. He lived like a secret in our walls, and in winter, when coals burned madly in our cellar, he poured up through the registers and we breathed him in our skin.

Mama taught us femininity by showing us how to sit and by binding dresses on our bones. She never talked about love, or sex, or death, or war, and she stopped holding us in her arms when I was still quite young. It was about that time when I noticed a change in my sister. I remember us going to church on Sunday and the constant uneasiness I felt about watching her body moving so foreignly underneath those peculiar dresses. I always knew that she only wore them because she had breasts now and it was expected of her. She mothered us and cooked for us but her long efforts to fit with the family were met with little affection and she burned in her struggle like a slow dripping candle.

When she graduated from high school, she married a stone man with a Mustang and had visions of melodic gardens. She installed and adapted her flawless limbs but she discovered that this new sprouting was just an extension or fold from the old branch. Now, children bloom from her with angelic wings and she weaves strings of light to guide them in darkness. Her man comes home with his loops and knots and they fall together like a seam. She lies beside him in the big empty bed and picks out the splinters from her head. She picks out the splinters from her head.

Oh Sister, Sister, I wish to gather you gently like a basket of herbs. You have crawled through the ice without a single bone fracture. Though you are there and I cannot touch you with my vacant fingers, we wait together for small alterations. Now we share our laughter, share our tears. Now we love.



# A Sampling of Excerpts from The Encyclopedia Bananica

A work in progress.  
Send enquiries or contributions to:  
Banana Productions, Box 3655, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 3Y8

Abbreviations for unidentified sources:  
UN = newspaper, UBIM = book of magazine, UC = catalogue.

by Anna Banana



## Art and Artists

**ALPHABET** -- Chiquita Caps, designed by Paige Snader, Darnestown, MD, U.S.A. -- *U & LC Magazine*, date unknown.

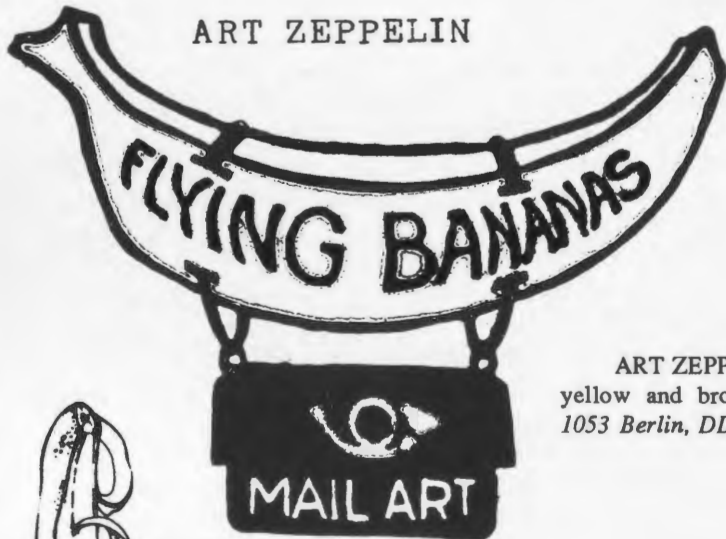
**BEN** -- Les Bananes 1958-82, Chez Lucien Durand, 19 rue Mazarine, Paris 6, 18/3/83. "Ben started doing banana pix in '58 'cause no one had done it yet. But Yves Klein told him to quit 'cause abstract art had had the biscuit. So now Ben is having 20 one-man shows in one month in the best Parisian galleries, each different." -- *Postcard from Hank Bull*, 22/3/83.

**DRENNEN**, Sarah -- Paints surreal images on reflective street signs. Using industrial sprays, the Boulder, Colorado, minimalist painter superimposed a bunch of bananas on a road sign, right. "You can say that I'm literally practising what I preach: bring the art onto the streets and to the people," she said in an interview. "The streetside paintings evoke all kinds of arguments and in the process stimulate people. Ah, what is this? Bananas on a road sign? This shouldn't be here, and that thought will lead to a discussion at home and at work, and the people will be talking about art." -- *Spartanburg Herald Journal*, Spartanburg, SC, 16/3/80.



**THIEBAUD**, Wayne -- Banana hands, 1975-76, oil on canvas. "I'm interested in foods," he says. -- *Photo from the Allan Stone Galleries*.

## ART ZEPPELIN



ART ZEPPELIN -- Silk screen print, yellow and brown. -- *Joseph Huber*, 1053 Berlin, DDR/IE, Germany.



## Books

**ANNA BANANA & ME** -- By Lenore Blegvad, illustrations by Erik Blegvad. A Margaret K. McElderry Book/Atheneum. Ages four to eight. "Ellen's ability to make up real daytime horror stories far exceeded mine. But Ellen has an irresistible friend, Anna Banana, who leads him into places and games 'where,' he says, 'I never go' -- into dark places in the park and at home, and finally to the lap of a stone statue." Etc. -- *Review from N.Y. Times Book Review*, 28/4/85.

**BANANA REPUBLIC** -- Catalogues of travel and safari clothing. -- 224 Grant Avenue, Dept. 731, Box 7347, San Francisco, CA, U.S.A. 94120.

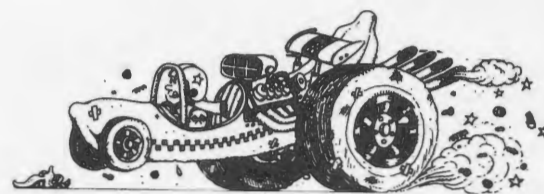
**BANANA** -- By Bonnie Bluh, Macmillan, 228 pages. "Joanna Banana, a zany, 45-year-old wife and mother, whose high-velocity monologue is raucous, dirty-truthful and charmingly funny. She's the lady inside all of us, waiting to get out and take our piece of the action." -- *Review by Elizabeth Pomade*, UM.



## ARTOONS & COMIX



## Events



**BANANA 500 [1]** -- A race for rubberband-powered vehicles carrying a banana. Winners will be judged on their ability to travel the greatest distance over a straight course. "Golden Banana Awards" for winners at the Pacific Science Centre, Seattle. -- *Carol Beers*, *Seattle Times*, 3/10/81.

**BANANA 500 [2 & 3]** -- Took place in Vancouver's Arts, Sciences and Technology Centre, 26-27/3/83 and 18-20/5/85.

**THE GREAT RACE** -- Organized by MacAvoy Layne as a fund-raising event for Maui's wheelchair athletes. More than 200 took part in the around-the-island, carry-a-banana extravaganza. -- *Maui Sun*, 16/4/80.

**INTERNATIONAL BANANA FESTIVAL** -- "An annual event since 1963, in the twin cities of Fulton, Kentucky, and South Fulton, Tennessee. The festival is an experiment in human relations that has achieved remarkable success, bringing together peoples of the two Americas." -- *Holiday Inn International Magazine*, 8/73.

**BANANA OLYMPICS** -- This parody of the Olympic Games was conceived and staged as an April Fool's event by Anna Banana in San Francisco's Embarcadero Centre in 1975. More than 100 persons competed for the Banana trophies in the first Banana Olympics, which was broadcast live by KPFA, Berkeley.

**1980 BANANA OLYMPICS** -- Staged by Ms. Banana through the auspices of the Surrey Art Gallery and the Canada Council. Again, more than a hundred persons competed in the event. Criterion for winning was not who crossed the finish line first, but who did it with the most appeal, i.e. costume and style of performing. This event took place in Surrey's Bear Creek Park, 13/7/80.

Working from posters, entry forms and publicity clippings about the 1975 event, the Fruit Growers Marketing Board of Brisbane, Australia, staged their version of the BANANA OLYMPICS in May of 1980, without giving reference or credits to Ms. Banana's idea and materials.

**GIANT BANANA SPLIT** (one of many) -- Selinsgrove, PA. Eight thousand people ate about a foot each of an 8,000-foot-long banana split -- containing 8,000 bananas, 800 gallons of ice cream plus fruit toppings, cherries and peanuts -- to qualify for the *Guinness Book of World Records*. -- *United Press*, 5/82.

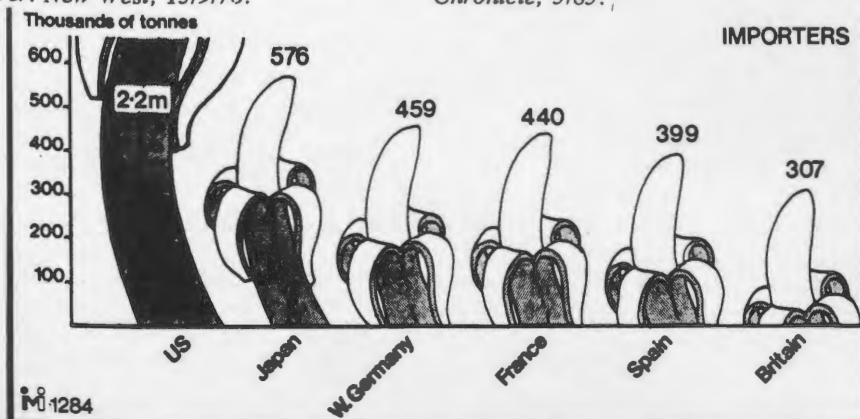


## Facts

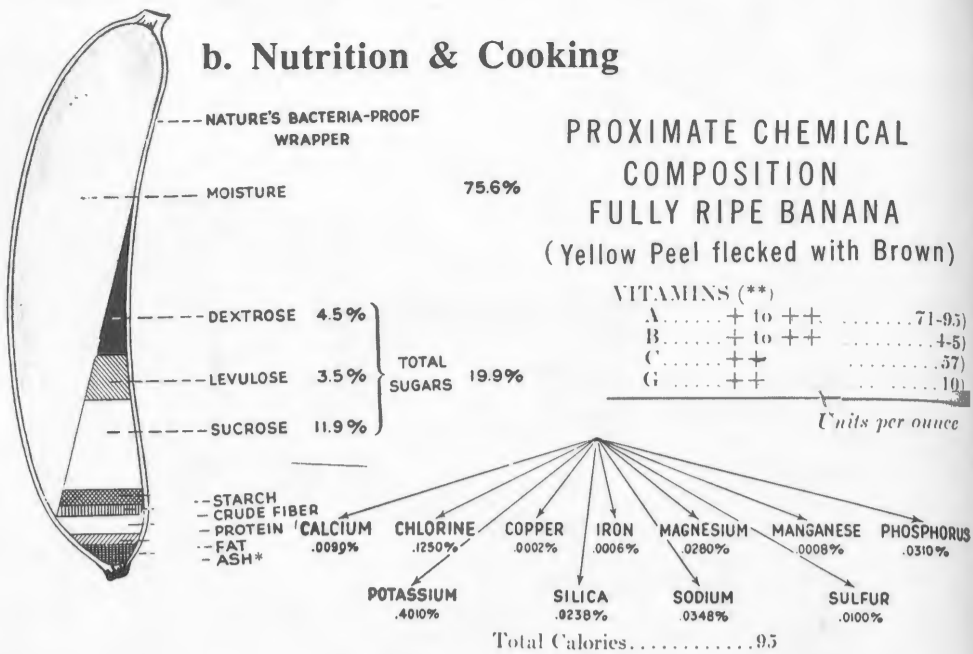
### a. Growing & Marketing

"The real, honest, I-kid-you-not truth is that, while very few Northern California nurseries regularly stock bananas, a number of these lush, 10-25 foot high wonders are not only thriving, but producing fresh, edible fruit throughout the Bay area. Even more amazing: Many gardeners are growing bananas outside!" -- *From "Growing Exotic Plants in Your Own Backyard," by Gary Hanover*. *New West*, 13/9/76.

**TRADE EMBARGO ON NICARAGUA'S BANANAS** -- Reagan supporter Jack Pandel, who runs an import-export firm in Delano, California, said his contract with Nicaragua represents almost 25% of the firm's \$100 million-a-year business. Says Pandel: "I've gone down [to Nicaragua] and never found any ill-feeling toward me. The people there are hungry and they're suffering. I'm no Communist lover, but it's just logic. If we choke them, they will blame us, and this embargo will shove the Nicaraguans more into the arms of the Russians." -- *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5/85.



## b. Nutrition & Cooking



**BANANAS FELPHAM STYLE** -- For six servings. Ingredients: 9 ripe bananas, 2 Tsp boiling water, 3 Tbsp dark rum, 3/4 pint whipping cream, 3 Tsp instant coffee, 2 oz. chopped raisins, 3 Tbsp brown sugar. **PROCEDURE:** Put coffee & boiling water in cup and set aside to cool. Whip cream. Add half the cream, half the rum to the coffee. Slice the bananas into a bowl, sprinkle with remainder of rum, sugar and raisins and mix lightly. Add coffee-flavoured cream and mix. Spread the remaining whipped cream on to and chill. -- UN.



## fashions

Mary-Anne Buxton, San Francisco



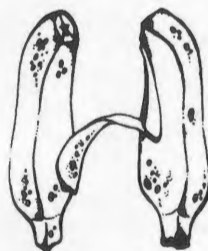
Eva Marmorstein, San Francisco



Josephine Baker, Paris



Katrin BJORKEGREN, Stockholm



## History

Going a way back, bananas ... the botanical name of the common banana of commerce is *Musa sapientum*, meaning "fruit of the wise men," which traces to an ancient legend that the sages of India rested in the shade of the plant and ate of the fruit.

All evidence shows that the banana is one of the oldest fruits known to mankind, perhaps one of the first plants to be cultivated. It had distinctive names in Sanskrit, ancient Chinese and the Malay languages, indicating that it was known throughout much of Southern Asia in prehistoric times. Bananas were found on all tropical Pacific islands when those islands were first visited by white men. Apparently the fruit was transported by immigrants from Asia starting around the time of Christ.

The Arab poet Masudi, who died AD 956, extolled a dish popular in Damascus, Constantinople and Cairo -- a confection of almonds, honey and bananas in nut oil, thus indicating that bananas had reached the Mediterranean by then.

Friar Thomas de Berlanga, a missionary priest, is credited with bringing the banana to the New World. He brought plants from the Canary Islands to Hispaniola in 1516. Shortly after, bananas were taken to mainland Mexico. The fruit thrived and spread throughout the American tropics and later visitors mistook it for a native plant. -- *National Geographic*, date unknown.



'S



## And the Law

**THEY'RE SERIOUS: NO BANANA JOKES** -- Harare, Zimbabwe (AP) -- Making fun of President Canaan Banana, whose name has inspired many jokes, is a crime punishable by up to five years in jail and a \$1,000 fine under a new law published Friday in Zimbabwe. -- *Los Angeles Times*, 1/12/83.

**BANANA LABEL CLUE IN FATAL BOMBING** -- Wellington, N.Z. (AP) -- A banana label may be the vital clue in the hunt for the Wellington Trades Hall bomb murderer. The label was found on a fragment of the suitcase which contained the bomb. Detective Inspector Ted Lines, who revealed the discovery of the banana label, said the significance of the label was its rarity. The Rica label was seldom seen in New Zealand, Mr. Lines said. -- *Daily News, New Plymouth, N.Z.*, 5/84.

**CRASH VICTIM CAN TASTE ONLY BANANAS** -- Mr. Herbert Talbot, a pensioner, told a High Court judge yesterday that road-crash injuries had robbed him of his senses of taste and smell. "Now the only foods I can taste are bananas and hot custard. I love flowers but cannot now smell any of them." Mr. Talbot, 67, received £7,500 damages award for his injuries and loss at King's Langley, Herts. -- UN.



## Personalities

**SAN JOSE, CA.** -- The government has finally been able to get Joseph "Joe Bananas" Bonanno, Sr., sentenced to prison. Until last year, the only time the 76-year-old Mafia patriarch had been successfully prosecuted was in 1945, when he paid a \$450 fine for violating a wage-and-hour law in his Brooklyn garment business. Last summer he was convicted of conspiring to interfere with a grand jury inquiry into his son's business activities. Etc. -- *San Francisco Examiner*, 13/1/81.

**JOSEPHINE BAKER** -- American-born entertainer rose to stardom in Paris in 1925 as the "Banana Girl," wearing no clothes except for a girdle of rubber bananas, dancing on a mirror and singing Ave Maria. -- UB.

**KEN BANNISTER** -- Top banana of the International Banana Club, 2524 North Elmolo Avenue, Altadena, CA, U.S.A. 91001. -- *Club Newsletter*.

**BANANA KELLY** -- A civic auction group that has been lauded for their work in restoring buildings in the Longwood Historic District near the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. -- UN.

**PROFESSOR BANANACO** -- "Of no worldly prominence or fame, but of kind heart and steady hand in the creation of personal mythology." -- *Letter*, 6/78.

**BANANAMATION** -- Christopher Hinton, 108 Bole Street, Winnipeg, Man., Canada R3L 1X5. -- *Letter*, 2/80.

**TOP BANANA** -- "Makes 'em laff when you say ... 'I can't hear you, I've got bananas in my ears.'" -- UC.



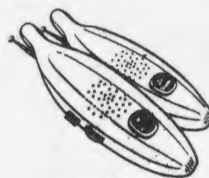
## Products

**BANANA**  
AROMA-CONDOM  
PLUS LUBRITOL  
GEFÜHLSSFEUCHT



**BUY A BUNCH, SAVE A BUNCH** -- Meet the Banana™, THE VERY TOUGH, VERSATILE, PORTABLE AND RELIABLE dot-matrix printer from Gorilla™. Leading Edge Products, 225 Turnpike Street, Canton, MA, U.S.A. 02021. -- *Computer Mag*, 1983.

**MUSIC & FRUIT LOVERS** alike are tuning into the 'Lectric Banana Stereo phonograph, designed to play four speeds, even upside-down. A-H Industries, Box 91, Coloma, MI, U.S.A. 49038. -- *Mechanix Illustrated*, 12/74.



**BANANA WALKIE-TALKIES & COMPASS.** A pair of solid-state 11" walkie-talkies with voice volume control, telescopic antenna, Morse-code beep button and belt clip. Battery operated from Chiquita Brands.



## How Biz



The Gang's All Here" and they are going bananas at the Thalia, July 31

**BANANAMOUR** -- Kevin Ayers.

**BANANARAMA** -- British rock trio, probably the most critically respected of the "girl groups," for their sweet, airy voices contrasted with the themes of their co-written songs: starving kids, gun pushers, etc. -- UM.

**BANANA RIDGE** -- Movie with Robert Morley & George Cole. "Hilarious success." -- UN.

**SECOND BANANAHOOD** -- By Dick Shawn. Combines a rubbery face with an even more rubbery mind. The theme of the show is Second Bananahood, warily wrapping his witticisms inside wackiness, unpeeling it like his omnipresent banana. -- *San Francisco Chronicle*, 24/5/85.

**TOP BANANA** of banana slang is GO, GOING, GONE BANANAS, with 61 entries to date, while TOP BANANA has only 18, SECOND BANANA only 7. -- *Banana Archives*.



## Language

**BANANAS** used as an adjective means crazy. William Safire writing on language in the *Times* says "Banana singular is a word used to derogate Latin American nations, as in 'Banana Republic,' while Bananas plural means crazy. Bananasville, then, is that frantic, crazy city across the river from Shrinksville." -- *New York Times*.



Ask for the top banana.



# THE ETIQUETTE OF INVISIBLE EATING

by Opal Louis Nations

The secret of manners is what we call "Invisible Eating." It is a matter of disguising the process without having to learn a few of the basic tricks employed by skilful ventriloquists.

Anything which advertises your eating, displays it, emphasizes it, is objectionable.

A young child once told me she had encountered an elderly jaundiced person at the family dinner table and was amazed to find that although he seemed to be just talking and having a jolly time, his plate was as white and glazed as the day it was made when the servants took it away.

Poise, at the dinner table, and refraining from useless and impulsive motion, are the hallmarks of social equality. A person who cannot control his hands is not at peace with his mind. The napkin should be placed partly folded in the lap, not spread out by much under-cover work, or as a cloth thrown at a picnic spot. How often do we see a man tuck a huge napkin into his neck as if he were in a barber shop? When the soup plate is inclined while the diner avidly pursues the last precious drops, we have a phenomenon that might be called "prospecting." The prospector, you know, takes zealous interest in the gold dust left at the bottom of his pan. He is closely related to the "Mulcher," who seizes a slab of bread and, like a mason applying mortar to a brick wall, smears the entire surface with butter. A fragment of bread, dabbed with butter, may be swallowed almost unnoticed. Do not treat the dinner knife as would a sword swallower during his act, the knife should not even come into contact with the lips. If you behave as such, your hostess will think you are from Patagonia. And please, I beg of you, do not go to the other extreme and try to be super-refined by using your knife as would an expensive surgeon a delicately held lancet while removing your vermi-form appendix, or as a long-sighted poet uses a pen in writing verse.

"Vegicide," the wanton cutting of the innocent tender leaves of lettuce with the knife, is a form of mayhem. You can almost hear the salad squeak in agony.

*I hope, old boy, you've never tried  
The awful crime of Vegicide  
For cultured persons in New York  
Cut up their vegies with a fork.*

"Zigzag eating," the continual shifting of the fork after cutting meat from left to right with a sort of sleight-of-hand effect, undoubtedly comes from the old-fashioned aversion to left-handedness. A peculiarly American technique with the fork is that elaborate arrangement of the digits known as the "Banjo Grip." The thumb, ring, and little fingers are held underneath the handle, while the fore and middle fingers are clamped on top. It is a difficult feat and yet almost any dock labourer seems to do it skilfully. Let us now examine the spoon. Stir up your tea with it one minute too long, too eagerly, and you'll never understand why she asked whether you tolled the bells for Sunday service.

The "Front Entrance" style -- inserting the point of the spoon into the mouth -- as many Americans and all Europeans do -- is all right when giving Little Johnny his cod-liver oil, but at the table it involves a semi-circular motion apt to feature the elbow. Well-bred eaters of soup follow this good maxim:

*Like little boats that put to sea  
I push the spoon away from me.*

The first thing you do at dinner if you are a hundred per cent Patagonian is to employ the "Touch System." You poke the knife, you jiggle the fork and move the salt cellar about the table and mark on the cloth with your spoon while you talk. Or you apply the "Bust Hug" to a drinking glass, ignoring the stem and leaving enough fingerprints to convict you of rape. The next thing you do is rest your elbows on the table. When the elbows are so anchored, the hands cannot be idle. First you pray. This is done by clasping the hands and enlacing the fingers like a baby, saying "Now I lay me down to ..." etc. A more advanced elderly form is with the tips of the fingers touching lightly.

Next comes the washing: hands are washed together as if by invisible soap. And after the washing, ironing. The palms are rubbed back and forth while the eyes, raised to take in the glass chandelier illumination, assume a pensive, far-away-in-Florida look. And finally, if the elbows are still propped on the table, comes "Face Feeling" in all its basic exercises. The ear is pulled, the neck is stroked, the cheeks, and perhaps even the air.

"Elbow Eating" generates other faults.

"Lizzie-Lick-the-Spoon" is a young lady who takes a heaping spoonful of ice cream. In and out the spoon will go, while she licks off a little at a time, and fellow guests are kept in a state of utter suspense for as long as possible. There's also the "Cup Cuddler." She plants her elbows on the table and holds her cup with both hands in sacrificial position at the level of her mouth. She sips and puckers while gossiping about her husband, friends or servants.

Let us pass to the lady of "Divorced Digit." That little finger of hers, extended as if to fix the direction of foul winds so self-consciously, is an airy attempt at elegance. "See that finger?" she seems to say, tauntingly. "Ain't I stylish?" Eating is an art, not an industry.

Now we come to the horrors of what is called "Loading." A piece of meat is ruthlessly stabbed with the fork, then with the knife a little potato is added to the load, a little turnip, and the whole neatly smoothed over and hoisted to the mouth like a hodful of plaster going up a builder's ladder. Along the same line is the "Dog's Dinner"; the eater cuts up all the meat on his plate into tiny mouthfuls of equal bulk, carefully salts his string beans, neatly slices a whole potato, and pours a coating of glorious gravy over all.

Among other mechanical crudities is the "Table Ostrich," who raises a curtain of mock modesty and behind a large napkin hides an elaborately frenzied picking of the teeth. Worse still is the "Home Dentist," who chases the tongue around the teeth with contemplative thoroughness. And then at last, after much game, that delightful capture of an elusive raspberry seed. It is a strange thing, but the fact is that we spend a tremendously large part of our lives eating but we never see ourselves at the task. If we did place a table before a mirror and studied the picture we made while eating, it is certain we would never recognize our own reflections.

## N<sup>o</sup>. 31. TABLE MANNERS: THE ART OF MASTICATION AND ITS PITFALLS

from Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen of Good Society  
by Opal Louis Nations

Take small mouthfuls; masticate slowly with the ears still, and the lips closed. Do not puff out the cheeks on any account. There is a strong and primitive suggestion of animalism in the society at breakfast or dinner of the man or woman who smacks his or her palate, grinds his or her food noisily as if eating were passing through a mill driven by oxen, who regards with lustful glances the contents of his or her plate, who syphons off a glass of water to the sound of a bilge pump, who spits out bones and pips with considerable force, who laps soup like an eager spaniel, who rattles the knife, fork or spoon against the side of the plate as if to indicate some skill in the art of percussion, who painstakingly divides one serving of vegetable from another so that dams, dykes and streams can be made of gravy on the dinner plate, who speaks when the mouth is full reducing general visibility, who clears his or her plate before others have blessed their own, who fusses over every mouthful by picking and dissecting food with the fingernail, who sips coffee like the piston strokes of a steam engine and who mixes his or her food up into a stodgy mess as if trying to match the colours in the pattern of the dining-room wallpaper.

It is not permitted to pour the gravy or sauce through the tea strainer nor is it nice to thrash the foot of the pepper pot in order to force out the contents. The shocking sight is too often seen of both men and women attempting, while still at table, to dislodge with the whips of their tongues portions of food that have remained in the interstices of their teeth, gums and corners of their mouths; nothing equals the horror of seeing a hissing snake pit of yellow teeth and throbbing tonsils.

## SWEE' PEA APPASSIONATA by Susan Parker

Fishing into and out of the moon full of roses blooming now as the rouged Soviet of th "cabbage patch doll in UKRAINE, Alberta running the upstairs bath o'ergrown with the foliage of yr cauliflower ears" -- Popeye exclaims munching the Kellogg vegetables and fishing the fruit trees into and out of the porridge bowl stream

dreaming of Mondays -- Ah! -- and years gone by "as the crow flies" and "me universe is unfolding as it should trickling through the grey" matter

yup, thr are no limits to the depths you can sink to as you slide down the banister of life remembering me as a splinter in th ca-rear -- though you've got a memory like a sieve -- the size of a Swee' Pea;

"not a bed of roses and spinach" between two ears overflowing the upstairs bath. The blackened toast of Sky "scraping it to the shade me wants" fishing into and out of the sink full of dishes for the Fruit Loop bowl stream wondering "where the yellow went" and years ... dreaming of the girdle of the universe "as you slide down the banister of life thr are no limits" to the heights you can climb to as you get out of shape

"and not give in to the terrorist demands of me sex bomb," Popeye adds eyeing the waitress with the string bean tits in The Milk Bars ALL ACROSS AMERICA taking "two hands to handle me whopper" -- that Beelzebub that by any other name would smell as sweet for 'tis not Big Red from Scuttlebutt Lodge sinking into the scent of her Musk-o-ka.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## by Judith Fitzgerald

aliment:nourriture  
Speise:Nahrung:Futter:Lebensmittel  
alimento

with ground-based  
telescopes one can  
learn a number  
of important  
things about --

-- a most delicious  
nourishing and  
wholesome food  
whether stewed  
roasted baked or  
boiled and I make  
no doubt that it  
will equally serve  
in a fricassee  
or a ragout --

-- remote planetary  
satellites --

-- no love  
sincerer than  
the love of food --

-- knowledge  
of a satellite's  
orbital parameters  
enables workers  
to calculate  
the mass  
of the planet  
and the strength  
of its gravitational  
field at various  
locations --

-- as good as a meal --

-- the mass of  
the satellite  
itself can often  
be inferred by  
observing the pertur-  
bations it induces  
in the orbits  
of other satellites  
if its diameter  
is known one can  
then compute  
its mean density --

-- if music be  
the food of love  
play on give me  
excess of it  
that surfeiting  
the appetite may sicken  
and so die --

-- which is the most  
important clue  
to bulk composition

### WOMEN'SPEAK:

A Gala Celebration of Canadian  
Women Poets/Le gala de la parole  
des femmes canadiennes  
on the occasion of the launch of  
*SP/ELLES: Poetry by Canadian  
Women/Poesie de femmes  
canadiennes* (ed. Judith  
Fitzgerald, Black Moss Press).

Saturday, November 8, 1986

A Space  
183 Bathurst Street at Queen  
Second Floor, 364-3227  
7:00 P.M.

*Gay Allison  
Ayanna Black  
Nicole Brossard  
Louise Cotnoir  
Louise Dupre  
Maxine Gadd  
Dorothy Livesay  
Daphne Marlatt  
Lesley McAllister  
P.K. Page  
Lola Lemire Tostevin  
Ann Wallace  
Betsy Warland*

# CONFECTIONARY

## by Dennis Cooley

when the squeeze is on life  
is maple  
syrup

the sun is a lemon  
meringue pie  
it sweats something awful

that's when the carmel drops  
gather  
faster than spruce  
leaks resin beyond all reason  
you spoon up an awful lot  
& that's the overflow  
that's carnal  
knowledge )save some for me  
)so you can grip the ball

the skin you are in is amber  
in love  
)save some for me  
& the sky in your eye buzzes  
in milk & honey

A is for bright eyes  
*eat your carrots*  
D is for strong teeth &  
bones

when thou art seen too much in the glorious sun  
oh leman mine  
i seize  
the day  
you squeeze  
darn near  
all the goodness  
out of me

when the heat is on  
you when you are  
in heat  
& you are loaded  
with beads gold as cod liver oil  
ring around a rosary  
told into the streets  
that are cold

it is then my sugar  
you are awfully sweet on me  
it is then you cure me  
of my malformed bones  
you open my eyes to new  
tricks & treats

that's when  
all the goodness gathers

into one  
sweet ball

& I can see  
you clean across heaven clear as liquid  
honey I swoon in your reflected glory  
bright eyed & bushy  
tailed i am  
stung in your liquid  
honey  
strung out like toffee

when the heat is up on  
us

it is then i  
have perfect night  
vision like  
a fly my eye  
balls glow in the dark &  
i bark &  
bark

when the heat is  
up on us



# SHREDDED WHAT

(a Whitman Serial)

by Rafael Barreto-Rivera

(1)

celebrate  
and what a fumbled arrogance  
for every atom  
observing  
summer grass  
my tongue brutally spiritual  
tasting  
slurping  
retiring  
good or bad  
Nature without check

(2)

houses rooms and gasms (better than orgasms)  
shelves  
books speech reach  
my mouth forever the passing of blood & air  
and a retired poet and a working one,  
both getting at  
the meaning of poems  
listening to all sides, filtering them

(3)

the talkers talking talk of the beginning and the end  
the talkers talking talk of the beginning and the end  
the talkers talking talk of the beginning and the end  
the talkers talking talk of the beginning and the end

the fat *comensales* ready themselves  
to crucify the wrong thief

(4)

the latest  
the real the fancied  
sickness

battles, horrors  
apart  
looking  
in & out  
watching

deeply shallow,  
wandering  
among linguists and contenders  
without mockery: witnessing and waiting

(5)

you and I  
not words not music very CPU-like  
carnal representations DNA satrapies  
"sensing devices that  
can measure speed, distance, etc."  
input-output of  
our self-monitoringness  
before a screen  
the screed --  
mostly our  
refraction.

Not sure of anything,  
consuming ritual portions  
we seek the vomitoria

(6)

a "?"  
how  
I guess must be  
bearing the owner's name  
Or food

or wish  
read-write  
lard-scale integrations  
Go back to first elastic zygote  
tool around  
and change  
the look of everything

(7)

lucky to die? Luckier, perhaps not  
to have been born?  
If Life's asynchronous, is Death a synchronicity?  
I eat, therefore I fart.  
Very well. I contain death in me.  
Or am contained by it in all I do, that's done to me.  
The crucial uncial question:  
AM I LOSING WEIGHT OR  
is weight losing me?

(8) (for bp & PD)

Favourite number, this, my "vertical infinity."  
I want to say,  
"The letter 4 and the number A are siblings."  
I want to say,  
"The number G and the letter 6 are friendly."  
I want to say the same  
kind of thing  
about R & B, the number "oh" and the letter zero.  
and so on.

$\infty$  is  
are may be  
it's an alphanumeric universe, don't you agree?  
The blab of  
The heavy  
The snow-sleighs shouted jokes pelts of snowballs  
The hurrahs the fury  
The flap of  
The meeting of  
The excited  
The impassive  
The silly syntax  
The surplus words  
The introduction  
The programming  
The image-base wherein all possible images are possible

The inverse of the image-base  
The brain's control, the camera oscura of  
The body  
[ a window ]  
through which  $\infty$  peeks  
leading to,  
led to

(9)

The big doors of the country  
The dried grass of the harvest  
The clear light

(10)

The Yankee clipper

My eyes  
The boatmen and clam-diggers  
My trouser-ends my boots a good time.  
That day  
Round the chowder-kettle  
All the wholesome eating  
The marriage in the open air  
The bride  
The red girl  
Her father and his friends  
Her voluptuous limbs  
Exorbitant in FORTRAN.

(11)

upside-down 2  
a hook  
which makes of 28 a  
representation  
Infinity can cling to, while  
"Twenty men crossing a bridge,  
Into a village..."  
supply us with an idea  
of a twenty-first.

(12)

butcher-knife anvil fire hammer computer  
repartee breakdown

(13) for PD

The closest thing I know to  
an Immortal: leaping to your "death" twice  
and bouncing back.  
This makes of you, too, one of

my favourite realities.

(14)

The wild leads  
and sounds  
suppose it meaningless  
upward the wintry sky  
an invitation  
promising, eventually,  
a downward turn  
Ya-honk  
Ya-honk  
(such is the bird's shout)  
curving, beak like ancient radar,  
airborne mathematician

# TANTALIZATIONS

by Marina deBellagente LaPalma

Outlined in neon against a flat, dark sky, the figure of a woman in a full skirt dances with great abandon. Below her in white neon script flash the words "Satin Slipper."

*A detail (sometimes unremarked) might endure. Distilled by time, it can work like a singular trigger: Each time it's pulled a sensation explodes at the base of the skull, flaring also from some indefinite area in the lower abdomen. And if you own a string of these, like me, you use them in rotation and make them last.*

With a rustle of my satin gown we pass through the glass door held by the doorman. Raoul, slim and elegant, tips him smoothly. The next time he arrives with a foreign woman on his arm the doorman again will hasten to show them in, beaming and calling him Señor Villanueva. Despite its garish sign, this Satin Slipper is a haunt of the "upper classes," a night club in, they believe, the *American* style.

Once we were seated Raoul ordered champagne and sent for the "flower girl" to pin an orchid on my dress. He fixed his dark eyes on me in what might seem, in someone even slightly less well-endowed, a parody of romantic fascination. Raoul could carry these things off, however. This look -- equal parts mooning lover and predatory animal -- reflected quite precisely the niche that he occupied.

*Connected, in a way, to adolescence, in the persons of, say, Bobbie and Carmen:* Two ends of a string. I would pull one way, then the other. I could never please them both at once. The joys were different. The thrill of being nasty together, having a secret. Or being sought after, caressed, begged. All in some cryptic, elusive code. Passionate friendship on the one hand; on the other, a simpler, mechanical fun.

Every morning at nine, for all but two of the days I was in Yelapa (counting the day that I almost drowned), Chuck and I met for breakfast on the terrace of the little place with the parrot and the waiter who did James Brown imitations, and I would tell him these stories. Sometimes I would start to lose control, *to lose my "voice," and think: what a crime it would be, what a tragedy, what a waste to lose the threads now, here. Sometimes only that fear kept me going.*

There in the club I toy with my silverware against the linen tablecloth, and realize I no longer find Raoul irresistible. Not his saturated eyes, not his accented command of English, not his cool, imperial manner with the staff, not even the svelte, grey car outside (in the hands now of that lean greyhound of a boy who parked it). We have spent the last twelve hours together in a hotel on the coast. I have sixteen more to kill until my flight leaves this god-forsaken country of his.

And am remembering the precise communication of desire in an apparently casual touch in an elevator. A group of us -- we had met on the ferry from Bari to Piraeus -- were travelling together, quite friendly. Ernesto was wiry, cynical, sweet. His girl friend, Adriana, tall, dark-haired, intensely political. At dinner once on Skiatos, at a steep hillside restaurant facing the sea, she gave a long, impassioned speech about all men's pathetic "need to be needed." I was shivering slightly as an evening breeze restored the island from the day's oppressive heat and Ernesto had just offered me his coat. (Later, someone had to explain to me what the point had actually been. I can be rather slow on the uptake.)

Anyway, Chuck liked hearing my stories -- out of sequence, foreshortened, shuffling continents like playing cards, compressing time, distorting and heightening life with their actual but specially selected facts. It was like streaked hair, he explained one time, smiling as I cocked my head in a tiny gesture of bewilderment.

You see, Clive had this game he liked to play, which consisted of getting calls from other women while I was in his bed; he would talk rather coyly to them, as if being "kind" to me, like a boy teasing his playmates in a whiny, bullying, uncertain, incredibly tense tone. He always made the situation last like a candy sucker. When I telephoned him (which I did only rarely and briefly to confirm a date or whatever) I suppose that he used my calls in the same way. That arch, extended word-play, that casual cat-like stretching. A tone that implied enormous intimacy, that softly pushed and pulled and threw its weight around. Once or twice it was men who called him. I happened to hear their tiny voices, you see, in the apparatus against his ear.

Years before, in Boston, I'd had a friend called Mona, for whom I told my stories. Mona loved to be shocked, so it was even more fun -- at that age. But Jacques -- he didn't shock at all. In our platonic *palapa* we talked about this and that, sometimes all night. He liked the stories to have little morals; about my learning something, or how I was different now.

On sticky afternoons Bobbie and I pretended to be lovers. Her mother worked and the apartment was ours. We took turns playing *The Man*, our bodies pressed together. Panting and inexperienced, we simulated excitement and complicated requests. She mentioned my "chest" while speaking of her own already-developed breasts.

Raoul addresses himself to my eyes in particular, calling them "blue" twice. He wants me to realize, he says, how special the situation is. He speaks of my red hair, pale skin and other features as if they were detachable components that I had simply brought along and was now packing off to some other *lugar*. He is imagining a dimly snowed northern country where I will touch (with "those beautiful fingers") the fair skin of green-eyed strangers.

Among other things, it's that ticket there in my bag that focuses Raoul's attention. He cannot let me go until he is satisfied that we are both sufficiently aware of "all that might have been." This is his phrase exactly, which he uses in all its past-subjunctive fervour, although he has never tried to persuade me to stay or change my plans in any way.

In fact at Nalda's in Friesland, Mick managed to interest me enough to stay up all night listening to his stories: Liverpool, London, Bangladesh, Tangier, Paris, The Netherlands ... his substitutes for public school. At dawn he started kissing my neck. I sat very still. The tips of his long fingers slowly traced the line of my jaw from ear to chin, then lifted and touched them -- shaking ever so slightly -- on my chapped lips.

I had hesitated all night, sustained by the awkward phrase "foreign homebreaker," which I was determined *not* to be. I *could* have made clearer moves, there on the leather couch. Little Lesty had been displaced so I could have his attic bedroom, and I kept feeling that after all I ought to use the bed (alone, I mean). As the night progressed, I did think of using it with Mick. But the prospect of tiptoeing up the narrow Dutch stairs and through Nalda's room was not appealing. And how would Nalda react to finding us up there? She had gone cheerfully to bed at two, so I suspected it might not matter profoundly. But I still held a few lingering doubts about her concept of family, duty, piety, fidelity -- or some other ideals I might have overlooked. In the sixties she *had* been a stick in the mud. Or what if she were best friends with The Wife, for instance?

This was late in the fall, after certain summer escapades in the Aegean. Yes, Ernesto had actually gone to Adriana that night after our walk through the hot Athens streets ... hopping to miss stray bits of trash, hailing taxis, plodding cobbles uphill to a locked Parthenon, lounging in tavernas talking, being lured somehow into a sleazy club because the bebop sounded *real* (as if the musicians were trapped in a bubble where it was 1957 forever as they played their guts out). He had a way of kissing -- at first I thought it was charmingly Italian, whatever that meant. But I realized (quite a bit later, I'm afraid) that he was holding back and trying not to become too aroused, let alone involved, that night and every other time we were alone together.... Apparently, he told her all about it when we got back to the hotel, as though asking for her permission. Which naturally she declined to give.

Another summer, earlier. The Atlantic, where the sun comes *up* over the ocean. Trying to construct a frame for telling Chuck about Sydney, I immediately alter her name to Susanne. Does it fit? The mask she peels off and off in the bathroom mirror: Celtic and cruel, hypnotic and raw.

*Things that were at the time part of a network of pain -- the intensity preserves the potency across the years and makes them useful for these exercises.* But this could take us on a long digression, I'm afraid, to Karla's fat husband, who got me a job once when I was twenty and on the loose in New York City in a purple satin dress.

## MY PLEASURE

from *The Time Is Now*

by Melody Sumner

In the mornings I eat. If there is nothing at home, I go out, there are several good restaurants down the street. I begin with the grains, early at seven or so, a large bowl, hot or dry -- wheat, rolled oats, rye, cornmeal, flax seed and psyllium. To sweeten it I add milk, sugar, honey, molasses, dates, whatever I can find. Then I relax, shower, perhaps take a walk, listen to the radio, read, waiting for my system to cleanse itself. I drink coffee in a deep fat heavy green cup, gold around the rim, the saucer thick as the skin on my thighs. My coffee is always the best -- precious, exotic, Jamaica Blue Mountain, calypso blend. Deep brown, heady, like wet earth, I pale it with cream, make some cinnamon toast, or a thick slice of wheat bread plumped with raisins. Some days I desire a large glazed buttermilk knot from the donut shop, or I run out to the delicatessen for a fresh croissant. I drink another cup of coffee, chin myself on the bar, do a few pushups, situps, stretch my legs in a wide V. If I feel up to it I do a little housecleaning, begin a letter.... I must have my eggs -- jumbo brown from Farmer Joe's, crack them into a jar, pierce the yellow orbs, shake the viscous and pour it out into a hot buttered omelette pan, cream cheese, green onion, mushrooms, fry it golden crisp high. Perhaps too a potato, with onion, paprika, dill and ground black peppercorns. Spring water and fruit juice, a banana just starting to spot, dollop of peanut butter with each bite. Two or three pieces of rippled white chocolate cold from the freezer, or a bowl of ice cream fudged over with syrup, a chicken enchilada, barbecued ribs, rice browned with onion and garlic ... a perfect round wet orange split into sections one by one.

By noon my hunger subsides. My need for food has been satisfied, I don't eat again all day, sometimes not again until the next morning. I desire something different in the afternoons, the heavy press of flesh, a man's body stiff inside me against which I can move. It's not so easy to find these days, the men are all afraid, they've heard about women like me, after our own pleasure. Sometimes it takes a couple of hours but I usually find someone. He must be taller than me and not too fat. I bring him back here and we fit our bodies together -- somehow -- even if he's curling away from me in disgust or tiny as a finger. Once it's in, I know how to keep him there for hours. I make him stay with me, under me, doing what I want for as long as it takes. I press his hands to my buttocks and bury my face in his neck, breathing in his scent and sweat. When I have spent myself, I let him take care of his needs, anyway he wishes ... but quickly. I am tiring of him, I want some brandy, my best cognac with a side of soda on the rocks ... first a sip of the hot, dark, then a sip of the cool, light, ice. If the man is still with me I offer him a drink, but he soon departs feeling the insistence of my silence. I want to be alone. When he leaves, I bring out the twenty-year-old scotch, fill a small tumbler and slowly pour it down. It puts me over the edge ... I find myself in a rare, warm, wildly aromatic place. I desire something more ... opium, the taste of century-old flower petals, tomb-ripened, revived for an instant with spit and fire. I see orange and blue careening in the flame, I breathe and my bones dissolve.... It is late afternoon, the sky colours and then goes grey, a thousand shades and densities of grey, textured and reflective like the surface of the moon.

I lie down and concentrate on the pressure tightening in my chest, fine points of light behind my eyes. I have given up on morphine, it dulls my other pleasures. Headphones clamped to my skull, I strip off my clothes and lie down on the floor wrapped in fur. I caress myself, curl up around my own soft centre, prepare myself for the dream:

It will be lovely it will be true it will be infinitely repeatable and nothing can disturb me nothing can disappoint me nothing will interfere. It will be lovely it will be true it will be infinitely repeatable and nothing can disturb me nothing can disappoint me nothing will interfere. It will be lovely it will be true it will be infinitely repeatable and nothing can disturb me nothing can disappoint me nothing will interfere. It will be lovely it will be true it will be infinitely repeatable and...



# HOT ABOUT BEANS

## by Margaret Dragu

Toronto's well-known performance artist and ex-exotic dancer Margaret Dragu shares some of her best bean recipes with *Rampike* readers. The renowned dancer and Canadian film star believes that beans represent a food that is both socio-politically responsible and highly flavourful. With these exotic bean recipes, Margaret proves that she can bring the palate as well as the other senses to a state of ecstasy.

### Black Mexican Bean Soup

Sauté an onion in oil and garlic.  
Add some chopped tomato, a bay leaf and some chopped chiles (or my favourite -- Rebel Fire Hot Sauce).  
Remove bay leaf and whizz in blender until puréed.  
Add black beans (cooked the night before) and purée.  
Heat this mixture in sauce pan until warm but not boiled.  
Add more bean juice, tomato juice or beef broth if too thick.  
Serve in a bowl -- have an accompaniment table of chopped green onions, grated cheese, and sour cream if you want to be fancy. It is a good idea to serve this with brown rice to make a complete protein. Red wine doesn't hurt either.

### Persian Beans

Cook one cup of soy beans. Takes two days.  
Sauté two large onions in oil. With curry, including curry powder, cinnamon, coriander, cumin, tumeric, cardomon, ginger, dash nutmeg.  
Add one cup of tomato sauce, one cup of beef stock; then, the cooked soy beans and about one cup of raw peanuts. If too dry, add more stock. Or more tomatoes.  
Cover and simmer for twenty minutes.  
Toast half a cup of sesame seeds. Stir in. Sometimes I add celery or onions or green peppers.  
Serve with salad.

### Brown Rice Salad

Cook brown rice in the old two-to-one combination.  
While the rice is still hot, add six tablespoons oil, three tablespoons vinegar, salt, pepper, tarragon, parsley, paprika.  
Cool.  
Cook half a cup of green beans.  
Stir in beans, half a cup of chopped onion and a bit of chive.  
Serve in a big bowl with an accompaniment of sliced tomatoes (with olive oil and rosemary and some black olives).

### Easy Green Split Pea Soup

In a crock pot, cook overnight two ham pork hocks.  
Cool.  
Take meat off bones and throw away fat and bone.  
Save broth and meat.  
To this mixture, add carrots, celery, onion, pepper, half a lemon squeezed including rind, half a cup of red wine, bay leaves, basil, two chopped potatoes.  
Let cook overnight.  
Cool and skim off fat.  
Reheat to serve.

### Best Super Beans

Cook pinto beans overnight in the crock pot.  
Drain.  
Fry onion and oil and garlic.  
Add a few cooked beans and mash.  
Add half a cup of red wine.  
Keep stirring.  
Add the rest of the super beans and a can of tomatoes.  
Keep cooking.  
Add a bay leaf or two and keep simmering.  
Remove bay leaf.  
If you need more liquid, you can add some of the bean juice. *Note:* Leftover bean juice is good to add to soups.  
Serve with grated cheese, or yogurt, or sour cream, and a salad.  
Can be refried and served with fried eggs for a hearty breakfast when guests stay the night.

### Chicken and Sausage Cassoulet

Cook one and a quarter cup of navy white beans in four cups of water for about one and a quarter hours.  
Refrigerate overnight.  
Next day, brown one pound of sausage (farmer's sausage or Italian hot sausage) then remove from pan.  
Fry about one and a half pounds of cut-up chicken in the brownings.  
Cool, in fridge, beans and chicken and sausage again.  
Next day, put chicken, beans, sausage, half a cup of chopped carrots, half a cup of chopped celery, half a cup of chopped onion and one and a half cups of tomato juice in a crock pot.  
Add Worcestershire sauce, basil, oregano, pepper, paprika, Rebel Fire Hot Sauce, pepper and salt.  
Cook on low heat for six hours.  
*Note:* A very hearty winter meal....

## Tell Tale Signs

No. 12

by Janice Williamson

DEAR "RUINED APPETITE",

YOU CHARGE THAT REVIEWER JANET FREE'S USE

OF LANGUAGE IS "INAPPROPRIATE, OFFENSIVE AND ULTIMATELY

UNIMAGINATIVE" IN DESCRIBING A CERTAIN

PIE AT THUMPER'S RESTAURANT AS "ORGASMIC".

YOUR POINT IS WELL TAKEN.

WE APPRECIATE THAT IF EATING

A PIE IS MS. FREE'S METHOD OF OBTAINING SEXUAL

GRATIFICATION, YOU "CERTAINLY DON'T WISH TO BE INFORMED OF

IT". HOWEVER, WE'RE CERTAIN MS. FREE MEANT THE WORD IN A

COLLOQUIAL SENSE, NOT AS LITERAL DEFINITION. IN THE FUTURE,

WE WILL TRY TO AVOID SUCH MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

*S*weat beads her brow, knitted in concentration,

labouring ecstatically towards gratification. Orgasm:

the colloquial kind assisted by new technology.

A Brawn electric toothbrush slithers pulsating across

her lips. Clear plastic bristles knot in

twisted tendrils. The impenetrable underbrush,

the jumbled contours of her dark continent,

undulate. The room hums with desire, Duracell, and

her everyday articulations.

This conversation, a sound poem of

"jouissance", extends, apparently, forever.

Suddenly the perverse thought of coconut creme

interrupts her body's quickened rhythms.

Shortening's greased touch stiffens her nipples.

Flakey crusts roll across her belly. A storm of white

on white, blinding, sifts through her consciousness.

Sticky limbs slide along the hot assembly line of baked

goods. Transparent gloves handle her roughly. Pinch,

then test, her every surface.

She drifts deep into waves of milky secretions,

floats in desire's cream-filled heart.

Whipped,

surfacing whole in symphonic

crescendo.



# EAT YOUR WORDS

by George Swede

"Eat your words, Jimmy," said his mother.

Jimmy sat staring at the words left on one side of his plate. "I hate these words, mom. They're too long."

"You eat what your mother puts on your plate!" said Jimmy's father. "If it's good enough for us it's good enough for you."

Jimmy poked the words with his fork until he found one that looked familiar. He wound the letters around the tines: REINCARNATE. The word had something to do with horses and Jimmy liked horses. "Not bad," he thought as he stuffed it into his mouth and chewed rapidly.

The next word was hyphenated: POST-MODERNIST. Jimmy knew that this was something to which you tied horses. Only it was a fancy one that's all.

"These aren't bad," said Jimmy out loud.

His parents glanced at one another and then at Jimmy. The mother's expression was adoring, the father's smug.

The next word was very familiar: QUESTIONER. It had something to do with horseback riding. He remembered the word from the Olympics on TV. It was good too.

Jimmy's mother beamed. The man at the word store had been right. Children liked words about horses.

"But don't ever serve them with horse meat!" the word man had warned.

The mother frowned to herself. Why not? The horse meat had been the butcher's special, a dollar less per kilo than any other.

Suddenly, the table began to tip. Jimmy's father gasped and sucked a piece of ground horse steak into his windpipe. He leaped from the tilted table, clutched his throat and ran in short circles before he fell stiffly to the dining-room floor.

The table finally turned over on Jimmy's mother. Her head struck the floor and cracked open. Hundreds of letters spilled out.

Jimmy kicked down the front door and trotted to the street. Soon he was joined by some of his friends whose mothers had been to the same word store and to the same butcher.

As he horsed around with the guys, Jimmy heard his mother's voice. "REINCARNATE, POST-MODERNIST, QUESTIONER," it whispered over and over in his ears.

Jimmy shook his head, trying to stop the voice. He was frightened. Fortunately, his horse sense took over. His mother only wanted him to eat the right kinds of grass. As long as she whispered in his ears, he would not forget.

Whinnying loudly, Jimmy reared on his hind legs. Then he whirled and galloped in the direction of the highway. It would lead him to the grasses.

His friends eagerly followed. They were glad to leave this one-horse town.



# DUGONG SONG

An Ocean "Rap-ture"

by Karl Jirgens

This rap-piece was inspired by a television documentary featuring the plight of a South Seas mammal similar to the manatee. This creature, known as the dugong, faces imminent extinction. Natives in the region believe that God has supplied them with an endless supply of dugong and so are unwilling to reduce their consumption of it. Their culture of music, ritual and dance centres around the generations-old relationship between man the hunter and his sacred prey, the dugong. Now, however, pulp and paper plants have been built along the coast and mercury pollution is rapidly destroying the natural habitat of the dugong. The combined effects of pollution and native consumption almost certainly ensure the extinction of this gentle-natured, beneficial and highly intelligent animal.

One day sittin' in front of TV

I was watchin' a program about the South Seas,

about islands green and oceans deep,

about a ten-leg beast called the giant squid,

about fish and birds and turtles and snails,

about the inky octopus and great blue whales,

about the reef and the beaches and the sunny bay,

about the scary finny manta ray,

about coral and clams and surf and tides,

about the nosy scallops with a hundred eyes,

but the thing that touched me to the heart

was the story about the beast that lives afar.

Friendly and soft, he's got no teeth,

his only fault is he's good to eat,

he's innocent, he's not to blame,

all the people call him "Dugong" by name.

He lives in the shallows and in the lagoon,

looks like he'll be extinct pretty soon,

people they eat him, every day,

cook him up, every which way,

sautee, puree, broil and stew,

poach and roast and barbecue,

they're cooking Dugong cordon blue,

fricasee, rotiseree,

frizzle and griddle like in the book,

skillet pan and pressure cook,

stuff him, baste him, tasty man!

They even put him in a can.

This whole thing's getting out of hand,

there's no more Dugong in the land.

Search the seas and search the waves,

Dugong's facing his last days.

So sitting at home in front of TV

watchin' that program about the South Seas

I got to thinking and I wrote this song,

called, "What you gonna do when the Dugong's gone?"

What you gonna *do* when the Dugong's gone?

So, hold the mustard and hold the mayo,

hold the Dugong for another day, oh!

Dugong run! Go someplace new,

or you'll boil up in a Dugong stew,

and then we'll miss you, we'll be sad,

thinking about the Dugong we once had.

So do your bit, on your next bite,

don't eat no sandwich with a Dugong inside,

stick to cabbage and stick to peas,

and let the Dugong roam the seas.

Remember him, and remember this song,

'cause, what you gonna do when the Dugong's gone?

What you gonna *do* when the Dugong's gone?

Image by Ernie Ernst





# THE BEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING

An Inquiry into the Ontology of Vegetarianism:  
A Technique for Rejuvenation (Subtext: Colonic Debunging)

by Marino Tuzi

Tortured by the pummelling diurnally received, we grasp for any technique minor or major for sustaining a sense of our intactness. Sometimes this grasping, furtive as it is most of the time, is a black comedy in self-preservation. We sink into a mire of wanting quick fixes in order to slip out of ourselves. And mostly we throw ourselves headlong into an orgiastic carnivore frenzy of self-supplication. Who said carnivore? But surely the vehemence for an immediate, disjunctive remedy to an equally immediate, disjunctive anxiety can be related to the immense carnivore need to devour the whole world without masticating it properly and allowing its substance to fulfill us with its crude comprehension. Surely the fat-ridden brimming red-dye meat strewn helplessly on the field of our most improbable and implacable palate causes us to sink deep into the dregs of this ongoing black comedy. In eating that meaty T-bone steak we are not so much enacting a cannibalist murder of fellow mammals as we are exercising a death wish inherent in human existence. We devour meat to attain some control over that thing that has eternally devoured us, the animosity of time. For the ravage of technocratic time assaulting us with its brutal nihilism is the evil of urban, transistorized society. It is the very vocabulary and epistemology of our experience of the tortures of daily life.

But wait there must be a way to counter this rationalist, mechanical elementalization of life in the crucible of contemporary technocracy. There must be a technique for redressing this imbalance of the human soul caught in vice-grip fashion in the act of satisfying its tragic carnivore need. There must be a purer strategy to inject an ontological quality into the arid carnivore rationalism practised by technocratized individuals. In the residual chambers of our convulsing psyches, there is the eternal means to overthrow the nihilism of the modern world of the Big Mac or the T-bone.

However, most people do not opt for a solution to the problem of coping with daily stress unless they feel that they cannot remember what it is like to have an easy and natural bowel movement. Or that somehow eating meat sometimes feels like that old shoe that took too long to die. Or that there must be greater subtleties to life than the crudities of this vast carnivore need. Or even yet that in times of high food cost and low economic returns, a pound of meat can indeed be a pound of flesh. What brings some of the same solution can never be reduced to a simple case of bowel motion or cash flow. It is rather a dam that bursts at a certain time after the impossible power of its own pressure.

Nonetheless, a practised technique for refurbishing the soul awaits us past that last mindless swallowing of flesh. Past that point in our existence where carrying last week's meal into tonight's meal might be ruinous to us as we try with all our strength and tact to contain that inevitable bilious movement of gas rounding like a thunderstorm in the hinterland of our posterior while we sip our wine in the preciousness of an aesthetic bourgeois moment among lovers, family and friends. Our epicurean desire tumbles before us like an indigested meal as we flatten out in the embarrassment of that unstoppable but therapeutic fart.

So it is at this threshold of human existence that we shift our troubled gaze to the green world so distant and alienated from the meat counter at the supermarket. There in that green world lies the material for the technique to revive the ontological premise of our lives. It begins rather innocently. A handful of romaine salad too fresh and sweet-smelling to bypass. And then it leads us to the waxed turnip in quiet repose, waiting for our creative hands to give it colour and dash. This is slowly followed by the glorious bunches of carrots dangling before our widening gaze, as we find ourselves in a spell-state handling the celery and excruciatingly lovely avocado. All this becomes a simple gesture that sweeps us in its own momentum towards that instant when we find that that salad was so easy to swallow and so light to contain in our bowel. And that turnip was a magic root vegetable speaking its own eloquent language in our burnt palate and devastated colon.

At first the shift mystifies us. We find ourselves smack up against the very unreality of our lives in the meeting of the alien reality of this vegetarian meal. It feels too illusory to our senses like that eternally sought lover who appears in our midst to the total incredulity of our mesmerized senses. For it is a kind of mesmerism which holds us in that first meeting of our colon with the facticity of plant life.

Some are too overwhelmed by the carnivore, technocratic epistemology of their existence to continue the journey into the realm of vegetarianism. A severe biochemical withdrawal will sometimes accompany the mental resistance to the virtues of this new ontological instrument for personal rejuvenation. The majesty of the avocado is lost in the delirium of those people unable to suppress the chemical need for meat: meat so splendid and complete in its song of the siren, calling us back to the nihilism that we have learned to accept stoically like an orator with a bad bladder, dreaming of the urinal while imparting knowledge so keenly desired by the listener.

But some forge on, determined in their colonic suffering to see the thing through, despite the painfully poignant sweetness of that lingering Big Mac still alive in the landscape of the palate. The salad and turnip meal stretches into the ontological interface with the divinity of vegetable protein. Like the primal utterings of that first oral language of human kind expressing the wonder of lovemaking and the ability of fire, the convert whispers to you the name: tofu. To the mechanical ear it sounds rather abrupt and crude in the disposition of its phonetics, lacking the driving force so evident in the counter boy's shouting out of "one Big Mac to go!" But to the lyrical ear tofu sounds out its own infinite virtues and possibilities. It is the ultimate protein, it is the assemblage of soya beans into one holistic matter of pure sorcery. Eaten unadorned for the pure joy of its organic state, tofu raises its consumer to indescribable heights of masticating pleasure and colonic balance. Moreover, eaten in cooked form its versatility is as endless and multifarious as the sexual patterns of the Kama Sutra. But the eroticism of tofu in the sensual alphabet of vegetarianism is not in itself sufficient enough to cure that primal craving for meat. It is good and well to indulge in the intricacies of illusion so perfectly potentiated by the mastication of tofu, but the technocratic world requires its own cosmic sacrifice. To the senses dulled and ruined by the carnivore rationalism of daily life, tofu is after all like a pearl before a swine. It is a fine refined thing that is lacking the primitive massiveness and sheer solidity of the T-bone steak so characteristic of the fundamental reality of technocratic existence.

Thus we flee the carnivore anxiety of our beings only to find ourselves still unfulfilled by the divine pleasure of tofu. The transience power of tofu in the palate and colon of the individual conquered by the empire of meat simply reinforces in its transience the feeling of inadequacy before a world struggling for a truly ontological state. Again some decide to re-enter the world of the T-bone and the Big Mac, adding as an extra measure a Wendy or Burger King fix. But the remaining few undeterred voyageurs of vegetarianism continue their trek.

The hot bun or garlic bread is replaced by sprouted bread. Here the brave soul begins to gain insight into the subtleties of vegetarianism and slowly begins to apprehend a way to cure the suffering of his long-distended colon. Sprouted bread is the essence of the vegetarian diet. It is pure fibre. Clear and precise, it is removed from the existential opaqueness of the exotic wonder breads purchased by the carnivore to facilitate his crude habit. Its consumption sets a once-sluggish colon into motion like the hard, rigid ice that breaks and floats in the approaching spring-time as the homesick sailor catches a glimpse of the shore and the glistening figure of his beloved, waiting companion. Yes, sprouted bread, composed of the pure untouched kernels of grain severed from their stocks, and slowly allowed to bake in low heat, is the magic talisman to relieve the colon from its martyrdom in the clutches of totalitarian red meat. You feel like this weightless being approaching the heights of its ontological possibilities as again and again you sense your bowel purging itself of aged and putrid meat matter. You rise to the apex of your potential as you empty yourself of the black plague of a plugged colon.

But this surging weightlessness does not replace that habitual carnivore craving. Instead it energizes an emptied bowel into wanting to fill itself up quickly with endless carrion as the air wafts free of a smell that calls us back to the succulent beastiality of meat. So our foray into the subtle, purifying world of vegetarianism is only a transient moment trapped in the ineluctable contingency of the technocratic cosmos. Having been cleansed by our encounter with greens, tofu, and sprouted bread, we return to the fine tortures of a historical love that is familiar and predictable. We return to the slippery world of the carnivore feeling regenerated but obsessively desirous of our habitual fix. We might even be tempted, in the glory of our carnivore return, to check out Kentucky Fried Chicken, or choose the greater refinement of Swiss Chalet, in our progressive attempt to regain lost time before the ultimate ingestion of salted flesh.

Yet there are those very few of us who remain grounded in the edenic pasture of our vegetarian experience. As we look around us, we bear witness to this process of attrition in which the majority of our fellows have relapsed into the protestantism of their carnivore lives. And we recognize with bracing courage that this is indeed a fine line that we walk in order to constitute an ontology in the centre of our troubled beings. That even now as we glimpse into the futurity of a meal, encompassing unrefined grains, beans, and the endless choice of greens and root vegetables, crowned with the roundedness of vegetable and fruit juices basking in spring water, the precariousness of this journey and stay in vegetarianism jostles our delicate souls. We are jostled by biochemical processes beyond our control, namely the loss of vitamin B in our asceticism from meat, towards considering some fish or even the rough possibility of fowl. For inasmuch as we can attempt to ingest a vitamin B tablet substitute, in our need for the vitamins in non-vegetarian food we are thrown back into the contingency of our existence. Moreover, a greater threat to our colon is at hand when with vestigial carnivore instinct we over-consume vegetarian food combinations or overload ourselves with beans or fibre. Consequently the platonic ideal of a weightless and silent bowel is contaminated by a bowel too thick to move and ridden with the most fatal flaw of flatulence. We stand transfixed by the ontological anxiety of this most absolute failure to construct an ontology in the morass of contemporary technomad life.

Yet if we hold firm and temper our vegetarian habit with a practical and receptive approach, we will not relapse into a carnivore vegetarianism. We, the few remaining in this morality play movement into human experience, will not be afraid of the unlimited and sometimes unpredictable adventure of vegetarianism, but in the eventual clearing of our bunged-up colon we will see the spiritual and physical value of our commitment.

So as we meet each other in health food stores or in vegetarian eateries or at the Hare Krishna vegetarian brunch, we will, in the silence and balance of our colon, share an ontology that is not affected by contingency but supported by the depth of our effort. And as we reel out into the chaos of the angst-ridden technocratic urban world, we continue to hone our subtle technique for rejuvenation. We in effect become one with our world as we are one with our food. In this, the minerality and fibrousness of our being is its own true reward despite the continuous problematic of living in a technocratic, time-obsessed society and the periodic bunging up of the uncanny colon.



Image by Pawet Petasz



# THE RESTAURANT

## by Alan Lord

For a pleasant evening and an unforgettable gastronomic experience I suggest you come visit us at *The Restaurant*, 450 Fakeview Road past Driveoff Boulevard, where we will wine you, dine you, and fuck your wife for you too.

Our kitchens are expertly staffed with ex-cons dropping their lit cigarettes into the vichyssoise without noticing and whipping the result into a creamy consistency. At *The Restaurant* we serve the slowest food in town, and our gazpacho is always piping hot. We tip bums to retch outside the window in full view of our customers, and also hire couples to read the menu posted outside, pointing to your plate and mouthing out: "Is it good?"

*The Restaurant?* It's the kind of place the well-to-do flock to, just to experience the thrill of being treated like a piece of shit for once in their lives. For example our waiters don't only ignore you, they stack the chairs upside down on top of you way before closing time. And the bus boys? Hey, they're the guys who *run* the place! They pace up and down at your table, fuming about how slow you are to eat your meal and move out:

"Finished yet, mister? I got another fifteen tables to pester!"

Subtle. *The Restaurant* is the kind of place where business deals are broken off, should you be so foolish to entertain clients there. It's a fun place where you can bring the kids so they'll *really* get lost on the way to the bathroom.

But let's talk openly about the excellent food. Our chef saucier, Gaston Mochamel, has a jealously guarded secret touch added to his wonderful sauces: green viscous snot imported from the Loire valley.

You won't notice it, but that steak au poivre you just ate was brought out of a freezer which has been out of order for months by a cook with AIDS returning from the bathroom without bothering to wash his hands. He dropped the steak on the floor (which is invariably crawling with cockroaches), wiped it on his greasy sleeve, then slapped it into a saucepan with a permanent ring of grime at the edge, and charred the steak on an intense flame to erase the green spots and stop the maggots from wiggling.

But you'll send the chef a bouquet of hand-picked flowers along with a bottle of rare liqueur wrapped in pink ribbon accompanied by a scented note declaring in Wrong French: "Maggniffeeque!"

*The Restaurant?* It's the state of the art in Cuisine Expérimentale. We have a highly competent staff of Neo-Nazi technicians working in our basement labs under the supervision of the most notorious Obitmeister in Culinary Bio-Engineering: Hermann Schlagentodt. The boys are constantly tinkering with the genetic codes of cross-bred in-vitro mutations to bring you the most unnaturally succulent exotic dishes no one has dared taste before. Fancy a Purple Yellow Duckbilled Pheasant with Tentacles stuffed in a throbbing twenty-pound Hairless Arachnid? And a-one snip here of the DNA strand, a dash of recombinant monosodium glutamate, add nerve gas to taste and, *voilà!* -- your wish is our Lab Request Form!

*The Restaurant?* You'll never find a hint of bouillon floating in our Hair Soup!

Sunday is "Let Your Kids Play Chef" day: We let the little tikes loose in our kitchen and encourage them to prepare food creatively. They'll treat mom and dad to whatever *mélange spontané* their budding young minds can eagerly concoct. Little girls come skipping up to your table with the "food," do a cute awkward curtsy, deposit the tray and wait for your reaction with big happy innocent eyes. You'll have to eat it all up, smile benevolently and pat their little heads and tell them how yummy it is and what wonderful cooks they are. Or they'll cry, and that means Bruno steps in to make sure you finish your meal.

But get ready for Thursday night, guys and gals, because it's ... battle of the tables!

The evening starts off quietly, with our guests arriving in groups amid the relaxing atmosphere created by Mr. Johnny's delightful tinkling background piano muzak. Our hostess Wanda shows them to their tables, and they are left to engage in pleasant conversation and giddy chitchat, sipping on-the-house champagne laced with a powerful laxative.

Watches are surreptitiously checked as the other guests arrive. At eight o'clock Wanda nods, and Mr. Johnny exits, smiling to a polite smattering of applause. The lights dim, and onstage a follow-spot travels across the shimmering gold lamé curtains. An expectant roll of kettle drums builds to a crescendo, and as the band leads into the "Battle of the Tables" theme song, from a tantalizing swirl of curtains emerges ... our maitre d' and referee, Bob McDip!

"Yaayyyyyy!!!"

"Hello everybody and welcome to *The Restaurant's* famous Battle of the Tables! Yeah! ... Whew! ... All right! ... Well ... I..."

"Yaaaayyyyyyyyy!!!"

"Okay! ... Whew!! ... I think tonight's crowd is gonna be even *wilder* than last week's! I can feel the *excitement* building up! Okay ... so ... most of you already know the rules, so let's dispense with the formalities and *get on with the show!*"

On cue, waiters file out of the kitchen and proceed to stock up the tables with a variety of overflowing dishes and hors d'oeuvres. The adrenalin is flowing as the patrons are poised for the attack with fork and spoon. *Bang!* Bob fires the starting gun, and the guests plow into their meals, violently gobbling up the food as fast as possible. Soup is ladled up sloppily in a reckless mechanical motion, meat ripped off bones and chewed in a disgusting frenzy, and spaghetti is scooped up by the handful and crammed down gorged throats ready to explode. The band whips up the action by playing a fast-paced Dixieland cartoon music full of honks and wheezes and crazy banjo rhythms. The waiters slap on Keystone Kop helmets and scramble jerkily this way and that bumping on purpose into each other and falling down as they try to keep up with the guests' exaggerated appetites. They run into the kitchen and land into a tumble of pots and pans, trip each other and crash into other waiters balancing enormous trays stacked with teetering food. They can't make it to the customers anymore, slipping and sliding in all that spilled food, and land under the tables, their faces smothered in jiggery piles of jello. It's a wild wacky zany slapstick buffet accelerating faster and faster as Goofy's ears converge on the timing clock. Panic sets in. Patrons let fly with the cutlery and plunge head-first into their dessert, packing their throats until the last possible split second before the buzzer sounds, forgetting even to pause for breath.

"Gronnk!"

"Okay folks, time's up!" protests Bob amusedly. "Come on, ha hah ... *stop eating!*"

The waiters drop their trays and wrestle eleventh-hour gourmands away from their plates. A hysterical stillness descends upon the battleground, punctuated by isolated sobs, scattered gasps, and horrible retching sounds.

"Boy, I was right," continues Bob. "This is a real live crowd here tonight, whew!"

*The Restaurant* priests in chefs' hats rush from table to table, administering last rites to a few unfortunate patrons whose demise has been quickened by awkwardly lodged chicken bones.

"And now for the weighing in. Results will be examined by our panel of experts, and a winner will be arbitrarily selected. All decisions are final."

The tables are cleared of remaining food, and the surviving contestants are placed upon portable potties on top of the tables. Chutes slope out to a large pan on a standard butcher's metric weighing scale. Everyone is issued a gas mask.

The guests go to it as their family and friends cheer them on, jumping up and down frantically. A round trip to Europe or a longed-for Winnebago may be at stake here. One contestant is caught having his stomach pressed by his pushy wife. He is immediately disqualified. After either fifteen minutes or the last grunt is uttered -- whichever comes first -- Bob McDip blows the whistle and the exhausted guests get carted off moaning on stretchers amid resigned applause.

The judges solemnly adjust their monocles and proceed cautiously from scale to scale, jotting down the readings in blue pencil, careful not to trip into the contest results. Bob grabs the microphone.

"I now declare the proceedings closed. The judges will render their decision, and the potential winner will be tested for use of Steroids. If he's clean, he'll be immortalized in the Guileless Book of Dubious Records. Now will you please vacate the premises, we have a lot of cleaning up to do, and food to recover for Monday's meat loaf."

The grumbling crowd shuffles dejectedly out the door, helped along by pushing attendants dressed in white gloves and tuxedos.

*Well!* That certainly is a lot of fun, but *my* favourite event is Ethnic Salute Day! Once a month we have a gala buffet celebrating a specific ethnic group, and the guests arrive in the colourful costume representing that month's ethnic theme. So, let's say this month we are saluting the Hardworking Peasantpeoples' Volunteer Communist Farm-labourers Committee of East Bulgoslovakia:

You'll clomp into *The Restaurant* in clunky clogs with fuzballs on your toes, swarthy attired in the ridiculous InfoTourist poster garb of East Bulgoslovakia, with the Complete Sayings of Comrade Miechisleyev Krakpotkin tucked into your wacky pantaloons. Your commissar for the day will be none other than ... Bubo McDipsu!

"A veri fine hello for evribadyi, and pliss be welcome to Soshyalist Pippuls' Peasant Republic of *Thyee!*"

The waiter-comrades parade proudly out of the kitchen-commune, which has been re-decorated as a dilapidated barn for the occasion. They salute all fearless Socialist Worker-guests, waving red banners, scythes, hoes and shovels, while everyone else smiles and applauds themselves.

"And now faithful comrades, we proceed to *work hard* for our bread!"

*The Restaurant* has been cleared of chairs, tables, and other such bourgeois knick-knacks, and has been transformed into the golden rolling wheat fields of East Bulgoslovakia. The wheat has already grown so much, due to superior scientific Marxist principles, that it towers above even the tallest monument dedicated to the memory of our founding father Miechisleyev Krakpotkin! Our comrades have to signal to each other with red flags and shout revolutionary slogans to communicate across the thick wheat! But no obstacle is too great for our peace-loving peoples to surmount, and the peasant-patrons boldly step forward with eagerness to volunteer for the Great Harvest!

We form fearless battalions of frowning, determined Socialist harvesters advancing resolutely through the fields, triumphantly mowing down the reactionary wheat with our short curved pocketknives like countless waves of obsolete T-34 tank divisions encountering a laughable resistance!

Way after sundown we finally pause to wipe the sweat from our brow, and rise proudly to survey the result of our day's collective work. Not one solitary blade of wheat is to be found still standing for miles around! All resistance has been crushed like grass under the foot! Long live the victorious achievements of our Mock Peasant Diner State!

We all break into a deep hearty peasant's laughter echoing across the distant hills, and vigorously slap our knees with hick joy, for we are the True Brothers and Sisters of Collectivized Soviet Food! Of their own volition, the women break rank to form a voluntary firewood-gathering brigade. They do not need any Capitalist Boss Restaurant Owner to yell instructions in their face! The men meanwhile busy themselves building sturdy picnic tables out of rough boulders found on the other side of the mountain. The boulders are relayed hand-to-hand in a chain of Socialist Brotherhood stretching as far as the eye can see in the sweeping darkness. Yes, we are happy Communists-for-a-day merrily shrugging off hard work with the help of Soviet marching songs remembered from grade school!

After the work is finished, we gather together and light a huge bonfire and stare at it for hours. The flickering red flames light up our happy faces, and the smoke helps to cloud our minds from the terrible suffering of our empty stomachs. We prefer to listen to the crackle and hiss of the flames in silence, instead of the idle chatter of bourgeois parasites who would rather let the oppressed peoples' staff of capitalist restaurants fix their supper for them!

The oldest patron among us steps up solemnly to speak. His age commands the respect he would otherwise not enjoy.

"Most of you Young Food Pioneers are not old enough to remember how bad things were before the Restaurant Revolution. But I remember. I remember how we had to sit politely and take orders from domineering hostesses and tyrannical maitres d', while the less fortunate masses had to wait behind the cruel silk cordon. Yes, I remember well! But all that has changed, comrades! No longer do we have to glance perplexed at the wine list and look like fools for choosing the wrong one! Now we can go without bourgeois exploiters with their fancy wines and table manners! Today we can stand proudly with our heads up high and look at our colossal achievements, without even being permitted to ask why.

"Yes comrades, look into each others' eyes with pride, for you know that there will be work for you tomorrow, after tomorrow, after that, the week after, *and forever!*"

The Old One takes off his torn pseudo-peasant's cap and places it over his heart. Everyone else who has one does so too.

"The mighty flames of our bonfire will burn as long as the Communist ideals set forth by our founding father and guiding light Miechisleyev Krakpotkin sears a gaping hole into our weary peasants' head!"

We hear Sacha's stomach growl. Then Piotr's. Then Natalya's. Then Alyosha's, Vladek's, Stashu's and Nyelena's. But courageous Bubo Illitch McDipsu starts humming *The Internationale* to raise our spirits. And soon, the tune is struck up faithfully by every able-bodied throat, until everyone else joins in. We clasp our hands collectively in the spirit of Gastronomic Solidarity, and with tears in our eyes, we thunder our defiant song to the indifferent starlit skies.



# THE DONUT SHOP

## by Joe Revells

It's 3:15 in the morning and the rain has started again. It's almost cold enough to freeze but instead it melts the last crusty bones of snow, collects in puddles by the curbs and in straight silver rivers over the street-car tracks. The reflection of a neon coffee cup with a donut half-submerged in it ripples and distorts, occasionally disintegrating in a gust of wind. The brown and orange colours spread on the oily sidewalk and mingle with the hot red bursting from an electric record in the window next door. The record shop is closed but the donut shop never closes. Twenty-four hours every day the neon signs deliver their messages. The rain brings them together. Behind the hot red record spinning noiselessly in the window is darkness except for the glow of a sixty-watt bulb illuminating a life-size poster of James Dean smoking a cigarette. This is at the back of the store and not immediately visible from the street. Behind the windows of the donut shop there are tables and chairs and yellow light.

Sitting at a table in one corner is Charles "Butterman" Butler the sax player. He has such a smooth way of letting notes roll out of his horn with a slippery ease, like brightly coloured liquid marbles trickling over the spout of a kettle at boil. Nothing is strained or pulled out into the open. It just makes itself appear like rarefied air, a string of words with smooth gurgling vowel sounds and soft transparent consonants. It isn't even a delivery. He never lets on that he has to blow into the instrument. The whining highs slip up to you like you're standing on a roof waiting to catch bubbles gliding up. Hhrrhhlhhlhrlalayayae. Oil in water. The Butterman. I didn't know his name was Charles until the donut shop was robbed.

From my window I can see the Butterman ignoring the woman at the next table. He stares down at his coffee and cruller, no expression on his face, unaware of the woman's bluegreen eyes not watching him but the pavement beyond the window. Their lips move privately. I watch, imagining conversation. The Butterman is explaining that he had a woman. "We had something together. Now we're not together and I have something different." He wipes crumbs from the corners of his mouth. The woman with the blue green eyes brings her coffee cup to her lips, sips slowly, and continues to stare through the window. She places the cup in the saucer and pulls a cigarette out of a silver case. "I once saved a man's life by sticking my fingers down his throat and pulling out a chunk of veal that had lodged in his wind-pipe. The dinner was a reward for preventing a large account from slipping away. It got my boss off the hook and he thought it was worth a veal parmesan. Afterward he said thanks I almost choked, and then finished his meal."

Until now the thick, steel-haired man in the Petro-Can work clothes had ignored them. He glances over his shoulder, almost seeing them. The waitress behind the counter at which he sits brings him a donut. He bites into it and red jam filling oozes from a hole in the middle. "I had to cut a man's throat. I was taking a tanker up highway 11 and just around that tight bend, y'know, right before Murray's Diner, I see this car overturned in the ditch. Well I slam on the brakes to see if there is anything I can do and I see this guy behind the wheel, face all busted up, blood everywhere, and his mouth is full of broken teeth. And he's not breathing. So I try mouth-to-mouth, but nothing's going in. Let me tell you, it was no picnic what with all that blood and the guy hadn't shaved in at least a couple of days. Made my stomach turn. Anyways, I figure the guy's swallowed his tongue and I start pulling at it, but it's all slimy and slippery, like an eel. I can feel his heart pounding like crazy and I know I have to do something quick, so I take out my pen-knife and cut a little hole right at the bottom of his throat. And presto! he starts breathing." The waitress behind the counter looks at his hands. They are large, with long, sausage-like fingers. There is a black semi-circle of grease under each nail. She wonders how he can eat the donut with such filthy hands.

As she wonders this her attention is drawn to a table at which are seated four teen-aged boys. They wave their arms and flap their hands. She points her chin in their direction and makes a circular motion in the air with her index finger. The youths nod. She picks up a coffee pot from the burner and takes it to their table. While she refills their cups she watches their mouths contorting, smiling. Their hands are now flapping wildly and their lips writhing. They gesture to each other rapidly but it is difficult to detect the obscenity. Finally one of the youths pulls a two-dollar bill from his pocket and gives it to the waitress.

The excited movement of the boys has caught the imagination of the Butterman. He watches fingers flying, rolling, sending bits of icing sugar into the air. One of the boys presents his hands for the others to see. They nod and he manipulates his fingers while they watch. The Butterman watches, hearing notes from an invisible sax, rolling up, dropping, squirting back up with a squeal. A second boy takes over, flashing gestures in rapid staccato. The first responds with three sharp notes. The second runs through his part again, slowing for the final pattern. Now the third and fourth trade rhythmic gestures. The first interjects with a patter of finger-jabs. The Butterman thinks a dozen thoughts bubbling up and down in fifths. His eyes are half-closed. The woman with the blue green eyes catches his reflection in the window. She had been watching the neon swirl in the rain until she realized she was staring through him. She narrows her focus to the surface of the glass. He is not watching her but he is offering something. His arms are extended in front of him. His hands are cupped. She imagines he is holding someone's beating heart.

Petro-Can Man is fidgeting with the serviette on the counter. The Donut Lady is watching him. She knows he is agitated because the four youths are speaking in a foreign language. He cannot understand the words, the sounds remind him of vomiting. He wants them to shut up. The Donut Lady looks at him coolly, with a half-smile that irritates him more. It is saying, "At least those boys were here the night of the robbery. The cops got the guys thanks to them." Petro-Can Man rips the serviette into pieces.

I smoke a cigarette and sip coffee while I look out my window. I feel like James Stewart in *Rear Window*. I do not expect Grace Kelly to walk into my flat with chicken sandwiches and milk, I do not expect her to start massaging my shoulders while I try to convince her that Petro-Can Man will kill the four youths. I can't imagine her crushed like a porcelain doll filled with liquid rubies on some European highway. She says, "It's quite simple, really. We were on holiday, my daughter and myself. We had been in Paris for a week, after which we decided to go to the country. I thought the drive to Nice would be pleasant. But the weather was terrible. Still, it was very enjoyable. We sang songs and told stories. It was wonderful. I didn't see the petrol truck until I was swerving to avoid it. I've often imagined dying, I've even acted it. But I never imagined dead."

The rain has stopped. Except for the occasional gust of wind there is nothing to disturb the reflections on the street. A street car rumbles by flinging the river out of its bed. After it passes the water collects itself again in the tracks and carries on. I look through the donut shop window. The Donut Lady has moved to the end of the counter where it curves round to the wall. I can see her hand as she picks up the phone. The phone rings. I answer. It is the Donut Lady. When I hang up I put on a jacket, lock my

door and cross the street to the donut shop. As I enter, four young people are coming out gesturing frantically to the Donut Lady. I sit at my usual table and the Donut Lady brings me coffee and a cruller which she will pay for out of her tips. She walks away. She is saying, "The cruller's fresh. Don't worry, something will come up soon. Keep trying." I look out the window to see light splashing in the puddles. The store fronts on the other side of the street are reflected when the puddles stand still. The smoke shop is closed but the huge neon sign blaring Player's Filter pours liquid blue and white onto the pavement. Next door is Horatio's Used Books. There is no neon, no light at all from the shop. I look up to the apartment above it. There is a light on, a study lamp over a desk where a typewriter sits humming. A man looks from the window, smoking a cigarette. He looks to where I am sitting. I bite my cruller and imagine he is talking to Grace Kelly and that the Donut Lady is rhythmically massaging my shoulders.



Image by Jayce Salloum

## THE THREE

### by Martha Nichols

The girl rinses her teeth with Coke.  
The waves are high and bitter  
pulled apart by a fire tide  
strands on end

The sand and sky  
unbreakable.  
She waits. Some day

The green bottle will crack open

A brown-haired woman is wearing brown  
gold highlights in her eyes. She stares out a tenth-floor  
window and can't imagine the ground below. Meanwhile  
the blue contains so many things: French vanilla  
sailing boats. Her feet kick away the window ledge.

The child asked her once, "What do clouds taste like?"

*Ice and opals.* Clouds coat her lips, sweet  
She throws back her head, her mouth wide open, swallows  
everything before her fall

I have a particular vantage point:  
a rounded hollow in the moon, dust like silk, so fine  
like powder ladies wear, just a glint  
in cheek hollows.

It's on my hand, this fineness, not part of the earth at all.

"Remember the old woman in a basket?" I asked my daughter  
all grown up. "She flew seventeen times higher than the moon."  
And the child asks her, asks her

*Where?* With cobwebs on the clouds and  
silence, this old woman:

My flattened soles. I know  
the straw weave very well, the cracks

The need to float on sound



# INDEFINITE SABBATICAL

## by John Cartan

Consider first the eyes of Amber Ducket. Like lifesavers with blue peppermint in the centre instead of air. And the long blonde hair with its streak of machine oil. And the T-shirt: big letters, red on white -- NO DEPOSIT NO RETURN. And the chocolate-brown panties. And Prof. Emil T. Fastbinder tied to a chair in her attic.

"You will never get away with this, Amber Ducket."

What hairy legs he had, this Fastbinder. And what awful shorts. For eleven years she had wondered about his shorts. Something black, she figured, with chalky fleurs-de-lis. And to see instead the faded hearts. "HOT STUFF." Poor man.

Seducing Fastbinder was like shooting fish in a barrel. The sly wink. The knowing smile. Then up the stairs, into the chair, off with the pants, on with the rope. And yet, even now, the authority in his eyes, eyes the colour of black licorice whips.

"I demand to know what you are doing to my pants."

"I am cutting them into tiny pieces." Amber opened and closed her shears under his nose. "I am going to give a piece to every student in your class."

The professor twisted in his chair. Clip clip.

"Amber Ducket. Ducket. Ducket. Of course! You took composition from me, years ago. You failed. And you resent me for failing you. That is it, isn't it?"

Amber heard again the sound of a hundred medical schools slamming their doors. She sighed. "I would have been a surgeon now if it wasn't for you." Clip clip.

Tricked again. Fastbinder's eyes grew moist as he followed her legs up, up. The chocolate panties. The sloppy, funny T-shirt. He stared unflinching at her shirt. Brave mountaineer bound forever to the plain! And aloud:

"The thought beneath so slight a film / Is more distinctly seen, -- / As laces just reveal the surge, / Or mists the Apennine."

"I like poetry," said Amber. "I think perhaps I will read some poetry to your class tomorrow." Snip. "Think of it, Emil -- may I call you Emil?"

"Please."

"Think of it, Emil! Two dozen freshmen. Their very first college class. Innocent. Virginal. Willing to follow wherever I lead. I'll change their lives!"

"Oh really? And what will you teach them?"

But then Emil remembered! Vending machines. No matter what the assignment, she had always written about vending machines. Essay after essay until he was forced, at last, to fail her. And now, in the shadows at the other end of the attic, they waited for him: vending machines.

Imagine an attic. Big black pipes appear from nowhere. They snake about the room clinging mostly to the ceiling, and return from whence they came. A desk, a furnace. A charcoal sketch of Plato about to be hit on the head with one of his perfect forms. On one side a dozen vending machines. On the other side Prof. Fastbinder asleep in his chair.

Imagine the attic completely unhinged. Lost. Blind. Surrounded on all sides by perfect buoyant darkness. Outside, in the pressing void, gases coalesce. A world rises up and slowly fills with canyons and amoebas, oceans and elephants, fills with cold starlight, fills even with classrooms full of children, ebb and tide, flowing to the sound of bells. And Fastbinder sleeps on, upstairs, forgotten.

When Emil awoke he found a rope around his neck. He was no longer tied to the chair, but his leash was taut. The other end of it was attached to a large machine, a contraption in fact. And atop the contraction a sign: COIN OPERATED TETHER.

Just within reach on his left, another machine. This one a huge clock which, every fifteen minutes, dropped a single coin into a metallic basket.

Emil experimented. The more coins one fed the COT, the more rope was released. Another coin, another yard of freedom. But within seconds the rope would begin to retract. Every moment away from the chair had to be planned in advance and purchased with hours of precious time.

Emil's first journey, an expensive one, was out the door of the attic and into an adjoining bathroom where he found, to his horror, a pay toilet. He spent his last coin to open the door of the stall and was pulled away sooner than he would have liked.

His chair was quite comfortable, a padded recliner. But great gaping rents had been opened in the fabric and bits of fluff and stuffing hung out haphazardly. It was as if some animal had gnawed repeatedly at the chair, a patient animal, an animal willing to spend a lifetime devouring its prey.

Emil sat back and surveyed the attic. Silently he calculated. It would take a small fortune to get out the door, past the bathroom, down the stairs. And then what? Still, it would have to be attempted sooner or later. He resolved to set aside one coin a day.

The desk could be reached in less than an hour and it held seven drawers! If he was quick enough he could pull them out before the COT recalled him. And then the happy hours searching every corner of every drawer, building a great mound of loot! Emil strained at the leash.

But the real treasure, the motherlode, lay waiting on the other side, a journey of at least five hours. There were nine machines all together:

A Pepsi machine. He licked his lips.

A Book Dispenser. Even better.

A Pay Phone. "But who would I call?"

A Soup and Sandwich Machine. Sustenance!

A Candy Machine. Decisions, decisions!

A Mechanical Tailor. Ah! To wear pants again!

A Slot Machine! Diabolical!

The ninth machine was in the farthest corner. It was heavy with apples. And above, in fiery letters, "Insert Exact Change Only." Clunk. Another coin in the bucket.

That evening, Amber returned triumphant from her first class.

"They are like fish, Emil! They sit with their mouths open, swallowing every crumb I choose to toss!"

"They are not fish! They are human beings! When they hear your first lecture on vending machines they will run laughing from the room!"

"I have already given it."

"And?"

"Hook, line, and sinker."

"You're MAD! Release me this instant!"

"I like being a professor. I believe I will teach another semester of vending machines in the spring."

"You will be discovered! They will miss me!"

"The grades will be filed at the end of the semester. That's all they care about."

"But my friends! My colleagues --"

"You have no friends. I checked."

It was true. He was a hermit. After five years they stopped bothering even to invite him to the faculty picnic. Prof. Emil T. Fastbinder sank into his chair and calculated how many coins it would take to hang himself. He stroked his beard and his licorice eyes grew wet around the edges.

"I'm forty-five years old and I've never been kissed."

Amber was busy filling the hopper above the clock with coins. She wore a tweed vest over her sweater and a matching skirt. Except for the cigarette tucked behind her ear and the bulging money belt at her waist she looked quite correct, entirely professorial.

"Really? Why not pay for it?"

"I did once. In sixth grade."

Amber ignored him.

"Barbarous Barbara Breen. During recess she promised to kiss me if I gave her a dollar. I gave it to her with all my heart. She promised to meet me after school under a tree. I waited until after dark. It rained and still I waited. Her family moved away the next day and I never saw her again. Since then I've kept my money to myself."

Amber counted the faded hearts on the professor's shorts. Hot Stuff.

"I was married to a Pepsi man once."

"Really?"

"He gave me that machine over there. Not another like it anywhere. We used to build machines for each other all the time."

"What happened?"

"He got me drunk one night and I woke up inside a coin-operated chastity belt. It really helped me to understand what being a machine is all about. But he tried to get in without paying one night and I pushed him a little too close to the shears in that mechanical tailor machine over there. That put an end to his sex life *real fast*."

Amber moved towards the door with a wistful expression on her face. "He never forgave me for that."

"You're not leaving me alone?"

Amber stepped out for a moment and returned with something that looked like an ancient grey duffel bag. She dumped it on the floor.

"What is it?"

"Grendal. Our cat."

It was huge. All but three of its teeth were gone. Its fur was falling off. One ear was in tatters and its ribs stuck out. It made an evil noise, part growl, part wheeze. And it stared at Emil with baleful green eyes.

Day 23. Fastbinder in his chair surrounded by supplies. Two drawers full of water -- one for washing, one for drinking. He sips Pepsi from a chilled glass, twist of lime. A dozen empty glasses lie abandoned at his feet. Another glass is broken, shards of glass used to cut the rope: no good (steel cable at the core).

The smell of hot sandwich. Just the smell, not the sandwich. (Fastbinder pulled home before he could retrieve it from the microwave.) Spanking new black pants. Another book, just opened. *The Biography of Amber Ducket (In Progress)*. Chapter 1 -- "The Problem of Evil":

... And in the fall of my twelfth year I put a quarter into that vending machine and pulled the knob labelled TAKE A CHANCE. The machine rumbled like an empty stomach and did nothing. I reached into its mouth and came up with a handful of dust.

I hid in a corner. Night fell. I took the machine apart. The shell of the machine, the façade, stood vacant, disembowelled, its mysteries spilled and spread across the floor. I ignored the great heap of silver and moved solemnly through the wreckage, touching every knob, feeling even the teeth of small gears. The night passed.

My parents found me the next morning asleep at the foot of a vending machine. The façade appeared unchanged. But in the afternoon the TAKE A CHANCE knob was pulled and the great mouth of the machine filled with chocolate.

Chapter 2 was entitled: "My Dreams of Medical School Destroyed."

On November 19, Fastbinder dials the emergency number in the pay phone.

"What is the nature of your emergency?"

"I've got a rope around my neck and I'm running out of time." Even as he said it, Emil winced. The nature of his emergency was hard to explain.

"Police, Fire, or Ambulance?"

"I'm in an attic and I'm caught in a coin-operated tether."

"A coin-operated *what*?"

"It's a kind of vending machine. Please hurry!"

"I'm transferring your call. Please hold." Emil watched the rope slither across the floor. Grendal was by the chair, twitching in his sleep.

"Advanced Vending Service & Repair, Amber speaking."

"No! It can't be!"

"Emil? Is that you? How nice of you to call!"

"I saved for two weeks to make this call."

"I don't have much time, gotta get back up to the university. What can I do for you?"

"Damn it! There's a rope around my neck. I need help."

"You're forty-five years old, Emil. You've got to learn to take care of yourself."

"But you don't know what it's like up here. It gets real crazy sometimes. I feel these sudden yearnings, but I don't know what for, you know?"

"Maybe I could get you a pay TV. Would you like that?"

"I'm out of time here."

"I understand."

These final words came just as the receiver flew from his outstretched hand and fell to the ground. It was as if Amber had fallen off a cliff and yelled up to him as she fell: I *understaaaaaand!* And as he fell into the recliner, red around the neck and breathing hard, it occurred to him that he couldn't even remember what his old apartment looked like. Before he had sometimes toyed with the idea that all of this was a dream, especially Amber. He told himself that Amber was a creature of his own subconscious, a demon from his childhood. He was even able to convince himself that the monotonous clunk of coins into the bucket was really the beginning of his alarm clock and that inevitably the alarm would go off and he would wake up in his own lonely bed. But now it hit him that, if anything, his old life was the dream, and that the chair and the cat and every last machine in the attic was absolutely and undeniably *real*.

It takes an hour just to drop the coins into the COT. Fastbinder has never seen so much rope. Leisurely he strolls down the stairs and gazes out the living-room window. His first window in six months. He resolves to return in the fall.

Amber is sitting at the kitchen table grading papers. "Transmuting Silver into Chocolate: The Vending Machine as a Source of Magic." She looks up for a moment but does not see him. Fastbinder runs up and down the stairs. The tails of his machine-fitted suit flap excitedly.

Fifteen full minutes in front of the slot machine. The 1812 Overture, full blast. A Pepsi in each hand. Grendal gnawing at the chair. Apples falling like tears.

And then, at last, the familiar tug.



# VEHICLE OF THE PARASITE

## by Richard Truhlar

Ever tell your kids you're glad they can think?  
FRANK ZAPPA

you are sitting in the Other Café  
with the tubular furniture  
the dispossessed wine glass  
all the values of an abstract institution

The Other Café  
is a practised intention  
foodstuffs equalling satisfaction and communication

you pick up a pencil  
let your hand wander over  
blank space  
in which you arrange a colony of parasites  
with interior movements

when time is severed  
gesture exists as spectacle  
the eat is on  
foodstuffs wander from mouth to mouth

pick up that pencil  
chew up the work  
you are the poet in the Other Café  
a ponderous substance  
which sticks to a blank space

while

she likes everything all at once  
even the addition of certain bloods  
to the meat pudding

the farm confirms the existence of the country  
so  
she leaves the city every weekend

she dislikes insects

you are a man in the Other Café  
the tubular furniture falls against the flagstones  
you remember  
the head is a suspect site  
unlike a farm  
you can almost hear  
the helicopters of the intellect

she has picked at  
in petrified distraction  
a qualitative world of poisons on her plate

consider the polytechnics of punishment

you are in the Other Café  
with a veritable promotion of edible objects

to name them as little as possible  
always ends this way  
A=A

to dig holes or to pile stones  
the head is a suspect site  
in which we arrange the entire collection  
of practised intentions  
petrified distractions

it is not  
a ballet of revolvers  
a raincoat without rain  
a coat without wear

you are the writer of the Other Café  
she likes everything  
the delicious risk of deluxe objects

chew up the work  
give it the meaning of its contrary  
not emotion  
but the sign of emotion  
she leaves you sitting in the Other Café  
pondering a qualitative world of poisons

there is no revolution  
the helicopters of the intellect  
do not attack tautologies

the eat is on

when you leave the Other Café  
perhaps the graphite gesture  
guarantees  
the value of the farm  
confirms the existence of the country

to dig holes in or pile stones upon  
the face of sociability  
all anti-intellectualism ends this way  
in the Other Café  
with the promotion of objects  
the entire collection of practised intentions and emotions

you have not left the Other Café  
what appeal has a colony of parasites  
to a pencil on a page  
with interior movements  
practised in naming it as little as possible?  
perhaps  
the guarantee of an event  
when a blank space sticks to a man?

in the Other Café  
she has carefully placed a ponderous substance  
upon your face  
a wrinkle of a doubt  
as to the existence of the country

but the farm confirms it  
so  
your smile exists as a spectacle  
an optical space into which she collects  
the interior movements of the everything she likes

this is imagined at the Other Café

we may be distracted for the moment  
but the plastic success of emotion exists  
as a veritable object

when time is severed  
she leaves the city every weekend  
you may go with her  
if you wish to guarantee the event

sitting in the Other Café  
with the tubular furniture  
the dispossessed wine glass  
all the values of an abstract institution  
there is no revolution  
in the death of language



Image by Chris Saletes

# WINTR SOLSTIS SONG FAMINE IN AFRIKA CRESCENT MOONS

by bill bissett

thers snow all around th cabin    thers snow all around my soul  
 boy ium luckee    boy ium luckee    i heer th music from th sky  
 heer th melodee    heer th song    heer th softning love    heer th  
 tone    thers th famine in afrika    we ar wun familiee    we can  
 help    send sum muneee    send sum    food    send sum love    boy ium  
 luckee    boy ium luckee    starlites    ovr th snow krystals filld  
 with watr    drink th tea    lite th    candul    whispr to th crescent  
 moon shining thru ths plentee    th falling snow    dew yu know  
 wher i am    neer th dreem    skatrs    on th lake frozn above th  
 kokanee    frozn above th dansing    eels    n th sleeping rushes  
 sumtimes ium a plant with feet    sumtimes ium animal fire  
 liting my sky    th fish rushing    into my opn mouth    rainbows  
 floating ovr th mountain    rain    bow floating ovr th vallees  
 rainbow floating ovr th sea    rainbow gonna cum n get me    put  
 sum mor wood in th fire    put    sum mor wood in th fire    dreems  
 ar getting highr    icikuls    icikuls    covring th cabin    kiyots  
 ar howling    soon iul sleep    undr th blu deer blankit    floatin  
 ovr th mountain    floatin    ovr th sea    northern lites ar  
 swimming in my dreems    sleeping    buffalo tongue    oystre petal  
 song    thers snow all around th    cabin    thers snow all around  
 my soul    th sleeping wild    onyuns    thistul    dandeeiom  
 pig weed    boy ium luckee    boy ium luckee    i heer th melodee  
 heer th singing winds    thers    famine in afrika    we ar wun  
 familiee    we can help    send    sum muneee    send sum food    send  
 sum love    heer th ice    treez    walking thru th snow meadow  
 th kiyots howling at th crescent    moon    n th dansing    branches  
 put sum mor wood in th fire    heering th watr singing    th  
 dansrs n treez    kiyots    runnin round each othr runnin up n

hi round th spinning moon heer th watr heer th watr

heer th watr sing

# TH FIRST TERRORISM

by bill bissett

in all countrees is th ruling militaree class    against th  
 civilyun poor    handing down th correct grammar    propr art  
 behaviour    module    set    leeving bloatid bellees    no access  
 to aneehing    guilt is useless    what we can dew abt th wars  
 troubuld ozone    polaritees uv caste    sexual roles    arms    erths  
 destruksyun    th pomes    art    return us to our world to make  
 equal wages for work uv equl valu    jurees uv whos peers  
 if peopul bcum equal    all ovr th world    ther will b no  
 muneee for war    or destruktiv religyus control

wealthee peopul n corporaysyuns can pay highr taxes    insted  
 uv ripping soshul services    defens budgets are in th trillyuns  
 now    thats wher th choices ar    th first qwestyun    dew we  
 want to die or not    we can give each othr guaranteed minimum  
 incums    solv thees wars    end th militaree industrial pavlovian  
 strangul holds on all our lives    th world we make togethr duz  
 owe us life    not sum living deth    why shud we be bizilee paying  
 for our own destruksyun    lemmings    prolonging th suspens n  
 anxietee    for what    patriotism    greed    who is bettr    matching  
 utopian bath towells    holding th missiles only    making war  
 nice

we cud still ern above our guaranteed minimum incums    muneee  
 cud still make muneee on muneee    oftn essenshul in starting up  
 n xpanding manufacturing    thr cud    still be inititivs    freedom  
 n sum reel guarantees    proteksyun from th ravages uv competitiv  
 systems    wch evreewun loses from if ther ar no othr ways developd

arint we call waiting for th two day work week    ther ar othr ways  
 so evreewun can b working    if we want    all ovr th world    is it  
 going to cum soon    n love    without feer    th influens uv yuunyuns  
 is for mor equalitee

in th interim    us all' bled by censorship    mor n mor isolaysyun  
 tortur    mystifikaysyuns uv church n state    dont let thos othr  
 countrees    peopuls    have aborsyuns    keep them ovrpopulatid so we  
 can control them    save theyr souls whil they work for nothing for  
 us    anee repressd sexualitee or hungrr is a war    our sharing lives

unlock th mind beem    who decides    isint it all uv us    can we heer  
 let us out    let us in

# LES NOURRITURES TERRESTRES

par Lucien Francoeur

à Langue de Feu  
pour le *naked lunch* littéraire

"Don't go no further  
(You need meat)"  
-- Jim Morrison

C'est son désordre d'ultra-desperados  
qui le nourrit de pensées sauvages  
et de fleur du mal

sur la route de la soie  
le soir l'émeute le trouve  
en attente de grâce et d'overdose:  
une Ethiopie du Faubourg à Melasse  
rien d'autre à se mettre sur la peau  
que cette langue dont nul ne parle  
et les chants de Maldoror

il est l'ultime recours de la dernière scène  
dans ses hystéries au goût de jeûne zen  
où il dévore ce qui lui reste de lui-même:  
le clitoris de la fée des étoiles  
et les rejets de prince

nous communions encore au Pornographic Delicatessen  
où les lesbiennes d'acid et les filles-commandos bandés  
lèchent l'odeur des athlètes et des travestis-kamikazés  
quand plus rien ne vaut la peine à la petite semaine



Image by Don Thompson



# ONLY HOURS IN WADI HALFA

by Karen McCormack

failure to a pulled string would not be an instrument  
tuned to any perfection other than

the outward reach

does knowledge equal Africa  
will ever

leave electricity out of this cube and look at the sky  
accumulated shadow rising  
if bones are measure to flesh  
these fires fly

in the north of intention  
final word of every sentence and  
the question mark upside down with exclamation

cold muscles are taut to demand a graduated  
longing for lengthening heat

hands seek not to meet but round a change in temperature  
vertical keening the white voice hums beneath its separate selves

not conversant with the auidial  
simmering of individual colours in a lake  
there are animals too and radar to track them  
newspapers get left behind with the crumbs, on what is  
remembered as a table

never to have lived in the place of birth  
denotes a photographic memory  
black and white, a false order in the garden's  
banana sprawl and papaya abundance,  
mangoes: two men leaving and the snake the dog caught

they are everywhere tongues prove  
but no vipers in Eire without voice

möbius knotted a singular passion for retrieval

the miles discuss among themselves the many feet to Mecca  
a continent's accounting  
of mouths and tea, kilometres commodity  
green reckoning on rains a season temporary  
bending heads to an horizon astonished  
by itself reluctantly

south of  
the equator might foresee itself backwards  
and no one believes in the need for harpsichords  
when Victoria falls  
that height and the lady agree

# THE REASON WHY GRACES FERVENTLY SAID

by Thomas Kretz

Amidst the Jesuits of long tables  
In coldest corner of refectory  
In house called *Casa degli Scrittori*  
With not even the Last Supper painted  
And digested by hungry centuries  
To draw the mind above esophagus  
I sit in an international soup:  
On elbow left El Paso man speaking  
In French to black visitor from Zaire  
On *entêtement*, *l'Académie française*;  
On the right wrist two Poles having it out  
In German clicking polished tongues like heels;  
Across the fence of bread sticks a Brother  
Fresh from Mato Grosso, still not able  
To breathe in oxygen-poor Italy.  
Whistling through white wine until the pasta  
Comes in all its gory groves of garlic  
When I lose myself in contemplation  
Twirling thoughts into an enormous ball  
Of matter for siesta to break down.



"Food" 3.8.1985

G. Deisler

Image by Guillermo Deisler

# WAITING FOR THE MENU

by Joseph McLeod

In the darkness  
a moth sings  
in the branches  
above the shed  
moving ponderously  
through the night  
without moon or wind

I hear the mother sing  
among the dying flowers  
in the garden below my window

The moth sings  
so low  
the vibrations  
move at the speed of day  
across my countryside

Across my workd  
a mother sings  
below the three towers  
that mark my way

I hear the moth singing  
and the dog whines  
in his small dark house

And below this mind  
a river pulses  
with a song of the mother  
as it pushes down  
to the centre  
of my heart  
and carries this love  
cool as a cucumber  
as I wait  
for the menu

# CHINA RAIN & TOKYO ROSE by Gabrielle Roth & Yolande Villemaire

Excerpts from *A Piece of Cake* by Gabrielle Roth and Yolande Villemaire. Conceived as a "conversation book," *A Piece of Cake* is the story of a healing. Both women, China Rain and Tokyo Rose, have an unfinished business with food: one of them starves herself, the other stuffs herself. Both are looking for peace with food. Gabrielle Roth is founder of the Moving Centre and leader of the Ritual Theatre Lab in New York City. Yolande Villemaire is a novelist and a poet from Montreal, twice a winner of the novel award of the *Journal de Montréal*. She now lives in New York City.

## China Rain by Gabrielle Roth

Food. How can I help you, Tokyo Rose, to heal your obsession with food? How can I ask you to enter the huge black hole which you try to fill with chicken salad, mangoes and chocolate? What kind of mirror can I hold up to reflect the madness of stuffing and starving your body as a way of appeasing a restless soul? Perhaps it's just a habit -- something to do instead of making love or getting angry. After all, you're a Catholic. You've been programmed to be good -- and you know you are a sinner destined for the fires of a raging hell. Guilty.

Guilt. Guilt is the key Tokyo Rose. You are guilty of committing dark sins -- you are guilty of being in a body -- a hungry body -- a body with an appetite that cannot be appeased -- a voracious body -- an animal body -- a body that will lead you into temptation -- the body of Eve -- the body of Mary Magdalene -- a body that wants to eat and fuck -- a body that screams for attention -- a body in a state of war. Your body is your enemy.

Enemy. Living in a state of war. A war between the Catholic Church and your soul. But the church has been absorbed into your cells and you no longer even give it conscious thought. Now it moves in the underground of your temple -- a resistance movement -- resisting your very nature. Like a radio station -- a twenty-four-hour broadcast sending messages over the waves into your mind -- messages of discontent and need. Hunger. It says, "Feed me. Punish me for I am not good enough for God the Father -- God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. I am weak. I am woman." No, Tokyo Rose -- you must distrust men -- popes and priests who have turned you against your body, your soul. Popes, priests, fathers, brothers who have raped your psyche and called you a whore.

Whore. Wanton creature -- seductive mistress of men. If you let yourself go you know you will be a whore -- better to be fat than to be a mistress -- a despicable creature who fucks Gods.

God. Who is god if you are not god, Tokyo Rose? What god would ask you to deny your nature? Human nature. Is this not bizarre this indoctrination against your very instincts and whims? Against your womanhood?

Our Father who art in heaven  
hallowed be thy name --  
Thy kingdom come thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass  
against us and lead us not into  
temptation....

Temptation. The man on the beach. The son of a friend. The husband of another woman. The dreams and fantasies you turn into something you can grab -- something you can shove back down your own throat -- turn them into cake, candy, cookies, crimes against your own self.

Self. Whose body is it, anyway?

Body. Your body cries out for the spirit of life -- the breath -- you want to be breathed -- to be filled with spirit -- holy spirit -- your body is the spirit's wife. Every fibre of your being longs to be moved by the spirit -- but you have not been taught to trust this longing. So you stuff yourself until you cannot move -- only your thoughts move -- into self-loathing. Such treason.

Treason. Betrayal against the state of your being. How could god ask you to commit treason against your very nature? A nature god apparently created. Is this god a fool -- why would the creator set up such a conflict? -- but then you are an artist -- you know there's no drama without tension, conflict, contradictions. The church is a figment of the imagination -- born in a state of war -- war against the self -- it was born in anger and separation -- the separation of brothers, fathers and sons -- it was not born of love -- it was born of war.

War. In the name of god you can count the bodies strewn across battlefields red with death -- religious wars seem the most barbaric -- Ireland is in your body Tokyo Rose -- the Muslims and the Jews -- the Protestants and the Catholics -- Hindus and Holy Ghosts -- the same gaping wound. Torn to shreds -- fragments of selves -- wounded soldiers of the Holy Wars. Put yourself back together again, Tokyo Rose -- your only hope is unity.

Unity. Unity is your only goal. Your body, heart and mind must hunger for peace. As long as you are divided nothing will change. As long as your body cries, "Give me cake," and your mind has a hundred reasons why you should or should not indulge or deny yourself -- not to mention the anxiety -- which covers any true emotional response you might have -- this confusion and contradiction -- this is hell my dearest Tokyo Rose -- this is hell.

Hell. Hell is right here in your body. The church has created this hell in the name of Jesus -- probably one of the gentlest and humblest human beings ever to dance on this earth. Spit your anger at his feet -- barf the church from your belly -- chew your prayers till they exist no more -- erase the dogma -- erase the dogma.

Dogma. Dogma sucks. Religious experience is direct. You don't need a priest or a nun, a rabbi or a preacher to talk to god -- you don't need to fall on your knees or deny your desires -- you need only to dance till there is nothing left but the dance and that my dearest Tokyo Rose is as close as you will ever get to god. In the ecstatic union with your Self -- there you will find god and this is heaven.

Heaven. Heaven is a state of being, of bliss, of unity. I hate religions, Tokyo Rose, because they divide and separate us. Rituals fascinate me -- it's their dogmas -- their "chosen people" attitudes and philosophies that threaten my nature. I know that you and I and that small Ethiopian boy are one -- we live in the same spirit, we cry the same tears. Embody the spirit -- now -- Surrender to the breath -- the rising and sinking -- the expanding and contracting -- the dance. You were born into a body this is your truth and whatever messages that body sends you must be coming from God -- but to hear them you must empty yourself of the voices of parents, family, friends, church and culture. To find the god within you must destroy all the voices of the past.

Past. Let go of the past Tokyo Rose so that you can move with innocence into the constantly unfolding present. Release all the tensions and struggles, memories and dreams, lifetimes and opinions -- let the wind blow through you -- empty your vessel -- become a channel -- a spirit dancer.

Dancer. A dancer dances. And that dance becomes a prayer. Your body is your temple. To go to church you must only stay home. Relax. Be. You needn't run to the refrigerator or travel all the way to Atlantis -- you are here -- now -- in a body -- a goddess -- an eternal dancer.

## Tokyo Rose by Yolande Villemaire

Let me. Let me travel all the way to Atlantis. Atlantis is now, in my body. In my shallow breath this morning. Your answer is sinking into my cells China Rain -- a twenty-four-hour broadcast sending messages over the waves of my mind as you say about the Catholic Church -- your answer is cleansing the guilt syndrome, activating something quite new in my body. Words. Words are food. Your words are feeding my hungry mind.

Let go of the past Tokyo Rose. You wanted me to write about Atlantis, food and anger when you got up a few minutes ago. You sat at your typewriter to write down your answer to China Rain. Now you are standing at the edge of a black hole filled up by the dead bodies of the Jews of the concentration camps. Let go of the past Tokyo Rose. You are goddess. Forgiveness is the key.

Krishna is surfacing sometimes in my body as I am dancing, light and lyrical, joyous being, emptied through the dance. I felt so heavy yesterday afternoon as we parted on West Broadway China Rain. Do you remember the yellow sky over Manhattan yesterday afternoon around five China Rain? I started walking towards home and then big drops of rain sparingly dropped from the yellow sky. I went into the Wine Bar, ordered some Perrier with lemon, read your answer over again China Rain. Is my obsession really with food? I wonder. I always thought my obsession was with words. I was so heavy with all the written words you gave back to me, so heavy I couldn't breathe.

Back home, I crawled on the floor and I groaned. There were screams locked in my body, movements locked in my body. It's funny what happened then. My intention was to enter the black hole, to look into hell, dive into my anger and fear and this knot of mixed feelings I still feel in my stomach. What happened is the chocolate ice cream in the grocery bag I put on the couch when I came in started to send messages: "Be responsible with the food you bought, now. The ice cream is going to melt." I got up, took the grocery bag into the kitchen, cooked dinner and chose to ignore my need to move and shout. I knew what I was doing. I always do that. I eat, instead.

Now my body is hungry. The temptation to deny my body the food it wants is strong. It would be quite easy to keep writing and postpone my breakfast. But I won't, knowing that my writing will be crooked because of the physical hunger, my heart will bleed for comfort and my mind will go lazy as a lizard. So let me have some breakfast before I go on with this piece of writing I want to finish before you leave for California.

So here you are, seated in the Japanese garden of the Golden Gate Park China Rain. Reading Tokyo Rose's answer. You know that right this moment she is entering the huge black hole because she committed herself to do so. You close your eyes and you see her whirling in the medicine wheel, scared and insecure, spitting her anger, crying out her sorrow. I can picture you sitting in this Japanese garden China Rain, eyes closed on your own hell, trusting the medicine wheel will heal us both and bring forth this book we both want to be a healing device for its readers.

Let me travel all the way to Atlantis because it is where and when my obsession with food has its roots. I won't tell the story in here, it is too long a story. It's going to be the subject of this book I wanna write and call *An American Best-Seller*. I see this novel about Atlantis as the first step towards this movie about Atlantis I want to shoot in the Egyptian Arabic desert in about five years from now. I want the movie to be called: *To Eat*. It's like E.T. but reversed: T.E. You see China Rain, as soon as I let go of the past, Tokyo Rose comes in and carries me into the future.

Back into present time I must confess I had a croissant, a chocolate chip scone, raspberry jam and hot chocolate for breakfast. I ate in a rush, in a total state of anxiety, feeding my need to be grounded much more than my physical body. I know I use food to ground myself. To trap the fear and the insecurity, the *I don't know* which is my ground of being most of the time.

Back to Easter Sunday, three days ago. In the shrine church of St. Anthony of Padua, kneeling. My mother has a nice beige hat on, I'm wearing a straw hat with a pink and green flower, mint green wool suit and a lace tie. I feel like I'm eight years old, all dressed up for Easter mass, so pretty in my pink coat, white hat and white shoes. The priest is saying that Jesus Christ is alive here, in 1985, on Sullivan Street. Jewish memories pop up in my mind but I repress them. I don't want to recall I was once something other than a Catholic. I've been Jewish, Buddhist, Shintoist, Mormon and so on but who cares? I have been brought up by these two Catholic parents in a very Catholic nation, and Catholicism must be embedded in my cells so deeply I can't tell the difference between my own voice and the Church voice.

The young priest who said Jesus Christ is alive is now praying, arms open, palms up. My body wants to pray arms open, palms up also. I haven't been in a Catholic church for a long time. My body seems to be ready to move but I remember that the proper way to be in a Catholic church is to keep still. You don't move. You stand, you kneel, you sit down and that's it. You bow your head maybe, you join your hands if you wish. But no open arms, palms up. The priest is the only one who gets to pray this way. My body craves the mudra though. My body craves the open postures it used to take in the Tibetan monastery where I studied in England some seven years ago. *Om mane padme hum*: how can I release the tensions and struggles China Rain? How can I release memories and dreams, lifetimes and opinions, how do I let the wind blow through me, empty my vessel, how do I become a channel, a spirit dancer?



The only thing I know how to do is give names to things. The tension is a nexus of so many things, the struggle is to transform my body from an enemy to an ally, the memories are coats of arms and shields, the dreams are messages from eternity, life-times are disguises for the chameleon, opinions are something you get killed for. The wind is blowing, rushing into my body, making it tremble and shake and scream. I'm empty as I will ever be. I can get no. Satisfaction.

Unity. Unity is what I long for China Rain. Let me travel all the way to Atlantis. I was a member of the Children of the Law of Oz. I am still longing for unity as I was then. Some unfinished business from this time is bugging me, obviously. I have no way to get away with it. How can I let go the burning sensations on my right side, the hard knot in my stomach, the pain in my arms, the throbbing wound on my forehead, the shrieking hurt in my broken ankles? I don't know what torture scene this is. I only know this is what is real in my body now, present time, even though you could see me quietly sitting at my typewriter facing the red brick wall on the other side of Wooster Street, wearing my blue kimono, writing this down while listening to a dog barking, catching the sign of the sun shining over my head.

My father was so funny this weekend, finding directions by looking at the sun as he would in the Canadian forest. He kept reminding me of our Indian blood all weekend. I was so surprised. A few years ago he wouldn't even admit his Indian blood. I took him and my mother to the Northeast Indians section of the Museum of Natural History where you sent me when I arrived in Manhattan. My father was impressed by the blue horse on a Dakota Indian shield. We both stood still in front of the window while I was telling him the story of the Dakota warrior who had a dream in which he was receiving some supernatural power through the thunder. My mother, meanwhile, was intimidated by some old Indian man in leather clothes, a statue in a window that looked so real she said she was scared like a kid. She seemed so different here, so much a stranger in this magic and red environment with her blue eyes and her blond hair.

Food. She is the one who taught me what she knows about food. She is the one who fed me as a baby and as a child. She was cooking my meals when I was a teenager and she handed me some recipes as a young adult. My feeling is that we don't have the same body needs. My eyes aren't blue, my hair isn't blond. Why should I eat steak and turnips? She doesn't even like steak and turnips herself. She is telling me I should eat meat because it is good for me. *They* say it is good for us. She, herself, really doesn't like meat either but *they* say in the papers and on the radio that we should eat meat. My father tells me in Warsaw during the war children had to eat rats. We, his children, are lucky. There is meat on the table. Thou shall eat meat except on Fridays.

Friday was my favourite day because we had no meat, what a relief. I loved the Catholic church because meat was forbidden on Fridays. It would have been a much better religion if meat was forbidden every day. No wonder I turned Buddhist in my twenties. Am I tripping too far away from our subject China Rain? Tell me about unity, tell me how to do it.



Image by Ernie Ernst

## THE MILKY WAY GOES INTO THE FOOD PROCESSOR

-- A GHAZAL --

by Mia Anderson

Milch Mama. One's suckled, one's squirted sphtt sphtt into a kettle of mashed plantain. Dinner for six.

Worms eat your heart out. Sons of pigs eat shit. Brer Rabbit at home in the briar patch. He goes to ground.

Oh Levity Jane Levity Jane your grave must needs be un grand lit. Flowers will raise a star where you sprawl.

I'll drink a burnt toast to my merry old ghost and the spheres sing Bottom's Up.

Weave weave oh weave, knit and knit oh the endless ununwindable interconcatenation of tissue.

Alice took another nibble of the mushroom. My ear shrinks. My left arm sprouts leaves.

## BEARINGS by Bob Wakulich

Every spring  
she supplies me with a knapsack  
full of pemmican, a compass,  
a napkin with her lip prints  
and four litres of Donini wine.

She blindfolds me  
and drive me to a spot she likes  
and lets me go.

I meander a bit  
and make my way back,  
arriving refreshed  
and severely horny,  
bearing silly trophies  
and superficial injuries.

The way this woman peels a plum  
would amaze you.

## SWALLOWING COLD by Edward Nixon

eating [sauce of the flesh]

licking dirt/sweat/cleaning himself

for her delectation ...

in the third century before Christ it became very popular for Romans to eat fruit smashed with mountain-ice into a paste, spooned into the sweltering mouth, chilling their saliva, sweetening words.

passing the ice over her breasts ... she penetrates with ice

now suddenly cold blood ... his anus washed frigid

he tastes her chilled cunt ... vanilla sperm now edible

\* \* \*

clean and cold

take this flesh which was sacrificed for you

it is no one else's now

eating is your only possession of another

the cannibals were on the right track

but they liked their feasts served hot, poor savages.

## TOILETSEAT by John Bennett

I was rubbing my thighs with toiletseat to the floor I was nailing a toiletseat standing on a toiletseat I was flailing at the ants on the ceiling I was spinning in the eye of a toiletseat wiping on the toiletseat a sausage I was trying to open the toiletseat make a door of the toiletseat I slapped the toiletseat against the window was biting and kicking the toiletseat hurling my change at the toiletseat I lowered over my head the toiletseat and ran to the drugstore, shouted DOCTOR at the fleeing clerks; I was hiding in the trashbin I was hugging the seat under my shirt I was hoping it would guide me, be flushing the dark, be a boat and a mirror and a headlight

# FOOD FOR by Robert Buckeye

Thought they say. The poor.

Come on. Hurry up. What are you (we) waiting for? I tell you. There's something for everyone.

1

-- Listen to the man, listen to him tell it. You know what he says it's like? Like a midsummer sale, an Italian street festival. What they call fridge benefits, what they don't put in your paycheque but instead in your life, somewhere. Usually later. Too much later. Ya. Listen to him. Because he never talks that way to the boss. Do you?

-- It's no good, Robinson, hear me? It's no good. What will you tell them if you do get a colour TV? Where you got it? On your pay? And mine? Do you think I'll get by with you put away up north there by the Lake and me having to take the bus every Sunday for visiting day? And how long do you think I'll take that bus?

The dream Robinson had, not this one he talks about and tried to convince himself is true, but the other one, the one he does not like, the one he sees over and over when he does not want to, the one about the old man with sunken cheeks, a hacking cough, a sickly sweet odour of rot. Robinson has seen him in one way or another since childhood, he realizes, shuffling into view, called in from behind doors by his parents, by teachers, the church, police, by his own fear: you want to see? Go ahead. Look for yourself: the uncle from across town (*we've put that behind us*); a neighbour (*your future, boy, you keep it up*); you (*fuck-up, asswipe, shit-for-brains*): the one in ten. This dream, the one he now has:

The old man listens for a sound only he can hear. He looks up at the blackness overhead and at the blank buildings and opens a toothless mouth. In the unreal light of the streetlight his eyes are dull flashes of yellow and his mouth a darker slash.

*You consider this a life? That we sleep in a warm bed, barely? That we work as we do? Who is the man who is a man, and I'll show you one who is not. Whose shoes does he fill? There is no fooling Robinson. Again he asks himself, this time out loud, "You consider this a life?"*

He looks over his shoulder out the open window at the late-afternoon summer day. Although he cannot see smoke from burning buildings, he can smell a specific burnt-oil tinge to the heavy air, like that from a car leaking oil. He rubs his forehead. *Fuck woman, fuck this talk.* He straightens his legs and pushes himself back against his plastic-covered armchair and then settles deeper into it, his neck jammed down onto his shoulders. He holds his hands, the hands of a working man, tightly clasped in his lap. He looks up at her standing there in the door to the kitchen and then looks away.

In his dream, the old man, stooped and uncertain of his step, shuffles slowly, hesitating often, down an alley. At last after what seems long minutes he stops. He scratches his elbow and looks around. He rubs his mouth with the back of his hand. Again he looks around. He pulls his Detroit Tigers baseball cap down over his eyes. He licks his lips, as if voluntarily. His right hand reaches out and pauses, while he waits to understand a noise he has just heard. His arm and hand continue their downward movement to the lid of the garbage can.

Glenna looks at Robinson and thinks of him, undersized and, at thirty, almost bald, his skin slack from what he ate (or what he did not eat), lazy. What was it she saw in this bird of a man, with his ears too big for his head, his boyish, buck-toothed smile? With that little-boy smile of his, how much he wanted to be loved. And yet he knew with that same little-boy cockiness that he would be. Or did once. *Those days.* How it made her feel good when he looked at her breasts that were firm then or when he put his forehead against her forehead without saying a word. How they walked down the block at sunset and he showed her the places of his childhood. (*We learn the words others say. We repeat the stories we know.*) Old before his time. *Old, goddammit, old.*

Robinson can no longer look her in the eye. He sees this woman a large a slab of flesh as her mother, dark shadows around her eyes, lipstick smeared on, and he does not want to see her.

*Well why the fucking not?* Do it, Robinson tells himself, do it. *You wanted to be in the middle of the road.*

All over Detroit there is fear and anxiety, uncertainty. The city is in flames. The National Guard is running scared, firemen move like zombies, police jerk with tension, and out in the suburbs they are indignant and they twitch. Curtains rustle anxiously in windows. It has not been this way before.

*Think of it. To come home to something at the end of the day besides the bar. Something you put there and no one to take it away.*

Robinson sees himself sitting in front of the big colour screen, having just popped a brew, worry-free, knowing he did not pay for it with his life. *Know that. For once. For something. Or just to have it sit there, in the living room, like some kind of trophy.*

*I mean what the....*

Robinson concentrates on breathing in and out, slowly, quietly, and he feels his chest rise and fall, his nostrils flare, his body ease itself with his breathing, as if his breath were fingers rubbing his back. He could not take the pain in her eyes.

-- Look. I don't know why I'm telling you this. I can just go ahead and do it. You know I'll be careful.

It's a piece of cake, Robinson tells himself. Even the one-legged woman down the street came back with something yesterday. And Jones next door said he heard people were walking right past cops, daring them to do something, laughing at them.

His fingers taptap the arm of the chair and Robinson takes a deep breath. He needs fresh air.

*Just to have it there. Your own. That you went in and got and took. You. And no salesman, company, contract, agreement, bank sitting on your shoulder, on your case.* Robinson knows he will not watch the TV.

-- Careful, he says. Careful, huh? I could laugh. It's not just the police or Guard. Do you think the man who owns the store is going to hold the door open for you? He's got a gun. And as far as he is concerned, it's his children you're taking food from.

Now Robinson remembers one night years back a fire hydrant streaming water, the smack of sneakers against asphalt, bodies grunting. Couples walking slowly down East Grand towards an orange and lavender movie sunset. Robinson and Glenna, her arm in his.

*It changed. It all changed. We grew older and it was not the same.* Robinson breathes and breathes in the dank, fetid rot of the row house, their own, yes, the American dream come true, home-owner, Robinson. Muddy Waters said it, and Howlin' Wolf, John Lee Hooker: Highway My Friend. The beat, beat, pounding.

Glenna does nothing but nag anymore, and *goddammit why shouldn't she?* He has never been able to do anything for her, anything she wanted or expected from life, even if he's *worked his ass off, so why shouldn't she stuff herself with food*, he could not fill her with anything.

The old man of his dream reaches down into a garbage can, his stomach rumbling. He wipes dried spittle from his unshaven chin and with his other hand brings up a hastily wrapped package of butcher's paper, pink and dripping. With shaking hands he tears at the paper and unwraps a raw slab of gristle, fat and bone. Someone has dropped cigarette ash onto it before wrapping it for the garbage.

Her ass is like a large, badly shifted flour bag, her breasts have slid to the side, she looks pregnant. Robinson has to be drunk, he has to imagine the sleek, young teller at the bank without clothes on, he has to squeeze Glenna's flesh hard, to get an erection.

Maybe that is what he wants. For the police to be there. For the judge to give him five to ten. *How bad could it be? Three square meals a day. No one to remind you....*

That is why he has to do it. To prove to himself that he does not live in a prison every day. That colour TV in his living room would be proof he still had balls.

Robinson sees in his mind's eye the stubble-chinned, leather-grey old man lift from the garbage a bottle of jack, good Kentucky bourbon. He raises it to eye level and examines it. He smiles a rotting-gum smile. The bottle is tilted upward and his throat bobs as he sucks it dry.

If Robinson is going to go, he better go. His TV will not wait forever. He sighs heavily and rubs his hand against the arm of the chair.

Glenna looks at him absently rubbing the top of his head. He takes a deep breath and rubs the upper lip with his thumb. He does not seem to be looking at anything.

-- Don't go, she says. Don't go.

She knows he is afraid and she knows she cannot tell him that. She knows he will get back some of the manhood the years have taken away, if he brings that TV through the door. But to what good? *He's lost it. And he'll use that TV as a sledge hammer to cover the fact.*

The right hand drops into the garbage and removes a bloody Kotex pad which it flips behind him. It reaches in and rummages around and comes up with a Teflon fry pan, its handle gone. Then, as if it is the hand of a surgeon in the operating room, his hands surely and carefully remove from the garbage can broken crystal, potato peels, wilted roses.

He wants to run, Glenna thinks, and she despises him for how he is. She understands how it is but wants no part of it nor can she help him with it. *Eat, he says. All you fucking do is eat. What is it you want to cover with that food? You used to have a good body. Now fucking you is like fucking a pillow. And what about you?* she thinks. *Do you know how you touch me after eight hours at work?*

-- Do what you want. I'm going to make dinner.

Once again as Robinson has dreamed it before the old man finds an alley. Stooped and uncertain of his step, he moves into darkness, shuffling slowly, hesitating often. At last he stops and looks around, scratching his elbow. He rubs his mouth with the back of his hand.

2

Down Twelfth Street a police car flashes blue lights but the police just stand there and do not do anything. Children play in the street with toys they have taken from stores. Teenagers taunt the police and occasionally threaten them with rocks and bottles. It is carnival.

*Relax, Robinson tells himself. Let your mind go blank. Breathe deeply. Breathe from deep inside, deep down below your stomach, feel it in your tail bone, deep inside. And then let it go, let it flow, outwards, let it spread.*

Robinson knows he will not be relaxed until he can hear his breath the way he hears anything else in the world.

He will have to circle down around the squad car and go in the front of the store.

And what do you expect to find in garbage cans? Do you want what someone else has discarded, gotten rid of, pissed away? Depends. The old man wants what he finds. He needs it.

The air is dead, stifling, with just a hint of smoke from burning fires, and it wraps around Robinson like a blanket.

The old man holds up an aerosol spray can, deodorant, used razor blades, nylons with runs in them, an empty jar of vaginal cream.

Robinson has a choice and he has no choice but he still has to choose. He fingers the wrench he has brought with him, feels its weight, its smooth, cool surface, feels how the force of his forearm would swing it. He should go before it gets dark. He will not be able to see in the dark. He will stumble and someone will hear. It angers Robinson that Glenna was afraid because she knows he will not be able to do it, pull it off.

The evening sky is pale orange, streaks of flaming red, darkening blue.

The old man finds newspapers and drops them at his feet. One says NO HELP FOR THE POOR. Another: YOU NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD SAYS REPORT. A third: OUTSIDE AGITATORS SAY POLICE. And more: COMMUNIST-ORGANIZED. RIOT-SWEPT CITY. IT'S LIKE IN THE MOVIES YOUNG GUARD SAYS.

The yellow parking lines on the asphalt pavement rush under his feet as he sprints down the street. He slides down next to a car parked near the store, hitting his elbow against the door handle. For a moment his entire body and the world outside him contract around the astonishing pain in his elbow and he feels for a moment he is nothing but that pain.

Down the street a stooped man, wearing baggy grey work trousers and a sweat-stained khaki shirt nearly unbuttoned to the waist, sees Robinson and stops. Hesitantly, Robinson stands, awkwardly puts his wrench in his belt, as if he were a repairman on the job, and walks down the block, *slowly* he tells himself, *slowly*, to the store. Robinson sees how bloodshot the man's eyes are.



*Move on, move on, dammit. Just move. One foot after another. Your evening stroll. For your health. You can make it, man. Just do it. And don't look back. Don't wonder where I've gone.*

In the store Robinson stands in front of a bald mannequin with her nippleless breast exposed, lies on her side with a bemused look on her face. Another mannequin has been knocked against the side wall of the display and her face muffled by a dress. The floor is covered with broken glass, though the plate-glass display window is intact. DRESS-UP FOR FALL. FALL IS THE TIME FOR CLASS.

The man startles him. Robinson has not been aware that the man had begun walking again and up close he stinks and his hands shake. For a moment he stops in front of Robinson and does not exactly look at him and does not exactly not either. There seems merely something that had come into his mind, whether from seeing Robinson or from something he already had in mind, you could not tell.

In the dream Robinson cannot forget the old man laughs soundlessly and holds up an empty wallet.

3

Suddenly it is still. Someone or something has shut off the alarm which has been ringing shrilly ever since Robinson entered the Electronic Lab store ten minutes ago. He feels his chest rise and fall, fall and rise, with his breathing. (Like walking down the street to your bar at the moment someone behind the wheel clicks into a channel only he hears and his car comes screaming down the sidewalk at you.)

The old man reaches into the garbage can. He has never reached the bottom of the garbage without finding food.

Robinson feels the pressure against his chest. His lungs contracting and expanding so many times a minute. His own sweet breath, clean and pure.

He hearts in that pounding, throbbing pressure of his own life blood what he does not have to hear to hear.

That old, beat-up, red Fender Telecaster of Muddy Waters, insistent, throbbing. The life, that music.

He feels the wrench in his hand.

*Image by Ernie Ernst*



## SECONDS by Mark Beamish

A summer spent  
treeplanting  
outside a Northern  
Alberta mining town.  
Boredom and black flies.

The meals in camp  
(nine a day to accommodate  
the various shifts)  
slowly became an obsession  
a night out  
a narcotic.

We line up patiently again  
at 11 p.m. for our second steak  
of the evening  
second pile of potatoes  
second slab of pie

and on rare nights to town  
we return from the bar  
and head straight for 1 a.m.  
bacon eggs hash browns juice coffee  
before bed.

We all put on fifteen pounds  
over a summer  
and because we're sweating  
in fields all day  
it becomes muscle.

Back in Toronto/real world  
we melt down to our  
former selves  
brag about the size  
of their steaks  
and our muscles

but there are no takers.

## METAPHOR by Marie Clark

the ability to comprehend metaphor  
being a prerequisite to life/i  
joined late/could have miss  
ed if age, experience and  
monetary necessity had  
not layered themself  
es in glass like a  
B52 & i got  
the  
hat  
for  
drinking five of them neatly in  
a row, but, of course, then i fell  
off the chair, the waiters carried me away.

## WHAT'S FOR DINNER? by Donald Brackett

- |                    |     |                                   |
|--------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Bat             | ( ) | Snowshoes                         |
| 2. Armadillo       | ( ) | Swaddling Clothes                 |
| 3. Chameleon       | ( ) | Sonar                             |
| 4. Deep-sea Fishes | ( ) | Gun blasts and<br>chemical attack |
| 5. Echidna         | ( ) | Tank                              |
| 6. Squid           | ( ) | Camouflage                        |
| 7. Flying Squirrel | ( ) | Suction Cup                       |
| 8. Hummingbird     | ( ) | Anesthesia                        |
| 9. Birds           | ( ) | Electricity                       |
| 10. Scorpion       | ( ) | Helicopter                        |
| 11. Snake          | ( ) | Spurs                             |
| 12. Antelope       | ( ) | Parachute                         |
| 13. Abalone        | ( ) | Jet Propulsion                    |
| 14. Beetle         | ( ) | Hypodermic                        |
| 15. Caribou        | ( ) | Signal Code                       |
| 16. Silkworm       | ( ) | Plane Flaps<br>(for braking)      |

## ALPHA/OMEGA by Paul Dutton

Any old stuffin  
I stuff in I  
stuff out

Any old stuffn  
stuff n  
stuff out

ny ld stuffn  
stuff n  
stuff ut

ny ld stffn  
stff n  
stff t

y ld stff  
stff  
stff t

y ld sff  
sff  
sff

y d sff  
sff  
sff

y sff  
sff  
sff

sff  
sff  
sff

ff  
ff  
ff

# BANANA POLITICS

## by Phillip Corwin

It was during the air war against sigatoka, over the lush jungles of Central America, that I first learned about the intrigues of banana politics.

I was flying low and alone in my unarmed, twin-casket, swing-wing Messerschmidt, spraying lethal chemicals and dodging phalanxes of hostile grasshoppers, when suddenly a giant banana appeared on the horizon, its green skin like a brushstroke against the clear sky, and a deep, male voice boomed: "Help! We are all brothers under the skin. Save me!"

The tropical sun can play strange tricks on a man, so I quickly elevated, invoked a spell I had learned from the United Fruit Company guru, made a 360-degree turn, and swooped down again from a different angle to see if the experience would repeat itself.

The time a great tarantula appeared on the horizon, its furry legs hanging down like streamers from the sun, and a high-pitched, unmistakably feminine voice said: "Yanqui, go home. Take your money and run."

The fact was that I had been internationally recruited to defend a friendly authoritarian government against subversion by an Asian communist regime that was trying to destroy the banana production of Central America in order to prevent people from getting high on smoking banana skins. Bananas were becoming competitive with poppies, it seemed.

I was being paid well, but I did not consider myself a mercenary since I was completely apolitical, as well as asexual. As a perennial existential bombardier in search of new targets, I had been having difficulty feeding my fantasies, shedding identities, and keeping up with installment payments on my underground shelter. Thus, when an IMP representative (International Monetary Predators) approached me and asked if I would like to earn some quick cash fighting sigatoka, I felt it was my patriotic duty to accept. I thought he was speaking about a rebel Marxist political movement.

Actually, sigatoka is a soil disease capable of destroying an entire banana crop. The name comes from an eleventh-century Oriental despot who had a liking for bananas, and once tried to cross the Pacific in a canoe made of banana skins. More recently, the term became a code name for a Vietnamese guerilla leader in the war against rice substitutes.

When I returned to the airport that day and tried to tell the natives about my experience, they became very frightened. They referred me to my flight kit, which contained a manual translated from the Quechuan, entitled *Fear of Flying*. But the manual was filled with obscenities, and I was too embarrassed to read it.

Then an Indian boy with twelve toes gave me an amulet in the shape of a phallus to guard against evil spirits, and the local parish priest gave me an immaculate deodorant spray used to prevent tropical hallucinations and to neutralize sacrilegious olfactories.

The air traffic controller, who was on strike, advised me to visit a masseuse in Quito who treated sexual dysfunctions. Unfortunately, none of those remedies worked. I was still confused about whether to continue.

And so, as during other critical periods in my life, I crawled into my orgone energy box, and emerged with these verisimilitudes:

1. Hallucinations are like vaccinations; they protect you from mortality.
2. Once you start a job, you should finish it, more or less. Once you start a life it will finish you, more or less.
3. To understand banana politics, you must solve the following riddle, which drove Nietzsche mad: Warum ist die Banana krumm?

Suddenly the chime on my digital wrist-watch went off, and I knew I had to act.

I reloaded my twin-casket, swing-wing, Dionysian air buggy with lethal chemicals and filled my pockets with sugar-coated gumdrops. This time I took a co-pilot with me, named Mother's Day. She was a beautiful young mestizo who had won international recognition by devising extreme goals for which children could compete in order to satisfy their parents' ambitions.

We climbed into the sky as though it were ours, swept down over the diseased soil and sprayed mercilessly. Once again, an enormous green banana swelled on the horizon and beamed messages in our direction. But we ignored him. And, once again, a gigantic tarantula spread her furry legs in all directions, virtually swallowing the sun and emitting warning signals, but we ignored her too.

I popped a gumdrop.

Mother's Day went wild with excitement.

"What are we doing here?" she asked, wild with excitement.

"Do you mean, why are we doing what we are doing here, or, why are we here at all?" I asked. I am very particular about language, especially when it is used for communication.

"Exactly," she said. Her hand groped instinctively for the joystick.

"We are doing what has to be done and what we have been paid to do," I said.

"Then why are you so frightened?"

"Because I am not a banana," I said.

"Nor am I a tarantula," she said, caressing the joystick.

"You don't understand. One should not risk one's life for what one is not," I said.

She laughed and laughed and laughed. She was having a wonderful time. A swarm of locusts arrayed themselves playfully off to the left.

Mother's Day continued to play with the joystick. I sprayed again and again. I felt like a killer, but I was enjoying it tremendously. I began to compose verses about dealing death to sigatoka. ("No soil will foil what toil hath grown. Die, sigatoka! The yellow skin will do you in, sayeth the djinn. Die, sigatoka!")

We cruised above the tree tops and the outstretched arms of the banana bushes. I knew my mission was either important or irrelevant. If the banana crop could be saved, the Government would remain in power. But if sigatoka were victorious, then foreign trade would suffer, inflation would inflate, blood would run in the cowpaths, and the Government would fall.

I sprayed and sprayed. Mother's Day manipulated the joystick vigorously. I swore an oath to do something historical one day. Legions of locusts fell before my mighty sweeps.

The soil rose up in tribute. Mother's Day said she loved me.

I could taste success, and it was sweeter than I had ever imagined it could be, once it was peeled.

I flew several missions that day. And each time I landed for refuelling and a new supply of gumdrops the banana growers shouted encouragement and offered sacrifices -- goats and pigs and political critics. As a special tribute, the President of the Republic presented me with a key to the Amazon jungle.

Once it was clear that I had won the battle and conquered sigatoka, my old friend the air traffic controller -- who was still on strike and had retrained himself as a religious architect -- templed a glorious erection in my honour, thereby consecrating my victory.

Ernest Hemingway dedicated a posthumous bullfighter to me.

Months later, when a new banana crop burst forth and soil tests showed no signs of sigatoka, the ruling military junta got high on banana skins and named a cocaine field after me.

Today, the Republic's economy is stable once more, torture has regained its prominence in internal affairs, censorship of the press has been restored, and women have been ordered to cover their heads, eyes, ears, torsos, legs and fingernails. Banana poachers are hanged by the toes until bitten by a tarantula, or they are quartered and buried under whipped cream and crushed nuts.

As for my own fortunes, of course I did not work for nothing, and with the money I earned I built myself a comfortable, eight-bedroom tree house in southern California, with a private jungle, a meditation plantation, and an orgone energy box for each third day of the lunar cycle.

I have retired from mercenary activity completely, and am considering a career in politics. As I told Mother's Day recently -- she lives with me now -- I know what I know what I know, and what I know is bananas.

"Exactly," she said.

# SINE WAVE

## by Don Webb

"Plastic deforms."

"And absolute plastic deforms absolutely."

Wu Wei owns and runs Wu's Variety Shop, an emporium of the tasteless, the useless and the obscure. St. Thomas Aquinas wouldn't have approved.

"He resembled a dissection on the march."

"She was clad in rage and a Sears housecoat."

Wu's Variety Shop is a four-room (perfectly quartered square with uneven porches suggesting a -- from music) stucco bungalow. The stucco is finished with large clamshell imprints and a strong admixture of mica for a glistening appearance. The style was favoured during the Depression; the stucco has begun to decay.

"The supply of strange ideas is not endless."

"May your vital salts flow unhampered."

In the back room with the porch Wu displayed a collection of sixty pairs of salad forks and spoons suitable for hanging. Wu's customers conjectured that he was fascinated with Western eating utensils since he was an inscrutable Oriental. Wu Wei was born in Austin, Texas, in 1935. The whole continuum of salad spoons and forks (ranging from the teak twelve inchers to plaster of paris gargantua nearly five feet long -- the latter antiqued a disgusting verdigris) nestled in six umbrella stands along the eastern wall.

"He aimed for a rigorous mapping of the universe of discourse."

"She said, 'Never trust an idiot with Velcro.'"

Lorenzo Dilling viewed the sixty pairs of salad spoons and forks and experienced an epiphany. He ran from the store. He drove to the Trenton, New Jersey, police department some 1,652 miles away. Using his power to cloud men's minds he sneaked unnoticed to the confiscated goods room. Photographers were busy photographing the loot (pecunia) of a recent drug bust -- ten pounds of cocaine and \$125,000.12.

"But your cult may be a ring of drug smugglers, a fifth column for neighbouring nations bent on conquest, or even a group of magicians with peculiar tastes."

"I've re-ordered *Earth Inferno* and will send it on."

With bland alacrity, Lorenzo snatched up the cocaine and money. After a night's stay in a Holiday Inn, Lorenzo drove back to Dallas. He purchased all sixty pairs of salad spoons and forks from Wu Wei. He purchased Wu Wei a chauffeur's outfit from Maggie's Uniforms. He took Wu Wei away from his life of variety. He called Wu Wei "Cato."

"'North Pole City has a rigidly structured society,' he said."

"She said, 'Are you going back now?'"

In a pearl white Dusenbergs, Dilly and Cato cruised the streets looking for crime. They snorted cocaine from a fourteen-inch amber plastic salad spoon. When they found crime Dilly used his power to cloud the criminal's mind and Cato used psychic jujitsu. They would take the bound and gagged criminal to the loading dock of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department. They would leave a salad spoon or a salad fork as a trademark. They wondered if they could find another cache of oversized eating utensils. Tarrant County's sheriff issued strong statements against vigilanteism.

"I'm tossing my gratitude into the bargain!"

"Ironically the format is banal."

The Tarrant County sheriff knew in his heart that the bound and gagged men must be criminals. He wished he had some evidence on them. He could hold them for twenty-four hours on "suspicion." Sometimes they confessed or evidence was found. He had twenty-three holding cells full of suspects. He had two drawers full of salad spoons and forks. Something must be done. He ordered a spotlight gel with a crossed spoon and fork in the centre of a clear field. He waited for its arrival smoking Pall Malls.

"I remember when he had a vision of bisons leaping."

"It is written she owned a fake fur coat of blue mink."

The gel arrived via U.P.S. The sheriff borrowed a spotlight from his church. The minister insisted he sign for it. The sheriff and two deputies carried it to the roof and secured its stand with duct tape. Later, during an interview, Dilly admitted he was surprised and elated when he saw the spoon and fork projected on the clouds.

Our Heroes sped to the sheriff's station. They paused to buy dominoes to conceal their secret identities. One of the deputies spotted the speeding Dusenbergs with his binoculars and yelled for the sheriff.

"A Yankee sailor, no matter how desperate, cannot impregnate a fish."

"Everybody doing Shit today -- it's a nice day, huh?"

Meanwhile in Trenton facts began to fall in place. The earliest theory of a laser concealed among the photographer's equipment was discarded. A newspaper clipping agency was consulted. Date compiled. The Police Chief called for the arrest of Cato and Dilly. Bounty hunters caught the scent. It smelled like money. A group of ruthless men left New Jersey. Some paused at novelty shops in Oklahoma buying salad forks and spoons as bait. Others flew.

"He hoped to be reincarnated as an Edgar Gorey drawing."



The sheriff stood in front of the station. The Dusenberg pulled up inches away in a show of precision driving. Cato pushed the plastic bag of cocaine into the secret compartment below the steering wheel. The sheriff confided his belief that the gagged and bound men were criminals. He admitted his lack of evidence. In secret (uncommunicated) each thought at once of phenomenology. Dilly agreed to hire a photographer provided he could keep the negatives. Cato regretted the cameras he'd left behind in Wu's variety shop. Our Heroes placed an ad for a photographer in the *Dallas Morning News*. They used a box to hide their secret identities. Several men and women applied. One of them turned out to be a long-lost cousin of Cato's.

"If these odd relationships have troubled you half as much as they have disturbed me you have been sorely put upon."

"It is highly useful in creating a more logical and true-to-life campaign."

Cato's long-lost cousin was chosen as photographer. In stressful situations he tended to call Cato Wu. Equally unfortunate was the lack of a clear nickname for the photographing cousin. "Shutterbug," "Mr. Flash" or "Brownie" were all tried and discarded. Outside observers of Our Heroes predicted that this third member would be the end of the team. Nevertheless they performed their jobs efficiently and with good cheer. The ratio of criminals convicted to criminals captured rose significantly. Anonymous callers suggested that the terrific trio were soft on drug pushers. Editorials began to appear questioning why Chinese criminals weren't caught. The Dusenberg received a ticket for double parking.

"Her swimming pool was the last to dry up during that long summer."

"His bow hunting is legend today in certain parts of Idaho."

The terrific trio busted a Black Mass in progress. The mayor of one of the more insignificant cities of the Metroplex was officiating. Photographs were published. Many city councils urged that the trio receive official sanction. Others were vehemently against. Cato tore up the parking ticket. The photographer believed that they were being followed by men in mirrored sunglasses driving a black Lincoln. Dilly suggested it was coincidence. Cato and Dilly sent the photographer out for burgers so they could snort cocaine alone.

"To all those who have changed along with me, and to those who have journeyed that rainbow road to Carcosa, I give my humble thanks."

"Albert, you have commuted for the last time."

As the photographer waited for the bucket of Extra Crispy, the Forces of Evil were in motion. They waited with sap and rope outside the glass door unaware that the photographer was not for Cato. As he emerged, the sap descended. The bounty hunters ate the chicken regretting only that it had come with the beans and not the slaw. After cleaning their hands on the handy lemon-scented Wetnaps (bounty hunters are a fastidious lot), they drove back to New Jersey. In their joyous abandon they ditched the box full of salad forks and spoons. When the cocaine euphoria had waned, Cato and Dilly were hungry. They drove the Dusenberg to the chicken place.

"He feared total sensory deprivation."

"She spoke seven languages including Japanese and Navajo at age four."

On the way they found the box of assorted salad forks and spoons. They thought it was a godsend. When they later counted them, they found twenty-three complete pairs and three unmated forks. In later years many restless nights would recall the mystery of those three forks. At the chicken place they got a bucket of original and two large ice teas. As they ate they cursed the fecklessness of the photographer, who'd obviously abandoned them. They rejoiced that he had left his equipment. Cato had been a fairly good amateur photographer at one time.

"I grow faint when someone mentions glad-rags."

"Do your readers really like to imagine female adventurers in this manner?"

To replenish their cocaine supply, Dilly and Cato flew to Bogota. There they met with seedy and furtive men with bags of white powder. Cato questioned the morality of their drug use. Dilly pointed out that they were keeping it off the streets. The seedy and furtive men made pictures of Cato and Dilly buying salad spoons and forks at a local bazaar. Dilly scotchtaped them into his scrapbook.

"You wanted a copy of your lease?"

"Note that the dagger does not radiate either light or magic."

The photographer was released in Trenton. To this day he does not eat fried chicken from commercial outlets. Dilly and Cato returned from Bogota and demolished a kidnapping ring. The Dusenberg was towed for parking in a No Parking zone. Cato retrieved it without a fine by giving the guard an autographed teak salad spoon.

"She did not have, despite the rumours, an Electra complex."

"His fantasy trilogy was rejected by seventeen publishers for the lack of verbs."

The Tarrant County sheriff presented Our Heroes with a medal. He refused, however, to fix their parking tickets. The boys tried the Secret Masonic handshake on him. It didn't work.

"Even after they'd learned about adjectives."

"The ghost bus faded like phantom lyrics."

I am Lorenzo Dilling. What Cato says about me is untrue. I was born in the house my father built.

"Plastic deforms."

"And absolute plastic deforms absolutely."

Finally he married her. To this day they live happily in Mexico under assumed names.

## SPOONERISM by Tracey Moore



Image by Fausto Bedoya

Tracey Moore uses metal on living human flesh the way some artists use paint on a canvas. She is a spoon artist par excellence. By interfacing the respective concave and convex characteristics of spoon and human face, Moore has developed a form of performance that is simultaneously contemporary and reminiscent of work by the sixteenth-century Milanese painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo.

## LOS DESAPARECIDOS by Karen Peterson

Set your oven to 230 degrees Celsius  
force 525 ml rabidly boiling water on  
250 ml stone-ground yellow corn meal  
adjoin 15 ml refined white sugar  
30 ml dairy fresh butter  
5 ml fine sea salt  
foment it all with care  
over low steady heat  
it will metamorphose  
into thick mush  
won't take long  
cool it  
suddenly  
inflict 2 beaten yolks  
and 2 whipped whites  
drop by silver spoon  
on hot greased palm  
embroil 20 minutes

they come to light  
and they are gone

[triple tested in many a cocina]



Image by Roy Click



# RAPPING WITH A FOOD PACKAGER

by Rod Anderson

"Move over, bacon. I've taken a job as a food packager."

"You mean wrapping shiny, bread-scented plastic around innocuous loaves?"

"No way, *pousse-café*. This is the big time now. The big state-of-the-ark time."

"Rust-degradable metal around coloured sugar-water?"

"Close but no lumps. No. I used to do that, I admit, and who didn't? Our mistake, sugarcake. We were all so wastemore wantmore in those days."

"But now?"

Now things go better. Hell, they come alive! It's where the action is. Packaging sanctifies. People wanted everything to come in packages. And now it does. Food and love. Safe and clean. Packed with the wiggle in its tail. I told you, this is the big time. Used to be that the job was a little repetitive. A little repetitive. The labelling machines would quit each week. Said meatless Fridays depressed them. I didn't believe them for a minute. Give a day and they'd take a week. So I threw them all out. Packaging's too important to be struck by labels. Important? Why?

Hell, everyone knows the secret of marketing lies in packaging. Lies? Eye-turning can sell stomach-turning. Nobody likes an ugly package. We make it look like happiness in every box. Why are you cynical? I'm not. We can't all be gourmets. The bad food has to be eaten too. The rolls with the holes. The tunae with lacunae. This is democracy, pal. Love at first bite. Spread it on creamy and thick. Some lies are socially useful. Packaging helps to get all the food eaten. Meatballism? Metabolism. So?

The secret is to be economical. Cost-containment. Lean, mean and green. Push the till. Cut the frill. I had to reduce package cost relative to content cost. But now?

Shape. I used to make all my packages spherical. Round in the round. Minimizing the surface-to-volume ratio. Not a success. My edibles rolled off delivery trucks still undelivered. Rolled out of refrigerators still unrefrigerated. Rolled off eating tables still unedified. Lost a fortune. Some good ideas just don't work. What else?

Size. Surface-to-volume ratio decreases with increasing radius. You mean the giant economy size? That was only my beginning. My packages grew dinosaurial. Their relative packaging costs dropped to microbial proportions. But look what happened to transportation! The camels couldn't hold them. Too much lump per hump. The silk route collapsed. My final jumbos are still today floating in Levantine harbours. Elephantine harbours? Waiting to be transhipped through Asia by rail once someone builds enough boxcars. I lost another fortune. But was there a way?

The right way proved to be package emaciation. Emasculation? Emancipation. For centuries I gave my customers heavy cloth sacks to hold their comestibles. Stupid! Then I invented brown paper bags. Cheaper. Years later, thinner plastic ones. Cheaper still. Odourless, non-toxic, citrate plasticizers brought improvements in transparency, flexibility, and in tenuity. Ingenuity? My competitors thought so. They're still using them. Do I see a trend? Of course. But stretch your sketch. I think you shy away from the obvious extrapolation. Which is?

Well perhaps you will say this is too radical, too political, too retractable -- but I say it is simply common sense. The package must ultimately wither away. Leaving only its shape behind. The ultimate generic. No name. No label. No package.

But won't people miss the excitement of unwrapping -- the ripping of the roping? You mean the inconvenience! The staple through the sandwich. The clip in the dip. The unopenable cap. The container contaminator. No, no. Stop the glitching in the kitching. Can the can and pitch the pouch. Besides, with an insubstantial package one doesn't have to worry about jumbo sizes. Or spherical shapes? Or any of that nonsense. On the contrary, one can design the package with arms and legs. Or whatever you want. Legs, incidentally, solve the transportation problem. I think at last I'm really on to something.

So when you say you're a food packager, you don't mean you wrap plastic around food? Not any more. I wrap myself around it. Starting with your big mouth? You bet. When push comes to crunch, I munch. I've worked on this technique for decades. I figure I have a shelf-life of another three. If I don't package something lethal or spring a leak.

May I imagine your skin as the wrapping? A pig bonged into a poke? No, you're wrong. Ban the bong. Sack the poke. You still haven't the point. The skin is part of the food too. The packaging is subtle as sin.

But what can the package be once it has withered away dialectically? Delectably. The packaging is just the pattern? Yes, the food comes and goes but the pattern persists. Forever? For a short while. Wile?

Let me explain it this way. When a guitar string is plucked, a standing wave is set up. I mean it doesn't go anywhere. Just stands still -- like the cheese. Now follow my wallow: we're standing waves too. Of food. Which in turn is made of? Food atoms. And they in turn? Oh get your damn noggin joggin'! Of food protons and electrons, of course. And?

Okay. Now sit down and listen. This is big-time strategy. Straight from the Science Council. Now they're saying all particles are standing waves of energy. Matter is merely a packaged form of energy? Yes, but without the package. And what then is energy? A standing wave of hunger -- the hunger that vacillates in a vacuum. You see, sugarpea, physicists say that the universe is a packaging of nothingness, that the Big Bang was a quantum fluctuation of it. Oh? You were wrong to pursue content. It's like peeling an onion. The packaging is everything. Though perhaps you think I have a professional bias. Well?

Well dietitians -- there's bias! They say we become what we eat. So gluttony is just self-love in advance? No, you see that's all a fallacy. The self is a fallacious symbol. It assumes we were something else to start with. The fact is we're walking, breathing, eating, defecating pieces of food. We're entirely food, always have been food. We can't become food. It's already our essence.

And psychologists! According to them the first thing a newborn food package learns is to distinguish itself from the rest of the universe -- to separate subject from object. Again they're wrong? Of course. They're thinking of a physical boundary. Leads them to such conundra as when does your food turn into you: in your mouth, in

your stomach, in your bloodstream? You mean when does life begin? Right. Such questions have no meaning. That's farm league talk. There's no boundary between food and food. Between flavour and flavour-bud. If one must think of self, think of pattern. There's no subject and object. There's form and content. Just self-replicating patterns -- that's what we are. At least, that's how we food packagers see things.

Tuesday afternoon a bureaucrat (one of those consumer commandos) in a grey tweed suit comes and asks my help in prescribing the proper pattern for a food package. And you tell him?

I spoon feed him. With gravity, I say, there will inevitably be an up and a down. So we can expect a food package to have a dorsal top and a ventral bottom. But left to right one should expect and demand symmetry. Oh ho! he says. Is that all? Certainly not, I say. I left the main point for the end. Food packages must be filled and later emptied. We can expect efficiencies when these two functions are locally specialized. This explains the head and anus of most food packages.

But haven't scientists long searched for a head free of an anus? The Great Devourer -- as impossible to find as a one-pole magnet! Of course, our ancestors thought black holes were such devourers. All those pure little mouths -- unconnected to anything else. Now we know better. We've exorcised their singularities, the little holey devils. For quantum theory predicts that black holes gradually "evaporate" their mass. This is a euphemism for defecate. So much for bocal purity. They'd been hiding their little asses down their throats all these years.

Next week the government will issue new regulations affecting all food packagers. Life will become more difficult for each of us. Wait and see. It was a mistake to give food the vote.

All people are food but all food is not necessarily people. No? Cannibalism may be good as far as it goes. But it's junk food? Right. Junk in the bunk. And worse: it eventually eats itself out of house and home. If we eat nothing but an aging population, sooner or later we'll all run out of food. However good you food junkies are to eat, someone has to make the sacrifice and eat something else or the whole system breaks down. Protean diversity -- or protein deficiency. What? Ban the manburger. Bring back the blintz.

Isn't it easy to become confused with these ideas? Well you can't blame a piece of food for thinking Sloppy Joe, can you? And last month doctors discovered that food has brain disease. Decease?

All wisdom is buried somewhere in etymology. And if you break food down into its aliments? As simple as a keyless coffee can! We find the prefix *al* refers to old (as in the German *alt*) and so the Latin *alere*, to nourish, means, in its innermost gut, in its belly, in its colon: *to make grow old*. So there you have it, ginger rabbit. Nourishment enfeebles. Senility is the result of decades of stomaching food. Of stuffing all your whine into a one-trip bottle. And now?

After the Great Nuclear War all the food became suddenly senile. Transportation came to a halt. None of the food packages could walk around. They'd all been...? Repackaged for another universe.

So the ultimate Big Mouth is the universe itself, when it turns inward, contracting to a giant implosion, a giant swallow? No, still wrong. There's a follow to the swallow. For now they say the Big Crunch just bounces back into another Big Bang. All the food gets recycled. Crunch and Bang? Swallow and Blast. Head and anus? Package and unpackage. Until we get it right? We won't. Too much slack fill.

But won't the bread turn into flesh some day? The wine into blood? Oh wrap it up! You're still not discerning. There's no turning. We're all in this communion of food together. So the separate packaging was, in the end, an illusion? Eat your heart out. You is me, sugarpea. All the same, I wish...?

Image by Don Thompson





# SOCIAL CONVENTIONS

## by Alexandre L. Amprimoz

Ego sum imperator Romanorum  
et super grammaticam.  
Sisigmund, Holy Roman Emperor.  
To a cardinal who corrected his Latin.

### 1. I Like Ike, Long Live Jakobsen

like a word that no longer explains anything  
the long poem is so much for theory

like michelangelo who in the four years it took  
him to paint the sistine chapel didn't take  
a bath so much for cultural references

like the piece de resistance in a bedouin desert  
oasis where i was once with my father when i  
was five. cooked eggs are stuffed into fish.  
the fish are stuffed into cooked chickens.  
the chickens go into a roasted sheep. the  
sheep is stuffed into a whole camel.

like the bound volumes at harvard  
(not at our university) so much for education

like einstein who once flunked out of hairdressing  
school

like sylvester stallone who once failed the entrance  
exam for the swiss federal institute  
of technology

What you have just read are fragments of a poem I once wrote to celebrate systems. I read them to Casanova. He let me have a piece (of his mind).

### 2. I Love Ove, Long Live Roland Barthes

u com'n read  
yr stooped poultry  
to me  
tanke godde  
i have a jobbe  
dishe washer  
at least honeste jobbe

my uncle Flavio Spaghetini  
gave me disse oportunity  
he eeze no realy relative  
he eeze friend  
of cousin  
who work  
eeze Sweeze guard  
at Kremleen

### 3. I Adore ore, Long Live Paul de Man (who deconstructed himself out of existence)

Relax. In his country Casanova was a gynecologist. He had come to Canada. In Italy, most gynecologists are on welfare. But his Swiss wife refused to accompany him. She didn't want to part with a cheese. It was a wedding gift.

A six-foot-in-diameter Swiss cheese on which Casanova had carved the very poem he had used to seduce other women.

#### Conclusion

(If you expect the conclusion at the end go and read a PhD thesis)  
Draw your own conclusion here:

---



---



---



---

Did I leave you enough room?

Here is mine:

but gravity is still here  
it pulls down organs  
and skin  
i made my calculations  
given the length of my legs  
if i lived 732 years 3 months and 1 day  
my testicles would drag on the floor  
my heart would be in touch  
with my ass  
i hate gravity  
eternity and other systems

Oh, I almost forgot! Here is Casanova's conclusion:

when i'm in love  
my prick  
reaches my chin  
my heart pushes  
against mine tonsils

Now we can begin. We always begin.

The great Toronto editor Barry Tone made a writer out of Casanova.

of one thing he was almost sure: the whole was never equal to the sum of the parts.  
his name was blaise pascal.

these are the words

monkey	alligator
grass	wind
reed	house
tiger	lizard
eagle	serpent
vulture	death
movement	deer
flint	rabbit
rain	water
flower	dog

but these are also the day signs a tribe used in the valley of mexico

#### Introduction

Where is the poem?

poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader
poem	margin	reader

Where is the poem?

1 again

Casanova can now write in English. Well almost.

I went to kindergarten in Rome. Communist nuns ran the school. Most of them were lesbians. The other one was a feminist.

2 again

Barry Tone didn't like Casanova's first page. He made so many corrections that the page looks like the Red Cross report on blood banks in Russia.

3 again

Casanova went to the funeral of his first page. After that he had a writer's block. I told him to return to simplicity.

A homosexual gave Casanova a Promethean glance: I'd suck your liver!

0 Surprise! Here is the poem

monkey and vultures	colours where in this light	half of them are fruit
in the grass under the wind in the rain all dead	shampoos dream of rainbows and spread like baby tears	the other half vegetables you don't
the dead rabbit and the lizard in your house	herbal like leaves in shatterproof glass	have to be either one for the university also
water your flowers walk your dog	the miracle marts the conditioners of heaven's cathedrals	makes a few exceptions

where is the poem

# FAMOUS AFFLICTIONS 2

## by Noah Zacharin

SEA

SEA

SEA

SEA

SEA

s( )urvy

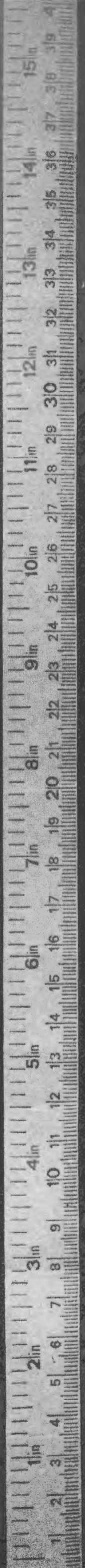
SEA

SEA

SEA

23 DAIRY	0
BB GAL MILK	0
@ 2.49	.00
24 DAIRY	6
BB HF MILK	6
@ 1.33	7.98
25 DAIRY	4
MEDIUM EGGS	4
@ .95	3.80
26 DAIRY	23
LARGE EGGS	23
@ 1.05	24.15
27 DAIRY	26
EX-LG EGGS	26
@ 1.09	28.34
28 DAIRY	10
BROWN EGGS	10
@ 1.25	12.50
29 DAIRY	24
JUMBO EGGS	24
@ 1.19	28.56
30 DAIRY	10
ORGANIC EGGS	10
@ 1.25	12.50
31 DAIRY	2
HF MED EGGS	2
@ .48	.96
32 DAIRY	2
HF LG EGGS	2
@ .53	1.06
33 DAIRY	3
HF X-LG EGGS	3
@ .55	1.65
34 DAIRY	1
HF BRWN EGGS	1
@ .63	.63
35 DAIRY	2
HF JUMBO EGG	2
@ .60	1.20
36 DAIRY	0
HF ORG EGGS	0
@ .63	.00
37 GROCERY	53
PK CIGARETTES	53
@ 1.25	66.25
38 GROCERY	0
CTN CIGARETT	0
@ 11.68	.00
39 GROCERY	0
CTN 100 CIG	0
@ 11.68	.00
40 #	0
ARTICHOKES	0
@ .69	.00
41 PRODUCE	0
CANTALOUPE	0
@ 1.19	.00
42 PRODUCE	35
CARROTS CELL	35
@ .39	13.65
44 PRODUCE	18
CELERY	18
@ .69	12.42
45 PRODUCE	0
QT O-JUICE	0
@ 1.99	.00
46 PRODUCE	0
HF GAL O-J	0
@ 3.95	.00
47 PRODUCE	0
CUCUMBERS	0
@ 3/ .89	.18
48 PRODUCE	53
ICEBERG LETT	53
@ .89	47.17
49 PRODUCE	0
LIMES	0
@ 5/ .49	.10
50 PRODUCE	35
BOST LETTUCE	35
@ .69	24.15
51 GROCERY	38
DELIVERY CHG	38
@ 1.25	47.50
52 GROCERY	

staying in line



# THE MAN IN THE COUCH

by Richard Gessner

A man lies inside a couch with a spring stuck through his body like a skewer.

Stuck from nape to back ball with his spiral-wound-tool, his arms and legs are stretched across the webbing beneath his back, supporting him in his skeletal bed cell.

The rows of coils running across the oblong couch frame are hooked through rows of holes at opposite ends behind his head and feet.

The springs flanking his ankles and ribs are shiny and paint-free from hours of scrubbing with his fingers and toes on sleepless days and nights while going through the motions of washing.

Prostrate in his cramped but compact living space, he is a fugitive trapped in hiding; feeling his dry tongue against his lower lip in the darkness.

The man feels a grinding in his belly when he moves, lifting his head up from the pillow of coils jutting from his nape, his face brushing against the burlap lining above him and beneath the outer cushions.

He listens to his breathing with eyes ajar while memories of washing dishes in the diner where he once worked flash through his head.

The world outside the couch is a room in a city boarding house. The smell of dirty laundry and stale cigarette smoke permeates the room. Beneath the sill of a dim window, piles of yellowing newspapers are scattered across the floor, making his outer cell a tabloid heaven. From the ceiling a light bulb shines above the luminous slip cover on the couch below. An aged girlie calendar and several karate posters hang on the walls in menopausal strength. At one end of the room is a neatly made bed and a dresser covered with bottles of aftershave, shaving cream dispensers, mountains of dulled & soapy disposable razors, crumpled government envelopes & loose change.

The couch is a limbo in a haven of isolation.

It is wedged between the bed and the radiator. With his head at the warm end, and his feet at the bed end, the man listens to the distant gurgling of flushing toilets & running faucets in the bathroom adjacent to his room. From the hallway, the voices of his neighbours ring faintly in his ears, growing more muffled as the radiator hisses through the arm of the couch, the heat bringing his stench to his nostrils.

The man in the couch once held great parties in his room, but now his neighbours no longer come. The isolation of his room wasn't enough so he retreated still further, in quest of a local extreme.

The owner of the couch who lives in the building comes to the room daily, bringing a fresh slip cover and bowls of oatmeal for the man on the spring.

When the man hears the owner enter the room he stretches his arms above his head, unhooking the top end of his spring from the couch frame.

He manoeuvres his torso in a spiral direction, kicking and pushing against the frame with his arms and legs -- heaving himself with all his might as though on a manual rotisserie -- wiping a swamp of sweat and pus from his face on the burlap lining beneath the outer cushions each time he spins around.

He spirals off along the route of his inner coil -- riding the alimentary roller coaster via his innards -- wounded on the battlefield of crisscrossing springs -- the burgeoning rows of coils spiralling out of his crotch -- encroaching on his stillborn member in a half-assed act of castration. He stares out across the expanse of copper webbing -- falling off the end coil in a usual state of unhealing.

Emerging from the couch to eat.

He covers his face with a tabloid in order to shield his eyes and wounds from the light. He crawls across the floor, rising in a bent squat to grip the arms of the couch and pull himself up (though he can never stand erect) circling the couch with a bent gait, climbing over the radiator and peering through a hole in his tabloid mask, watching the owner sitting on his bed holding his bowl of food.

The owner hands him his bowl which the man takes with hesitation poking at the clotted oatmeal with his fingers, bringing it to his mouth and chewing while gazing up at the karate posters, the men on his walls reminding him to persevere on the bed through his body in order to gain a better fate.

The owner watches him eat knowing that for this man food is secondary, that his real nourishment comes from the way in which he dies and wraps his leftovers in his newspapers as though packing them for a move in a box marked fragile, in ceremony for the travel of his static famine.

On the one hand, he would like to pull the spring out of the man's body once and for all, casting him out of the couch and into the world, thus destroying his dreams of glory and martyrdom on the spit. Then he could take the couch back to his own room, restoring it to its natural condition, reupholstering the interior with a fresh set of springs (the owner lent the man the couch so he could more comfortably accommodate his frequent party guests).

But the owner lets the man stay on the spring because he enjoys the submissive look on his face when he emerges from the couch to eat.

When the man finishes eating he goes back into the couch, spiralling onto his spring to wash a dish in his mind, rehooking the neck end of his wire so he lies level with the rows of adjacent coils.

He feels the outer cushions above him contract, pressing against the inner frame as the owner puts a new slip cover on the couch.

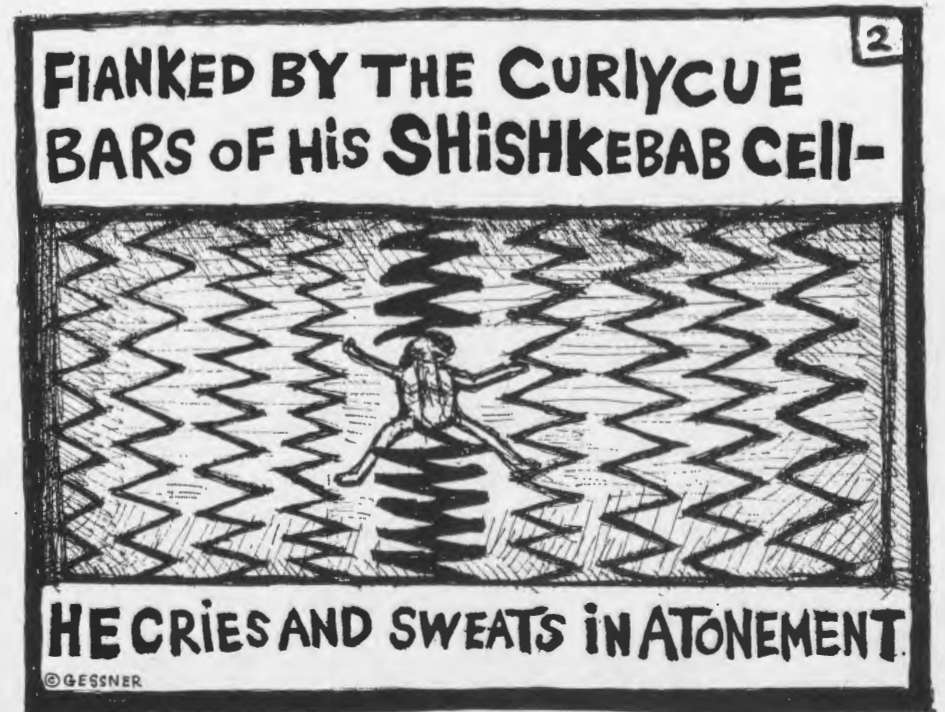


Image by Richard Gessner



# CONTRIBUTORS

Alex Amprimoz is a talented semiotician teaching at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. He regularly contributes innovative texts to RAMPIKE.

Holly Anderson is a RAMPIKE corresponding editor and lives in New York City. Her unusual visuals have graced these pages regularly.

Mia Anderson is an apostrophic punster who writes poems and stories out of Mount Forest, Ontario.

Rod Anderson is not related to Mia or Holly (or Alex, for that matter). He is a Toronto writer who spends a lot of time in grocery stores.

Anna Banana was doing Banana Art before Donovan sang "Mellow Yellow." This is her first appearance in RAMPIKE. She is currently seeking a publisher for her *Encyclopedia Bananica*, featuring a wide range of unusual facts dealing with bananas and world culture.

Rafael Barreto-Rivera is a member of the famed Four Horsemen poetry group. He can amuse and amaze with his visuals as well as his voice.

Mark Beamish spent time in the Canadian north planting trees and now has turned to planting poems.

John Bennett is a writer, editor, publisher and founding member of Luna Bionte Productions, a publishing venture in Columbus, Ohio.

Claudine Bertrand is a highly gifted poet working out of Quebec. She is also the editor and publisher of *Arcade*.

Bill Blissett contributes regularly to RAMPIKE. The still youthful concrete and sound poet also records mystic visions in his paintings.

Donald Brackett is a visual artist, performer and writer (living in Toronto).

Robert Buckeye is a serious and talented writer living in Middlebury, Vermont.

Patti Capaldi is an exciting new visual artist from New York City.

John Cartan likes Lifesavers and lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Marie Clark creates visual metaphors in Kamloops, British Columbia.

Roy Click prepares delicious gourmet cartoons out of Clarkston, Washington.

Dennis Cooley is an outstanding and multi-dimensional talent from the Canadian prairies. He teaches at the University of Manitoba and lives and writes in Winnipeg.

Phillp Corwin is a writer working out of Scarsdale, New York.

Jean-Paul Daoust is one of Quebec's finest young francophone writers.

Frank Davey is the editor of *Open Letter*, and the mastermind behind the electronic literary database, *Swift Current*. He teaches both English and creative writing at York University and is a highly reputed literary critic who has contributed poems with a wry sense of humour to almost every issue of RAMPIKE.

Sheila Davies lives in Berkeley, California, and is a writer and performer with a unique vision.

Gulliermo Delsler is a superlative graphic artist presently residing in Bulgaria. This is his second appearance in RAMPIKE.

Margaret Dragu is an amanuensis par excellence, a Canadian film star, video and performance artist, and former exotic dancer (though she's still exotic) who travels between Vancouver, Toronto and Mexico, and has the reputation of being an absolute angel in the kitchen.

Eugene Dubnov is a former Muscovite now living in London, England. His fabulous stories are being translated into English and appear regularly in RAMPIKE.

Paul Dutton is a member of the renowned Four Horsemen poetry ensemble, a Toronto Blue Jays fan, a talented 'pata-musician and composer as well as a regular contributor to RAMPIKE.

Brian Edwards teaches at Deakin University in Victoria, Australia. We take this opportunity to welcome Brian on his first RAMPIKE appearance.

Ernie Ernst is a photo and postcard artist who claims to be going semi-berserk trying to be creative and "earn" a living at the same time. He lives and works in Farmingdale, New Jersey.

Brian Fawcett is the author of the critically acclaimed *Secret Journal of Alexander Mackenzie*. He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia. We take this opportunity to welcome Brian on his first RAMPIKE appearance.

Judith Fitzgerald is a poet, literary journalist and baseball writer currently living in Toronto. She is one of the editors of an anthology of poetry by Canadian women, *Women'speak*, which is due to appear this fall.

Gerry Gilbert, writer, publisher, visual and performance artist, is editor of the long-running *B.C. Monthly* and lives in Vancouver, British Columbia. His new book, *Moby Jane*, is due soon from Coach House Press.

Luclen Francoeur is a legend in his own time, rock star and poet. He lives in Quebec and visits Paris often. He is a RAMPIKE regular.

Richard Gessner is understandably quite neurotic about being one of the most innovative artists in New York City but we still love him.

Dave Godfrey is a writer, electronic media master and creative-writing instructor at the University of Victoria. Also a RAMPIKE regular.

Barbara Golden is a hot writer, visual and performance artist who enjoys gourmet living. She works primarily out of San Francisco.

Matt Harley is a Toronto artist who loves dinosaurs and sometimes paints on stretched animal fur taken from old fur coats. Matt did the gourmet cover image for this issue of RAMPIKE.

Thomas Kretz is a poet working out of Rome, Italy.

Richard Kostelanetz is a noted literary critic and textual explorer. His works have been widely published and internationally recognized. Richard is a regular contributor to RAMPIKE.

Marina La Palma is a writer and performance artist working out of Los Angeles, and a regular contributor to RAMPIKE.

Alan Lord is a talented and extremely busy writer, performance artist and producer of the Ultimate Performance in Montreal. He is also a RAMPIKE contributing editor.

Karen McCormack is a gifted Toronto poet who works at Gallery Moos. Her most recent book is *Nothing by Mouth*. She is currently studying opera.

Thomas McDade lives and writes in Bridgeport, Connecticut, which is the home town of two of the most famous U.S. cartoonists of all time (both now deceased).

David McFadden is a RAMPIKE regular and serves on both the editorial board and production staff. Dave's novel, *Canadian Sunset*, is due from Black Moss Press this fall.

Joseph McLeod is a Toronto writer who has visited China and teaches at Seneca College.

Sid Marty is a semi-regular contributor to RAMPIKE, and works in the mountains near Lundbreck, Alberta. Sid works with dynamite on the job and in his writing.

Céline Messner is part of the new generation of francophone writers centred in Montreal.

Tracey Moore is certainly the finest and possibly the only spoon artist in the world. She currently resides in Toronto.

Robert Morgan is an established art critic who teaches at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He is also a conceptual visual artist and a regular RAMPIKE contributor and correspondent.

Opal L. Nations has published a mountain of extremely unusual work. Originally from England but formerly a resident of Canada, he now lives in Oakland, California, and plays a lot of Doo-Wop music as a disc jockey with radio station KPFA, FM-94.

Martha Nichols is a bossa-nova writer working out of San Francisco.

Edward Nixon is a brilliant up-and-coming writer from Toronto.

Lin Osterhage is on the staff of *High Performance*. She is a performance artist living in California.

Susan Parker is an extremely gifted Toronto punk Krishna be-bop poet.

Pawet Petasz, an experimental artist from Poland, enjoys RAMPIKE.

Karen Peterson works for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Vancouver and writes funny things, although she admits that this might be a *foodhardy* endeavour.

Al Purdy is a master of Canadian writing. He has contributed to RAMPIKE on several occasions. In this issue he gives us a sneak preview of the introduction to his new *Collected Poems*, due this fall from McClelland and Stewart.

Paya Rohay is part of a new generation of experimental Quebec artists. Paya's work takes form as visual, written and performance art.

Gabrielle Roth is a cultural guerrilla from New York City, who collaborates with Yolande Villemaire.

Chris Saletes is a photographer working in Sackville, New Brunswick.

Jayce Salloum is a Toronto photographer taking a sabbatical on the west coast, including Vancouver, British Columbia, and La Jolla, California.

Gerry Shkatanl is an editor, master haiku poet and charter member of the Coincidence Club. He is also a restaurant reviewer for *Toronto Life*. His poetry and fiction have been widely published.

Phillippe Sollers is the well-known founding editor of *Tel Quel* and now *L'Infini*. Steven Heath has called Sollers' novels and editorial practices "a radical advance on, and critique of, the Nouveau Roman -- a redefinition of literary practices which gave it [the nouveau roman] its impetus and vitality." This is Phillippe Sollers' first, but, we hope, not his last, appearance in RAMPIKE.

Melody Sumner is the editor of Burning Books. She has published numerous exciting experimental texts and contributes often to RAMPIKE.

George Swede is of Swedish descent, teaches at Ryerson College and writes comic works of unidentifiable genre. He edits *The White Wall Review*.

Don Thompson is a Vancouver collage artist with a peculiar vision of life.

Aina Tilpus is a professional electron-microscopist and photographer working and living in Toronto.

Richard Truhlar is part of the Owen Sound poetry ensemble. He is one of the chief editors with Underwhich Editions and he writes, performs, and makes progressive audio recordings in Toronto.

Marlno Tuzl is a politically conscious writer living in Toronto.

Yolande Villemaire is originally from Quebec and is presently working, living and creating marvellous works in New York City. Her cosmological 1980 novel, *La Vie en Prose*, is currently being translated into English.

Bob Wakullich lives and writes in Calgary, Alberta, where he admits that all is not sunshine and discos but there's still a lot of life.

Alida Walsh's work has appeared in *High Performance*. Her unique approach to performance is tempered by her New York City sensibility. We welcome Alida on her first appearance in RAMPIKE.

Don Webb lives in Austin, Texas, and is interested in the plastic arts.

Irving Wells teaches and writes out of The College at New Paltz in New York. Among other things, he has been translating Malcolm de Chazal's *Sens-Plastique*.

Janice Williamson is a talented literary critic headquartered in Toronto. We're hoping we can get her to join the RAMPIKE editorial staff in the near future.

Noah Zacharin is a dentist who writes poetry and plays guitar in Montreal.

## ERRATA

Mrs. Zend informs us that Robert Zend was born in Hungary, not Czechoslovakia. We apologize for this error and send warmest wishes to Mrs. Zend as well as thanks once again for giving us permission to publish Robert's work.

Daniel Brown informs us that he was incorrectly credited in the last issue. His listing should have read "Daniel Brown" not "W. S. Brown" although he concurs that Wes is his nickname. Sorry, Wes, and thanks for pointing it out.

Victor Coleman informs us that his photo-documentary trip to Central America, in collaboration with Judy Whalen, was focused on the elections in Nicaragua, not El Salvador. This goes to show the level of ignorance many of us have regarding the situation in that part of the world. Thanks, Victor, for the illumination!

