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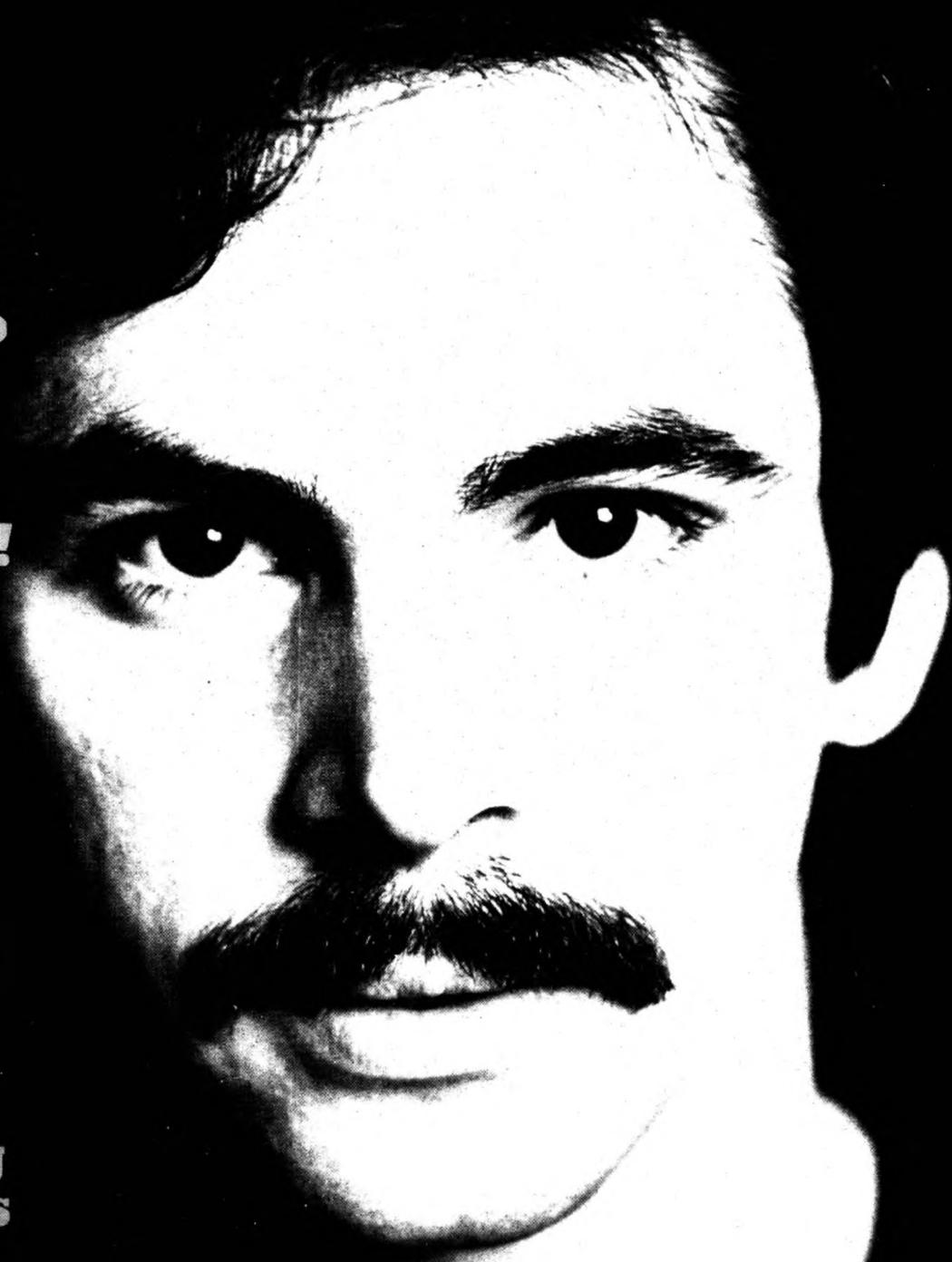
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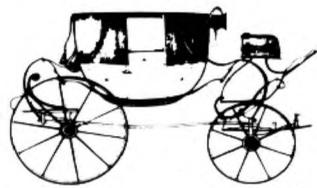
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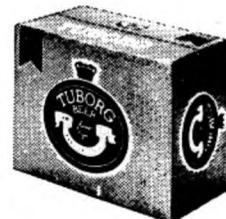
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The Uninvited



When Telefair Communications informed us of the "Advocate Invitational Conference" called for at the Hyatt Regency Hotel O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois, on March 27 we first thought it was a heavy-duty pong tournament (that popular bar activity), but after a mass of letters informed us that the agenda includes some closed discussions of methods of keeping the "gay spoilers" away from the media and the politicians, we took a closer look at what the owner of the new *Advocate* is up to these spring days.

Since we were not invited to David B. Goodstein's exclusive private Chicago Ball (making us proud to be, in his terms, "Gay Spoilers," meaning our work has been effective), we're anxious that our brief comments not be interpreted as sour grapes so much as grapes fermenting.

We wish to make it perfectly clear that *Vector* respects Colonel Goodstein's rights to convene in the Windy City (albeit characteristically on the outskirts) and to declare officially that S.I.R. hasn't seen fit in its infinite wisdom to bother taking an official stand (or even so much as a curtsy) on the matter. Any persons in attendance who happen to be dues-paying members (card-carrying notwithstanding) of S.I.R. and choose to attend the Chicago hoedown do so at their own risk and as (very) private citizens.

Of this we can be certain—the hostessed luncheon will be superb and mouth-watering. We also anticipate excellence in the area of guard surveillance, funds collection, and, of course, the chairs will be perfectly set up.

If anything happens, we will probably do a piece on it since we're the only national publication not ashamed of placing the word "GAY" next to our cover title and are pledged to honest reporting of the entire gay experience—not just that which "touches our lifestyle," but what touches all of us.

We wish the sponsor and non-participants in this historic convening all success, and if anyone—anyone—gets laid, then it will not have been in vain.

—R.J.P.

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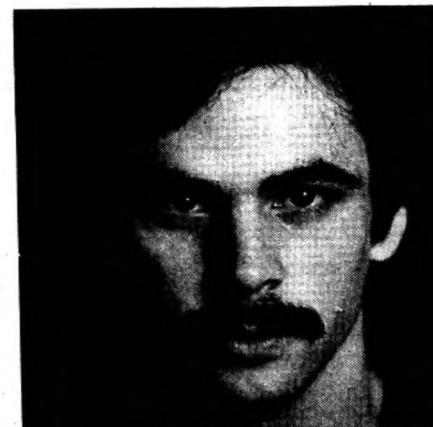
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VECTOR

THE GAY EXPERIENCE

VOLUME 12 / NUMBER 4

THE GREAT SAN FRANCISCO MYTH by Paul-Francis Hartmann17
The first in a series blowing the myths of San Francisco as a gay mecca. Hartmann directs his attention to the ultimate San Francisco trip — a leap off the Golden Gate Bridge—and why it is sometimes the only gay alternative.

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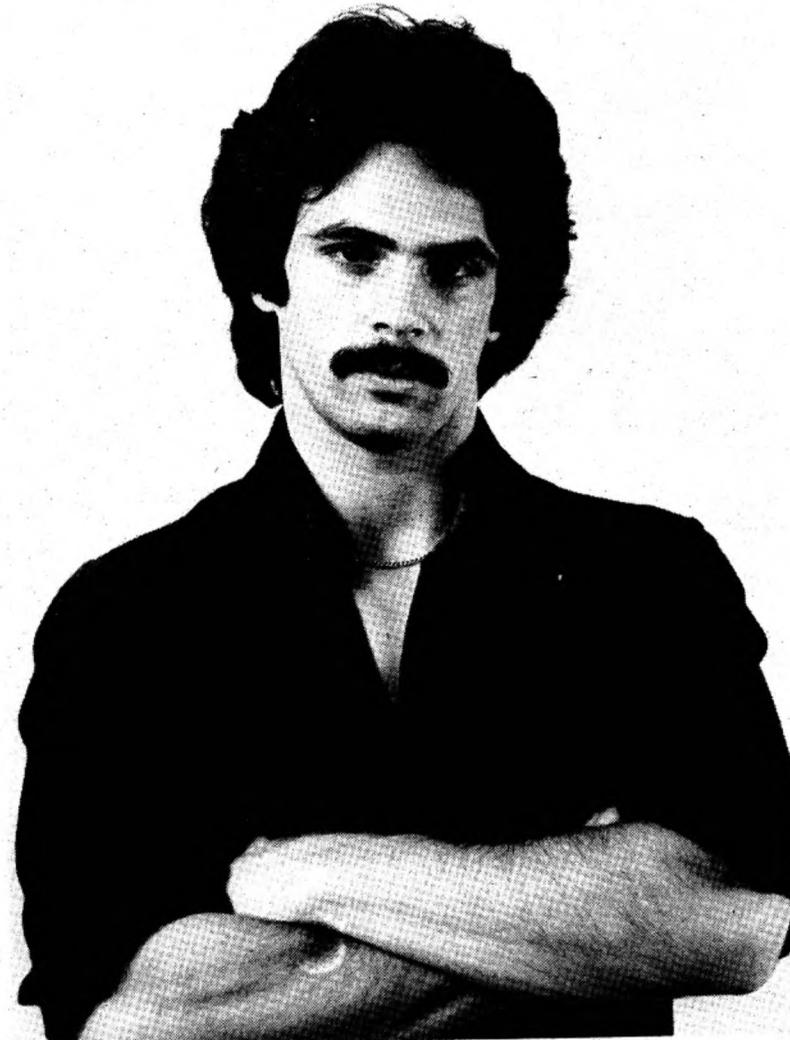
Unsolicited manuscripts and photos are welcomed and must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. All submissions will be responded to within a week. Graphic artists are encouraged to make appointments to present their portfolios to Art Director, Jay Manning.

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SERVE THE GAY COMMUNITY!



VECTOR's man for April, STEGGIE, photographed by STEPHEN COLLIER

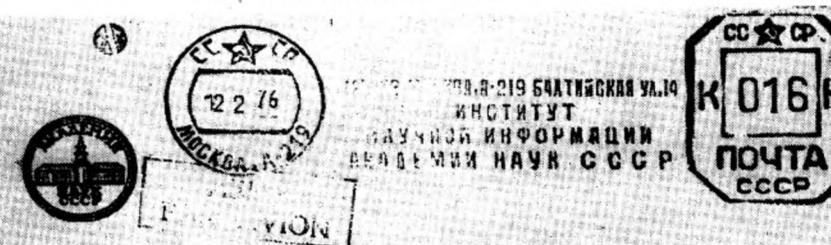
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Charlton Hewett
 Columbia, S. C.

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Just a line to let you know I've had very good response to my ad in *Vector* re the nationwide film round-robin. Have had inquiries from Boston, Atlanta, Miami, Oklahoma, a few Calif., and Ariz. Tho't you'd like to know.

K. Sell
 Berkeley, CA

PAGE 40, FRANK

Your magazine is great, but it

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В печать 21/X-1976 г. Зах. 5333 ПИК ВИНТИ

has one major fault. You have photos and articles whites, blacks and Chicanos. But where are the Orientals? Remember we're out here, too! Add on and be loved by all.

Frank Augustine
 Hayward, CA

NO LONGER LATENT

Want to let you know this is virtually the first *Vector* I've really enjoyed reading: the poetry is some of the best you've had yet, the articles as a whole were well-written, and even the play, though heavy with arguments and thoughts we've heard a dozen times in similar relationships, captured it believably on paper. Seems as though you've struck in the direction of quality. I'd say the magazine's latent potential is beginning to be utilized, if you continue in this vein.

Darrell Schramm
 Oakland, CA

Subscribe now and save one-third of the newsstand price.

Well, figure it out. Twelve months of VECTOR at \$1.25 a pop comes to \$15.00 per year. Right now, a subscription is \$10.00 per year. That's a saving of five bucks, or one-third. A bargain any way you look at it.

For twelve years now, we've been giving you the best in fiction, photography, politics, entertainment, analysis, opinion, poetry and anything else which pertains to the gay experience. Each month we review theater, books, restaurants, music (both classical and contemporary), you name it. Although we're crawling out of our San Francisco shell, we STILL cover Sodom-by-the-Bay better than anyone!

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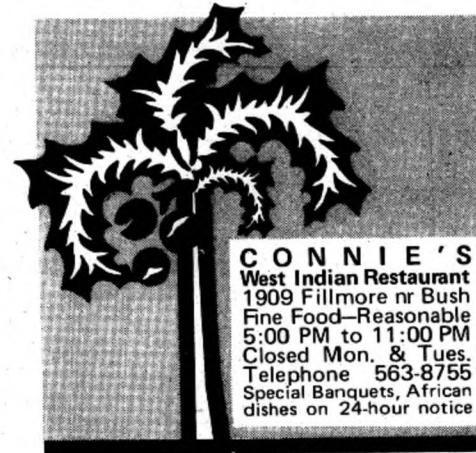
Books

Déja Lu?

OSCAR WILDE
by H. Montgomery Hyde
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 389 pages,
45 illustrations, bibliography, \$15

A Review by
SHEILA MASTHOFF

The familiar features of Oscar Wilde looking out from the dust jacket give no



clue to the surprises to be found on the endsheets of Mr. Hyde's latest book. In the front is a reproduction of the famous card left at Oscar Wilde's club, the Albermarle, by the enraged Marquis of Queensberry. It is with a little shiver of fear that one sees this infamous card, marked exhibit "A" in the trial, on which Lord Queensberry hastily scrawled "For Oscar Wilde posing as a sodomite" when, of course, he intended to write "For Oscar Wilde posing as a sodomite."

There is also a copy of the letter to the London *Evening News* that Robbie Ross jotted down on the back of two envelopes and Oscar signed, giving his reasons for withdrawing from the prosecution of the marquis. It is again with some emotion that one finds, at the end of the book, a reproduction of the final bill submitted by M. Dupoirier, the kindly proprietor, least rapacious of hotel keepers, in whose Hotel Alsace Oscar Wilde died in 1900. Among the list of charges for room rent, linen, medication, special nurse, lemonade, hot chocolate, and cognac, one notes with an ineffable sadness that of F12.60 for "42 bougies pour le veilement @ f30" (forty-two candles for the bedside vigil at 30 cents each). The endsheets and the

cover are in a tasteful green. One wonders whether this was intentional on the part of the publishers since green was a favorite color of Oscar's and is, according to Havelock Ellis, a favorite of gays.

ANY NEW MATERIAL?

But what, the student of Oscar Wilde's life may well ask himself, can possibly be new about the life itself, following the spate of biographies that have been published in the past seventy-five years? Will this, he wonders, prove to be a case of *deja lu*?

The book opens with the customary genealogy, but it is much to Mr. Hyde's credit that this is brief. Few things are more boring than long-winded accounts of maternal and paternal forebears whose exploits several hundreds of years ago were not particularly interesting even then. The unhappy reader quickly becomes lost in a pseudo-Biblical maze.

Most of what follows is necessarily familiar, since this is probably the most comprehensive biography to date. As such, it is admirably suited for those who know Oscar Wilde only by reputation, through his plays or TV. The scholarly Mr. Hyde retraces the Wilde tragedy efficiently, step by step, highlighting it with anecdotes such as the account of a discussion on Roman Catholicism with fellow undergraduates at Oxford. This culminated in one of them hitting Oscar on the top of the head, exclaiming, "You will be damned, you will be damned, for you see the light and will not follow it." A hilarious account of a dinner engagement with Marcel Proust and an uproariously funny interview with a reporter from the *St. James Gazette* are included.

THE GREATEST THRILL

Some previously unpublished letters from the long-suffering Constance Wilde

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Perhaps the greatest thrill of all is to learn that during the Paris Exhibition of 1900 Oscar Wilde made a recording of the last three stanzas of "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" into an invention of Thomas Edison's, "the phonograph or speaking machine"—the only recording of Oscar's voice ever made.

Many of the illustrations will be known to devotees of Oscar Wilde's, but Mr. Hyde has included five by the Canadian photographer Sarony, taken when Oscar toured America in 1882, and an unfamiliar olemn photograph of Constance. There is a fine bibliography for those who wish to delve deeper, but one could wish that the index were in larger print.

The text contains only one obvious inaccuracy. The play *The Duchess of Padua* was completed on March 15, 1883, not 1882.

Mr. Hyde has written more than twenty books, mostly biographies. His interest in Oscar Wilde has been lifelong. It is developed from the time when he was assigned Oscar's old rooms in Magdalen College, Oxford, and grew following a meeting that was initiated by Lord Alfred Douglas, the first of several. At one time his Wildean collection was probably the largest private collection in the world. Mr. Hyde states that it is now in the possession of Mrs. Mary Hyde of New Jersey. Perhaps someday he will tell us how the transfer was effected and of their kinship, if any. One wonders how so valua-

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ble a collection ever left England.

A cousin of Henry James's, Mr. Hyde lived for several years in the former's English home in Rye before he relocated to Kent. Let us hope that we may look forward to many more biographies and that somewhere, somehow, he will run across and share with us still more accounts of the life and brilliance of the incomparable Oscar Wilde.

In a letter written when he was twenty-six, Wilde wrote, "I am determined that the world shall understand me." During his miserable exile he prophesied, "Fifty years hence or a hundred years, my unhappy fate will call forth world-wide sympathy."

Yes, indeed, Oscar, some of us do

understand you, and we do sympathize. We remember you, and we don't intend to forget.

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Theater

Vultures

THIS IS (AN ENTERTAINMENT)
by Tennessee Williams
A.C.T., San Francisco

Someone said that Tennessee Williams is being exploited by hungry producers who are into the fact that the remaining pieces of flesh on the Williams Carcass are still box-office gold. It's sad to realize A. C.T. is yet another vulture, since it is already the consensus of opinion that *This*

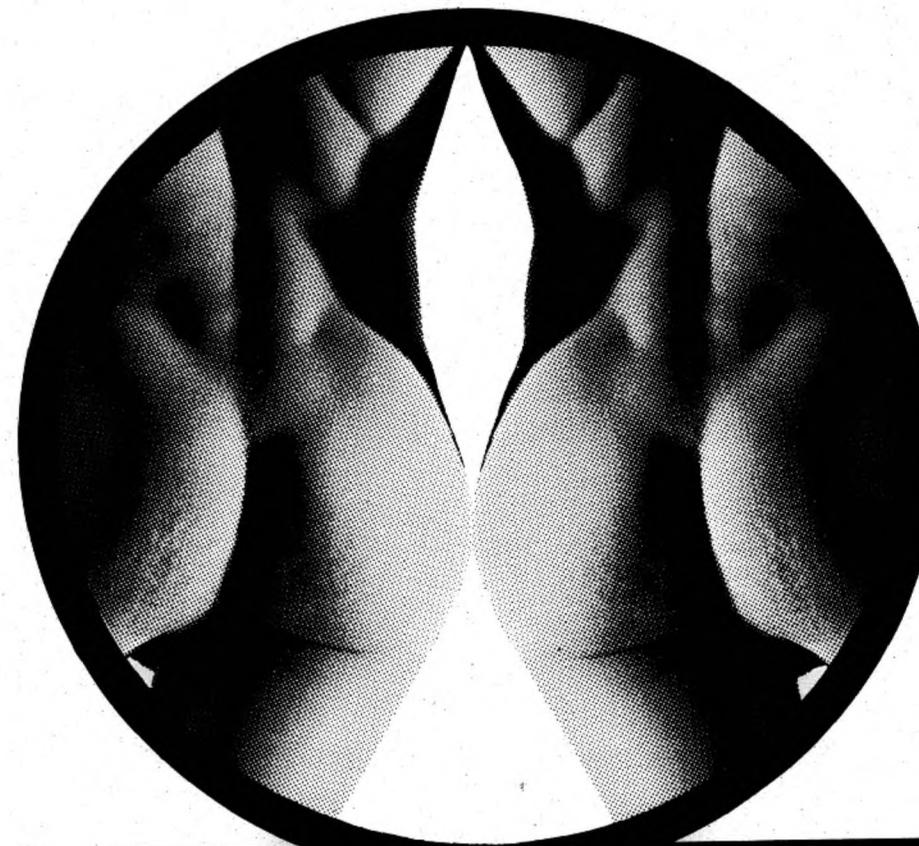
Is is an embarrassment all around.

Midway into the first act I flashed on the possibility that Elizabeth Huddle might just turn to the audience and say, "If this shit is where it's at, I want no part of it," and walk off the stage. My heart bled for this brilliant actress being forced into a series of things that were ugly and that assaulted all the senses.

Several things impressed me about the press conference granted by Tennessee

Williams, chief of which was the realization that the majority of the "press corps" is gay, and I'm referring to those who do not work for the gay press but that small army of reporters working the perimeters of the Bay Area. And how embarrassed they were when the upfront gay reporters tried to pin Williams down concerning his failure to address his talent toward upfront gay themes. After each pointed question was thrust at Williams it was one of my closeted gay brothers who rescued Tennessee by countering with another change-the-subject question. (Again the realization that our major oppression comes not from straights but from closeted gays all the way from Madison Avenue to the Marin townlets.)

However, Williams did harp on the need for grace and style throughout his life. (He twice cited Martha Mitchell as an example of "style and grace.") But nowhere in *This Is* is there grace or style but rather a bizarre collection of disgusting fantasies, gynophobia, homophobia, and, as in so many of Allen Fletcher's directed productions, any physical failing (the very old) is set up as a hilarious situation. Sick meets sick meets sick. And the total equaled a bone-crushing boredom that



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emptied the theater at intermission. Wakes can be fun. This one wasn't.

US, THE REST OF US
Japan Center Theatre
San Francisco

From the pen of Charlie Hufford come the most poignantly honest and moving situations concerning homosexual love and homosexual experience that it has been my pleasure to see. (It's not a gay play, though.) The dialogue and acting are brilliant, and they are matched with moments in the script—I had to hold my breath. It was there and so right on; it went right over the heads of the straight media people who seemed only to see the flaws, which were considerable.



Edwin Blair holding Doug Shook in a scene from *Us... the Rest of Us*.

The theater is a cavern destroying the intimacy this show cries for. The music is reject muzak for rock supermarkets and elevators. The singing talent is underwhelming but...

The direction by Robert L. Wodzinski in pulling the divergent forces of long script into a tight, ever fresh, ever unfolding, ever mysterious, ever soothing total was nothing short of brilliant. The cast of twenty or so knew exactly what they were doing and did it with so much infecting conviction that it pulled us into a rare atmosphere of awareness.

This is a cast/crew/script that is wide open in consciousness and so very, very aware! It's more perfect being than trying to be, and that's exactly what *Us* is all about—being. More than once I cried.
—Richard Piro

Les Fleurs de Mai

We have been getting a lot of good fiction submitted to us lately. How to choose, oh, how to choose? Then Richard had the bright idea to have a Fiction Special in the May issue of VECTOR. We get to clean out our files and you get a bonus!

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Anyone who understands this advertisement is encouraged to drop in to the VECTOR office any time and explain it to us. They send us their lovely magazine, COK SEK. We would appreciate having it translated into English.

Politics

The Caucus Race

GAY DELEGATES AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

In California on April 11 at 1 p.m. each candidate for President of the United States will hold caucuses to elect delegates to the Democratic National Convention. If you want to see gay delegates go to that convention, you will need to reserve that afternoon, attend the caucus of the candidate you prefer,

and vote for a gay delegate.

Each presidential candidate will hold a separate caucus in each Congressional District. The locations will be secured by the end of March. If you miss the notice in your newspaper, call the campaign office of the candidate you prefer and ask where his caucus for your area will be held. Any registered Democrat is eligible to attend any caucus in his or her Congressional District. Ask some friends to go with you. When you arrive, get together with other gay people and decide whom you want to nominate as a delegate. If you nominate only one gay person, your chances of winning are probably better, but feel out the situation you find yourselves in. Your chances are better if your choice has been active in past presidential campaigns or other election campaigns. Then go around the room and sell your nominee. Go up to total strangers and ask them to vote for your upfront gay delegate-nominee, active in the gay community and Democratic politics. If you were able to gain a consensus on a person to support for delegate before April 11 and if you bring a few hundred flyers urging people to vote for your favorite, so much the better.

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SAN FRANCISCO

These caucuses are the preliminary, pre-primary means by which people are selected as delegates. If we do not go to these caucuses in larger numbers, there will be no gay delegates. It's up to you.

Below, I've listed the major presidential candidates and what I know about their stands on gay issues. Rather than list them alphabetically, the listing reflects by current (1/26/76) preference. As April 11 (or the correct date for your state) approaches, select a candidate, find out where his caucus will be held, and plan to attend it.

FRED HARRIS

Former senator from Oklahoma: Populist candidate Harris has a strong position on gay rights. He would issue an executive order banning discrimination against gay people, urge Congress to pass the Abzug bill, and appoint qualified gay persons to positions in his administration. He has brought up the subject of equal protection for gay people in speeches to predominantly straight audiences, e.g., at the Alameda County Labor Day picnic in the fall of 1975.

MORRIS K. UDALL

U.S. representative from New Mexico: Believes that gay people should have the right to work in private and public jobs without discrimination or harassment on account of their sexual preference. He shares with Harris a reputation for concern about our environment and its vulnerability to uncontrolled growth.

MILTON J. SHAPP

Governor of Pennsylvania: Says he is for "full civil rights for all people" and substantiates his words with an executive order banning discrimination against gay people in state employment services and



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with a veto of an anti-gay bill. These acts were the result in extensive dialogue with the gay community in Pennsylvania; he has sought meetings with gay people in other states. Some question has been raised about his support for hiring women for leadership roles.

FRANK CHURCH

Senator from Idaho: I don't have any details on his statements concerning gay rights—just a positive feeling. His early anti-war convictions, his commitment to the civil rights of individuals, and his record of leadership in the Senate prompted me to place his name ahead of that of Bayh.

BIRCH BAYH

Senator from Indiana: Would issue an executive order banning discrimination in federal employment against gays; he supports the Abzug bill. However, he initially was a cosponsor of SB 1 (the Mitchell version of Penal Code "Reform") and still believes this repressive legislation is amendable.

CARTER, JACKSON, SHRIVER, AND WALLACE

These are alphabetically lumped together at the bottom. Either they have serious reservations or a past history of opposition to gay issues, or they are up-front anti-gay. I'm sure readers know enough about the Republican candidates vis-a-vis gay rights or plain, ordinary everyday human rights, to understand why I do not even mention their names.

So the choices are numerous; we will probably see a brokered convention. The only way we will have any input into the final approval of the Democratic Party Platform and the selection of the nominee is to send delegates to the convention. Remember: caucus first; then convention.

DINNER WITH THE NEW MAYOR

The Golden Gate Business Association got a head start on the gala-political-event-of-the-year award with its January 29 Second Annual Installation of Officers dinner. It was probably a national first to have an incumbent mayor of a major metropolitan center install the officers of a predominantly gay organization and deliver a major policy address. It is not a first to have had the straight media ignore the event after receiving notification from both the association and the mayor's office.

In addition to Mayor George Moscone, the crowd of close to 300 featured: Sheriff Richard Hongisto, District Attorney Joe Freitas, his opponent in the last election, Carol Ruth Silver, Senator Mil-

ton Marks and Mrs. Marks, Judge Edward Cragen, Board of Supervisors President Quentin Kopp, and candidate for Assembly Art Agnos. Board of Permit Appeals member Harvey Milk, Moscone's first gay appointment, received a standing ovation. Also honored were former Community College Board candidate Rick Stokes and his lover, David Clayton, who were celebrating their sixteenth anniversary.

Seldom before have I seen such a broad cross-section of our community gathered in one room. People from Alice B. Toklas, Harry S. Truman, and Reform Democratic clubs were seated among representatives from the Tavern Guild, the Society for Individual Rights, the popular South of Market Business Association, the Wednesday Form, the Tuesday Night Club, both Imperial Courts, the Pride Foundation, and many more. I hope it happens more often, as everyone apparently enjoyed himself a whole lot.

NEW GAY POLITICAL CLUBS

New gay political clubs are forming throughout the nation, the latest being the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club in Washington, D.C., and the South Bay Gay Democratic Club in and about San Jose. The nation's oldest, Alice B. Toklas, will probably hold a workshop in political and fund-raising skills for the Bay Area clubs, and, if interest is expressed, tapes of the workshops might be made available at cost. Write me in care of *Vector*.

— Frank Fitch

TO POLITICALLY AWARE READERS

Vector welcomes all diverse political opinions and does not intend to be limited to being an organ for the Reform Democrats. However, in order to implement this we need contributions in the form of well-written manuscripts.

Officially *Vector* is apolitical and we intend to offer information to keep our readership aware of their political power.

—Editor

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CRACKING THE GREAT SAN FRANCISCO MYTH

A program of social surgery is seldom initiated with frivolity. The risks are calculated before, during, and after the operation. I agreed to address the issue of Gay San Francisco '76 with a sharpened scalpel—not out of any spite or sour stomach. But out of distress over the climate of gay city life. The distress is not mine alone; I've heard it voiced in many quarters. "How can we improve our lot?" is a question I hear again and again. Or, "I'm so tired of the bar and bath-house scene." Or, "Where do you meet a man who's not playing some twisted game?"

We all are delighted that the city proves itself a never-ending carnival for the tourist and the weekend reveler. Outside of encountering each other, the resident and the visitor do not have identical needs. A San Franciscan must eventually grapple with strategies for survival and a meaningful life. The conventioner and the vacationer require only the giddiest gay wing-ding they can swallow. Our guests want to be exposed, and shocked, and our pornographic lives provide the condiments. Stuff them, and they're satisfied; the hangover is resolved elsewhere.

Over the next months *Vector* and its feature writers will be rethinking, reassessing and testing the

quality of gay life in San Francisco. At issue is an attempt to raise "gay consciousness," to dispel some hot air, to salvage something from the wreckage.

We've chosen to focus a blue spotlight—the least flattering for the face—on the midway and its people. A bastard amber spot covers the blemishes, softens the wrinkles, and San Francisco needs no additional rosy coloring. The call for objectivity is a hesitant call for one more shade of light, equally colored, but dimmer. To some sensibilities it is no light at all. Our necessary lighting is anguished: harsh, intense ultraviolet.

We are sending up flares for ourselves, for those who would like to live here. We suspect that around us stretches a littered no-man's land. If there is a dedication, let it be to those brothers and sisters who never "made it" here and whose corpses lie shredded over the battlefield. Names now out of memory, gay riders spun off the carousel that never ceased whirling, that never returned.

I subscribe to a kind of social Darwinism, the survival of the fittest. Adaptation or extinction. But I don't believe in letting lambs be led to slaughter without even trying to hand them a flashlight.

—Paul-Francis Hartmann

Part I: Another Anonymous Tragedy

"HE HAD HANDCUFFED BOTH HIS HANDS,
AND HIS LEGS WERE BOUND WITH A BELT. . ."

By PAUL-FRANCIS HARTMANN

A myth is a similar picture in the minds of many people. It is an internal lithograph as true as any cobblestone we stub our toe on. It can lie submerged in mist, or it can stand out in bold color. A myth can be stonily stable and of long standing; equally it can grow, decompose, or die. It accumulates or shrinks through its own kind of logic and arithmetic. The Nazi myth triumphed under Adolf Hitler, and a generation hurled Western man and his basket of myths into a decade of horror.

There is such a myth about San Francisco. At first glance, it looks good and clean, yet under radioactive scrutiny a microbe colony is swarming. In the minds of most Americans to live in San Francisco is some kind of extraordinary good fortune. In the crystal ball of many young gays, it is a destiny stopping this side of Shangri-La. A myth can be beneficial and a torch, or it can be destructive and a blinder. One can get beyond the fiction and launch a productive life, or one can fall for the pitch, becoming its victim and slave. At the end bundled with the other scraps of fraudulent copy. To be shredded.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?

To assess a myth requires a different brand of long division and multiplication. Hunch, perspective, participation are fed into an inferential calculator. Breaking the myth down, retabulating the digits, never produces the same totals. One entry might be a greater power than the entire balance sheet. The geometry of myth is an open-ended system—anybody's game, but likely the most significant game of our time. The end power is not to package, but to enlighten.

Another approach at evaluation is to pump blood into the tick, hoping to splatter the blood-sucking parasite before its head and pincers take hold and infect the total system. The inflated diagnosis is then held up to the findings of men like Jung and McLuhan or is set beside the pages of James Joyce or the canvases of Francis Bacon.

There comes a time for Jack to cut down his beanstalk; while it is to the advantage of some to exploit the myth for private profit, it is the prerogative of others to burst the balloon for public health. A Liberty

Bell year seems propitious to do some weeding in the Flower Children's overrun and run-over Garden of Eden. The San Francisco Bicentennial question is not to ask where have all the flowers gone, but to ask what siren has taken their place.

THE BRIDGE, THE SHAFT, THE ROCK

Three man-made structures have come to symbolize San Francisco: the Golden Gate Bridge, the Transamerica shaft building, and Alcatraz. On picture postcard, travel poster, calendar, and snapshot, the three remain the favorite subjects and the same three perhaps best tell the city's "other" story.

Spanning the Golden Gate, the vermilion bridge gleams like a radiant welcome. On clear days patient gulls gliding above, and below, trim white sailboats, effortless in the breeze, promise a city of little tension, great hope, and purer values. The new, penis-shaped Transamerica Pyramid proclaims a daily pledge of allegiance to San Francisco's sexual frankness and liberation. A twentieth-century minaret knifing itself into the skyline, a snow-white challenge to its squarer and duskier neighbors. It is both adored and abhorred. Well inside the Bay squats the abandoned federal prison, now a rusting and gutted hulk. Its charred cell blocks are crumbling and ominous. In 1976 an obstruction to shipping, still off limits, more dangerous than ever.

VICTIM OF THE MYTH OF SAN FRANCISCO

A Welcome, a Statement, a Warning. A come-on, a high point, and a stay-away. To the tourist the trio are merely sights, spelling out a message of a good time; a golden "hello," a getting-it-up, and a brief flirtation with the devil and decay. To the young gay who has made the city his home, the three might be telling a different story: an initial bright promise, a permanent erection, and an inescapable ruin. The tale often ends where it began, at the Golden Gate. The pilgrim spent and spindled returns to the original threshold, having concluded that, as in legend, the Rock offers neither freedom nor pardon. He now knows the bridge is not really golden, but plated a tarnished, dried-blood red. His fluid and the plasma of countless disillusioned spirits. He straddles a rust-red beam and leaps into the blue peace below and hopefully into the white innocence above. The old American fable, gulled again. . . another anonymous tragedy;

The *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 20, 1976:
". . . He had handcuffed both his hands behind him and his legs were bound with a belt. He made a striking picture with the sun on him. His head was shaven and he was wearing dark glasses. I shot a picture. We heard a scream, another scream or two—and then a faint splash. . ." said Michael Smith, 29, speaking of John Smith, 40. The body of the

"The new,
penis-shaped
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Pyramid proclaims
a daily pledge of
allegiance to
San Francisco's
sexual frankness
and liberation."

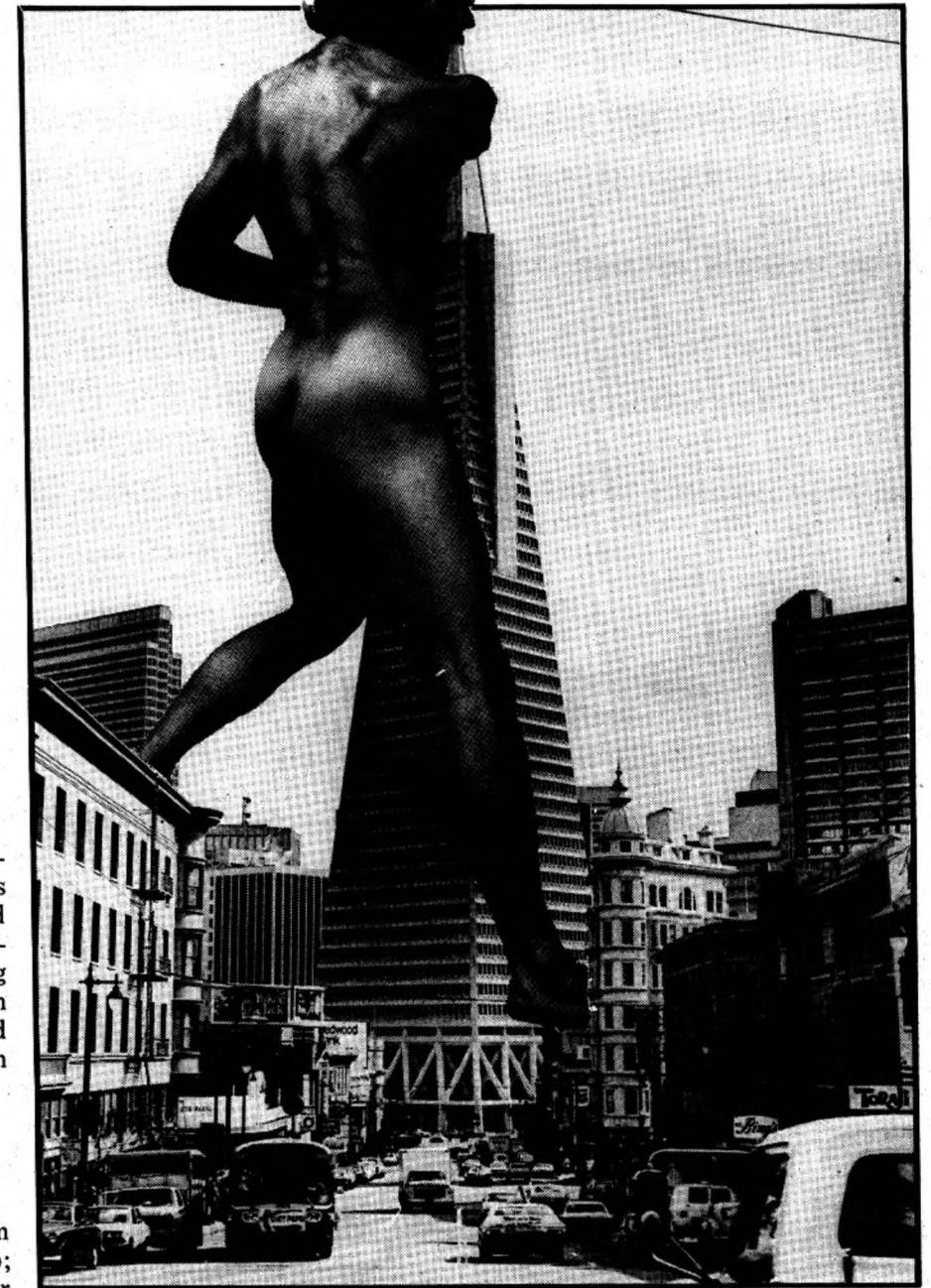
man, who jumped at 4:54
P.M., was not found by the
Coast Guard.

The incident warranted both front- and back-page space in that day's paper, for this time there happened to be pictures. "A Closeup of a Suicide" headlined the event, referring to Smith only as "the man." An X-ray picture might well have told a story of "the victim." A victim of the myth of San Francisco.

CINDER FELLA AND HIS TALE TOLD IN A TUB

The tourist and the city overwhelm each other in a fleeting courtship; they always part friends. The suitor for the city's heart is soon lulled to sleep in the city's hypnotic spell, and he jingles away his youth, a bangle on its wrist. If the suitor should escape, they often part enemies. However, the city never loses; be it a brief fling or a fifteen-year engagement, there's always a new wave coming.

From suburban split-level to small-town white clapboard gothic, San Francisco looms as America's sexual frontier. To any youth who somewhere knows he won't be marrying the girl next door, who senses that Standard Brands and General Motors won't be recruiting his kind of talent, who recognizes that Security Risks somehow denote himself, who sniffs that the kindest thing he can do for his family is to put a continent between the heritage and himself—for him San Francisco rises out of the



fog of imagination as the solution; the salvation.

Often the shift here begins with an initial visit. Flying in to stay with old friends who preceded him here, or arriving by van or bus to take a summer course at Berkeley or at USF, hitchhiking around the country checking out the cityscapes. Dabbling in the gay scene. If he is fresh and good-looking, it will seem as if mountains move before his very eyes. He returns home, more frustrated than before, and endures another winter at his desk or station, knowing now that he has a marketable commodity; his face, his lean body, his open smile, and his considerable genitals. The second or third visit and he's here to stay. It's all too true: "They want me, they spoil me, and, shuffling through the groping hands, I'll surely find my Prince."

SAN FRANCISCO AS ANOTHER SINKING VENICE

Since there was first a city, mankind has known that cities eat up lives and spit them out as regularly as the garbage scows make the forty-mile ocean run. New York, Paris, Los Angeles bait the young who have shown small-town promise or who have been encouraged to climb. The Big Apple is just that because it feeds on talent, and the ambitious go there to shake its fabled tree. Hollywood? Break out and break into the movies, scramble up and over broken bones. Running round and round the track—in training—itching in the bullpen for that one phone call, that big break. London, Washington, Chicago, Dallas are ladder cities. One starves for a goal; as a “comer” one has a valid role to play. San Francisco, like Venice, is endeared to the world’s gentler sentiments. They are to be kept afloat, kept from sinking under their own weight and lethargy into their gorgeous, sun-drenched lagoons. The ferry to Sausalito, the *motoscario* to the Lido. The Bridge of Sighs and the world’s favorite leaping bridge. Cable cars and gondolas, Byzantine mosaics and rainbowed Victorians. Harry’s Bar and the legendary Rendezvous Bar. Haight-Ashbury and the Piazza San Marco. The Campanile and Coit Tower. So much to love, to remember, to rhapsodize over. . . the two cities to die in, for Death in either is apotheosis. Venice will find its salvation in a pump, and gay San Francisco has found its answer in cocaine, in amyl, and in a gallon can of Crisco.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES & MYTHS

The gay cub arrives in town with perhaps a few hundred dollars, often bearing the family’s curse, clutching a few phone numbers, and head filled with glittering expectations. He checks in at one of the Y’s, or a friend makes space for him in the Haight or in the Castro ghetto: a dingy flat of four bedrooms and a kitchen filled with plastic bags of garbage that are seldom taken out. The first weeks are a whirlwind of out-every-night and fucking as if it had just been invented. As the money begins to dwindle, he begins to worry. Some DOM who takes him out to dinner or who buys him drinks looks better all the time. Sooner or later he starts to look for work; his friends and bar buddies aren’t much help since not too many of them are employed either.

Outside of banking and insurance or the tedium of government service, there are not too many careers, professions, or skills to pursue in San Francisco. The market for teachers, lawyers, and doctors has been oversupplied for decades. Speech therapists settle to clerk in neighborhood gift shops; landscape architects find a non-future in selling plants. Literature majors can serve coffee in bookstores; artists swell the market making candles and macrame. Few industries originate in or center themselves in San Francisco. Products are designed elsewhere, manufactured elsewhere. The city has little to do with conception or completion; instead it is used more often as a showplace. To sell these products

on the road, one has to play the very game he has come to San Francisco to escape. The day of peddling computer parts, wearing flowers in your hair, has never even materialized.

Writers, dancers, singers, actors, musicians tend to ply their trades part-time—in some neighborhood center for the arts. The big time is about as big as the number of agents one can find in the Yellow Pages. But the “artist” can always take to the streets to fiddle for the tourists storm-trooping the holiday circuit.

When the cash runs out, it’s no longer a question of what he’d like to do, nor what he was trained to do, but whatever he can get. Any short-order trivia will suffice.

Some enroll in any kind of school (if it will bring a check in the mail) to take up the slack. Others find interim work in hospitals, in convalescent homes, doing typing, driving a cab. There is much demand for para-professionals and volunteers, but at little or no pay. An enterprising few rent their services as housecleaners and houseboys (the “fringe benefits” might be a bit galling, but it’s something). Others find that, hidden behind a switchboard or dressing windows, being stoned or half-loaded is difficult to detect, and the tedium is made more bearable.

The majority find a halfway house in tourism as bell-boys or desk or reservation clerks. The demand for dishwashers and cook’s helpers seems constant. For the “groovier” there’s the temporary burlesque of busboys, waiters, maitre d’s, bartenders. A deck in constant need of reshuffling. The essential requirement is, not the quality of their service, but their attractiveness and possible availability. They serve to chum the gay waters and draw in the bigfish spenders. These jobs seldom lead to “better things”; regardless of the young men’s hopes, they trade their twenties and early thirties for jobs they never really wanted in the first place.

Hustling—be it anywhere from stalking the corners of Powell and Geary streets, to dial-a-trick, to home-visit massage—is always an alternative, a solution. Perhaps the final solution.

For all the recent flak about the happy hooker, some people eat arsenic and ground glass and live to tell the tale. If one can maintain his base-line dignity, a minimum sense of self-value, knowing he serves the public like some sort of disposable diaper or a day-old tampax, so be it.

Much of the cityscape reveals a work force waiting to be rescued. After fifteen years, for the surviving casualty cases, there’s always Aid to the Totally Dependent.

A few ragamuffins actually do land their Prince Charmings and exit from the scene. Enough to keep the chorus line kicking with their fingers crossed, except that with each draining year Cinder Fella’s foot grows more gross. Patrol the Polk Street Pigale, cruise the Castro brick walk, follow the Folsom Street lovers’ lane, or cross the Haight Street River Styx. Encamp yourself in those Elysian Fields and observe closely the beaten army of step-sisters at parade rest.

“His head was shaven, and he was wearing dark glasses.” ●

The Matter

No, nothing’s the matter, I thought.
I’m just hung over, out of work, down
to my last ten dollars, living in a strange
city where people are murdered every
day and old men with cats named
Wilda die of cancer. What could
possibly be the matter?

FICTION by M. L. PEARSON

When my happy hour drunk had completely worn off and I sat wearily in front of the *Tonight Show* wondering whether or not it would be worth my while to go out again, a curious thing happened. My doorbell rang. It caught me by surprise, even frightened me. I was new to the city, knew literally no one, and had more or less safely isolated myself from past friends in past cities. (No one knew that Fred Baumgardner was living in Apartment 5D in the Wilshire District of Los Angeles. NO ONE.)

Well. . .

It wasn’t the phone. The phone would have meant Mother. “Do you have a job yet, or what?”

“No, Mom.”

“Have you been *looking*? Someone’s not going to just walk up to you on the street and offer you a job, you know. You have to go out and interview. Have you been doing that?”

She knew. But *no one else*.

My doorbell rang. The landlord?

“Do you have any pets?”

“No, sir.”

“We do not allow pets in this building. This is Wilda. She is not a pet. She is a person. I get lonely, and she keeps me company.”

My doorbell rang. Fighting down the familiar urge to bellow out, “WHO IS IT?” I made my way shakily down the hallway and into the living room.

I’ve never been one to worry about burglars or mad rapists or anything; so I swung open my door with as much vigor as I could manage, an open invitation to anyone with dark deeds on his mind. What loomed before me could not be described in one sentence. Or one paragraph. Even a novel would be pushing it.

“Could I use your phone, please? I locked myself out of my fuckin’ apartment, and I don’t have a copy.”

“A copy?”

“Do you mind, huh? Huh? You’re standin’ there lookin’ at me like I was a piece of shit or something in the hall, and all I wanna do is borrow your phone. Could I please?”

I motioned the creature in with my head.

“Thank you. I’ll leave a dime in your mailbox.”

The creature was good-looking, but in a scroungy, unpleasant way. His movements were agile and trained (like a dancer), but they contradicted his general appearance: He reminded me of a suntan lotion ad that had seen its better days. A weathered billboard on the Ventura Highway. He was young, but certainly no baby. Muscular, but not muscle-bound. Blond. More sunburned than tanned. His face was taut and slightly lined from too many afternoons at the beach.

“Pisses me off. Can’t stand stuff like lockin’ myself outta my apartment and cuttin’ myself shavin’ and stubbin’ my toe and stuff like that.” I had noticed that his accent was Chicago-gangsterish. Gruff and coarse. Guttural.

“Hello,” I said. The creature just looked at me.

“You’re gay, aren’t ya?” he said with a sly smile.

“I think I am. I’m not sure yet. I get picked up a lot. On the street. Sometimes I get money. Sometimes I don’t. It don’t matter to me one way or another, but sometimes I think these guys would be disappointed if I didn’t *ask* for it. You know what I mean?” He was dialing the phone furiously. I opened my mouth to speak but didn’t get the chance. “I like sex as much as the next guy, maybe more. I used to be real particular about what I’d stick it in, but these days. . .” The creature shrugged. “Things are different. I’m not a hustler, but I pose for pictures sometimes. It pays a lot of money, and I save it. I got a savings account.” He hung up the phone. “Fuckin’ line’s busy.”

“My name is Fred,” I said.

“Landlord’s in the hospital. Did you know that? He’s got cancer. He’s dyin’. Cancer depresses me. It always has. My mother died of cancer. Do you have a Coke or anything?” I went into the kitchen as he continued talking. “I was little. So I don’t remember much about it. I remember the hospital more than I remember my mother. To this day I get sick to my stomach when I smell disinfected stuff.” His voice became hazy as I moved into the kitchen. I observed that he didn’t attempt to raise his voice so that I might hear what he was saying. He kept talking in that same fast, uninvolved monotone that was obviously his style. I returned and found that he was continuing his conversation as if I hadn’t left at all: “. . . except for the time I had this dog that died. He got poisoned. I think the landlord did it. Son of a bitch. Him and that fuckin’ cat Wilda. I kept the dog quiet. He didn’t make no noise at all. Thank you.” I handed him the Coke. “How long have you been living here?”

“Three weeks.”

“Three weeks, huh? You kinda look like Ken. Has anyone ever told you?”

This threw me off balance. "Like who?"
"Ken. Ken. You know. Barbie, Ken, Midge, Allen. You don't look like you ever had a pimple in your life." The creature sat down in a rented chair next to the phone.

"Actually, I did have a pimple," I said grimly. "Once." "Once! Once!" The creature laughed. "That's hot. Ho. Ho. Ho. That's too much. Once!"

"Do you have a name?" This, as if to a child.
"Sure, I gotta name. Whatdya think?"
"What is it?" I asked, with the patience of Job.
"It's Bernard," he said, still laughing.

His smile vanished. "My friends call me Bernard." No retreat. I had hit a sore spot. "Oh." I changed the subject. "Is that all you do for a living? Pose for pictures?"

"No, I do lots of things. Bartender, painter. I was in an underground movie once." He was watching to see my reaction. "Tom's Hot Rocks."

"Were you Tom?" I asked, my face an impassive blank.

"No. No, I just had a small part." For some reason this struck me as outrageously funny, and I laughed. Bernard tensed a bit, trying to decide whether or not I was laughing at him. He shrugged and grinned. "I made three hundred dollars for one afternoon's work. Not bad, huh?"

"No. Not bad. You can't beat it with a stick." Bernard's eyes narrowed. "Funny you should use that particular phrase because in the middle of this flick Tom gets tied up to a tree with a piece of nylon cord and I step out from nowhere and start beatin' him with this stick. I beat him black and blue. All over. His balls. His stomach. His tits. It's a very important part in the film because it's at this point that Tom (that's the hero) decides he's not only homosexual but S&M as well." Here, a pause. "It colors his whole life."

"I can imagine." Bernard began dialing on the phone again. "There's only one other key to my apartment running around LA that I gave to this chick who lived with me last summer." "Who's taking care of the building while the landlord's sick?"

"Beats the shit outta me. It could be old lady Stanford in 2C. We don't have a super as such, and the maid won't be in till tomorrow." He put the receiver down. "Still busy. Sooo. . . that means, unless I get Helen on the phone, I'll be up the creek." His mouth turned down at the corners. "I won't have a place to stay tonight."

"Don't you have any friends you could stay with?" "No."

This did not sit well with me. "Well, the bars are still open. Maybe you could. . ."

"No way I'm gonna walk to some dreary bar and stand around and wait for pot luck. I got pride"

"You could stay here." The words were out before I knew it. They hung like ice in the air, and I hoped he wouldn't acknowledge them.

"You mean it? Could I? You wouldn't mind? I really hate to call Helen—she's such a cunt."

No turning back now, I thought. "No, I don't mind." "You got any grass? We'll turn on. Have a party. There's a great old Joan Crawford movie on TV tonight. You got a TV?"

"Yes. It's in the bedroom."
"We can fool around later if you feel like it. You like to get screwed?"

This was getting ridiculous. I didn't want this person to be in my apartment. I didn't want to smoke any grass. And I hated Joan Crawford. ("The very idea, Mr. Weatherly!") Who was this person? I stared at him.

Bernard bristled. "You're givin' me that look again like when you first opened the door. Is something the matter?"

No, nothing's the matter, I thought. I'm just hung over, out of work, down to my last ten dollars, living in a strange city where people are murdered every day and old men with cats named Wilda die of cancer. What could possibly be the matter?

"Would you rather I leave?"
Yes. Yes. Please leave. Let me go back to Johnny Carson and black coffee and solitude.

"I'll leave if you want me to."
I forced a smile. "No. Don't leave. Make yourself at home."

The creature took off his shirt and tossed it on the sofa. "You never answered me about sex. Do you like to get screwed?"

Get screwed! Ha! Me. Me, who throws a fit when the doctor prescribes suppositories. Me. Get screwed. Me, who buys Preparation H by the 15-ounce tube and eats bananas daily to ward off constipation.

"You hesitated. You didn't answer right away. You had to think about it."

"We'll see." (God only knows where that came from.) Bernard took off his shoes. "I think I may have athlete's feet but I got some powder in my apartment if you get infected."

I went to the front door and locked it.
"I'm kinda horny tonight. I been takin' a lot of Vitamin E lately. I rub it on my skin, too."

I walked into the bedroom and changed channels on my television set. Joan Crawford was looking pensive at some man in a tuxedo.

"WHERE'S YOUR BATHROOM? I GOTTA PEE."

I sat down on the edge of the bed and unlaced my shoes. Although the thought of going job hunting the next day did not appeal to me, I nonetheless set my alarm clock for 8:30 a.m. and turned on the skinny yellow lamp that sprinkled light across the room and into the hall. It was going to be one of those nights.

M. L. Pearson is twenty-four, from Houston, Texas, and an almost-college graduate with brown hair and blue eyes. He's a full Aquarius. He's had two one-act plays produced in an experimental theater in Houston and another in process set tentatively for April.

Inside Mr. Williams



(Well, Almost)

by JAMES ARMSTRONG
Photos by DAVID WAGGONER

Mr. Tennessee Williams has written a number of successful plays, among them two or three that—whether time will be kind to them or not—will certainly survive. Because the arts in America now are probably at their lowest level ever and because Success now reigns supreme in our cultural pantheon, we are preconditioned to exalt whoever manages to attain any success. Williams has had much success, though none of it recent. With very few exceptions, we admire his plays, while making excuses for their shortcomings. Williams's primary strength lies in his ability to write *roles* rather than plays.

All this being the case, it is difficult, though necessary, to stand back a bit and wonder whether all that success really means greatness, or simply a lack of genuine competition from anybody other than Arthur Miller and William Inge in the '40s and '50s, and now from Edward Albee. It has been a long time since America had more than two functioning "serious" dramatists at any one time.

With such thoughts in my head, I attended the press conference that A.C.T. held for Williams the day before the opening of *This Is (an Entertainment)*. The press representatives were—with one exception!—enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and respectful, and their questions, by and large, were interesting and cogent.

The queries may have been cogent but not all the answers were.

HALF-ANSWERED QUESTIONS

Williams toddled in, wearing a pair of burgundy trousers, a snappy glen plaid sport jacket, and a nattily knotted necktie, and beaming affably in all directions. If he is indeed as shy as reported, he masks it well, for he was completely charming and seemingly quite at ease. He was witty, amusing, urbane, and very cool. Never mind his fame, he came across as a marvelous person to spend an evening with or take a trip with. However, a lot of the time he only half-answered questions, sometimes he dodged them entirely, and occasionally his replies seemed to be responses to no question that had been put. It made for a little confusion.

It was, all in all, a curiously nonproductive hour, possibly because he had been through it all the night before. He didn't give much away about the new play beyond that it marks a complete departure in style, if not in content, from anything he had done before, though admitting its kinship to *Camino Real* (1953), and that it fits into no definite category. A fantasy, he called it. "My work has gone through a metamorphosis, and so have I," he said. He has certainly done that. More



revealingly than perhaps he knew, at one point he told us, "I wrote it for my friends, like all my plays!" And: "Oh yes. There are lots of messages! . . . It's a *light tragedy*." The flippancy could have been fatigue. After all, he was but twelve hours distant from "An Evening with Tennessee Williams," at the Geary. Facing and fielding questions from a theaterful must have been a strain, and now here was the Press with many of the same questions.

PERFORMANCE PREFERENCES BY WILLIAMS

In Williams's opinion, Marlon Brando is our greatest living actor. The films that were made from his plays were nearly all warped out of shape by the prevailing codes of censorship. *Summer and Smoke* had to have a happy ending tacked on, which simply destroyed the sense of it. His favorite movie adapted from one of his own works was *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*, and he preferred Vivien Leigh's performance in that to her Blanche, in *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

He had nothing but praise for the A.C.T. people who were able to cope with all his changes in *This Is*, which is posited as a play in progress, rather than as a finished work, and a learning experience both for A.C.T. and for the playwright. (I cannot help but consider this as nothing more than a gross sort of advance copout. Williams and A.C.T. are hedging in case the play is a flop—which it is—and in case the public pays top prices to see an unfinished play that may or may not be improved upon!) Even the title is mutable.



Why did all his plays have female roles as the leads? He ducked that one entirely, only stating that *Night of the Iguana's* lead is a male.

His greatest compulsion in life is to work, to write. "Every morning I get up and say to myself, 'Well, what are we going to write about today?' And if nothing particularly is in train, I just write anything at all, without knowing where it might be going. Sometimes I think it's good and pursue it, and it turns into a story or a play!"

There were many references to his recently published *Memoirs*, about which he sounded somewhat apologetic. Doubleday, he stated, had used its own judgment in cutting it and had, without his knowledge, deleted much that was merely amusing or interesting, concentrating on his sex life. When asked how a person of his importance could, etc., he shrugged and chuckled and then looked suddenly stern and replied, "I turned the manuscript over to them, and just. . ."—several more shrugs and a bit of hand waving—" . . . trusted them to do the right thing with it." That struck a lot of us as quite, quite unlikely.

Did he ever suffer from writer's block? "Yes," he replied, clasping his hands and looking up at the ceiling with a broad grin. "Oh yes. Every so often I am typing away, and there comes one of those *terrible* moments when I stop and say to myself, 'What if you can't go on and *do* it anymore?' And then I just take another drink and go on and do it!"

Sitting there, listening to one of America's foremost playwrights in the flesh, did produce a certain thrill. For the unquestioning enthusiast, it was like



being a music lover and quizzing Stravinsky. But less committed souls, such as myself, bearing in mind that Williams's last good (and possibly his best) play was *Night of the Iguana*, in 1961, waited in vain for anything truly incisive, enlightening, or insightful, and came away disturbingly reminded of the amiable fuddlements of the late Robert Benchley, whom in his mustached incarnation Williams now physically resembles. (This hit strongly when he got hilariously tangled among three pairs of spectacles, none of which seemed to be the right pair of spectacles!)

Asked about turning any more of his plays into films, or about writing directly for films, he replied that, in view of the fact that the cultural climate has changed and censorship is no longer a problem, he would be delighted to do both. *Baby Doll* flopped because he had to pull too many punches.

ABOUT WRITING A HOMOSEXUAL PLAY

Which reminded me that, quite apart from the question of whether Williams is a "great" playwright or not, he is undeniably an "important" playwright, if for no other reason than that he was probably the major influence on the path toward a rational and honest portrayal of people's sexuality on stage.

Inevitably he was asked why he has never written a homosexual play. He was, in fact, asked it several times, and each time he ducked. "I don't want to seem to set the homosexual apart," was his most direct response.

I don't think he is *interested* in doing such a play, and



very likely he has become tired of the assumption that, since he is Tennessee Williams and now an avowed (even over-avowed!) homosexual, it is somehow his responsibility to do something for the Movement. Well, if he doesn't want to, God knows he doesn't have to.

"The homosexual experience in America is tragically humorous," he said at one point. At another he said, "I wish the various lib movements wouldn't go to such bizarre extremes to state their cases. They do more harm than good and often give the public the impression that homosexuals are freaks."

From the things said at this interview, and from statements in other interviews I have read, I would deduce that Williams's sexuality is a problem, possibly a real bane, and it is wrong as well as vain to demand of this homosexual artist some art about homosexuality.

Hard-core activists will rage that his position carries a duty. But, unless Tennessee Williams wakes up some morning, takes a drink, and finds that he feels like writing a homosexual play, the activists can just rage on. The intelligent artist does what he must do, and Tennessee Williams is a very intelligent artist.

He is also very polite. Asked whether he would allow an all-male production of one of his plays, he merely blinked a moment in astonishment and then calmly and firmly said, "No. It would destroy the play." What a morning after!

James Armstrong is the San Francisco correspondent for several publications, including After Dark and Dance Magazine.

Right Here, Right Now.

ac'tū-āl-i-zā'tion, n.
A making real or actual.

by RICHARD PIRO

One of the heavier effects of going through the Fisher-Hoffman Process of therapy (*Vector*, December 1975) is the sometimes unpleasant task of placing a relationship under a microscope and dealing with whatever comes up. It wasn't long before I realized that I had "selected" my California friends for the same reason I had selected my lovers—the sad, sick need to suffer in order to feel good. Carol was such a relationship. While I considered her my "best friend" in Berkeley, I ignored the amount of pain and suffering I willingly sought after, which she even more willingly granted. (Why is it so many gay men have that kind of a friend?)

Upon completion of the Process, I performed some painful self-surgery and told Carol I no longer wished to continue the relationship under any circumstances.

Three months of no contact later Carol called early one morning:

ME: Carol, I'm just rushing out the door to go to work. I assume this call is related to your having finished Actualizations last night? What is it you want to tell me?

CAROL: I just wanted to thank you, that's all.

ME: Thank me? For dumping you? Where's that coming from?

CAROL: Because you were the only one of my so-called friends who refused to support my bullshit and had the courage to just walk away.

THAT'S HOW I GOT THERE

This was heavy! The three months of no-contact vanished, and we chatted for close to an hour, ending with her inviting me to "share" her Actualizations reorientation experience later in the week.

I was impressed. Carol looked like, spoke like, and was obviously thinking like a new woman, and for a

heavy-duty ex-Bronx lady, married and the mother of two children, this certainly warranted immediate investigation.

The few people who had heard of ACTUALIZATIONS were vague about just what the experience was all about. It was common knowledge, however, that Stewart Emery was Werner Earhard's number-two man at *est* and that his defection to start his own trip, Actualizations, was somewhat of a scandal in the awareness circles. Needless to say, Stewart's following (those several thousand *est* graduates he had "trained") has been constituting the majority of the Actualizations workshop participants. Not having been through *est*, and carrying around a large load of feelings concerning the *est* philosophies, I knew this negativity would have to be bypassed in order for me to be objective.

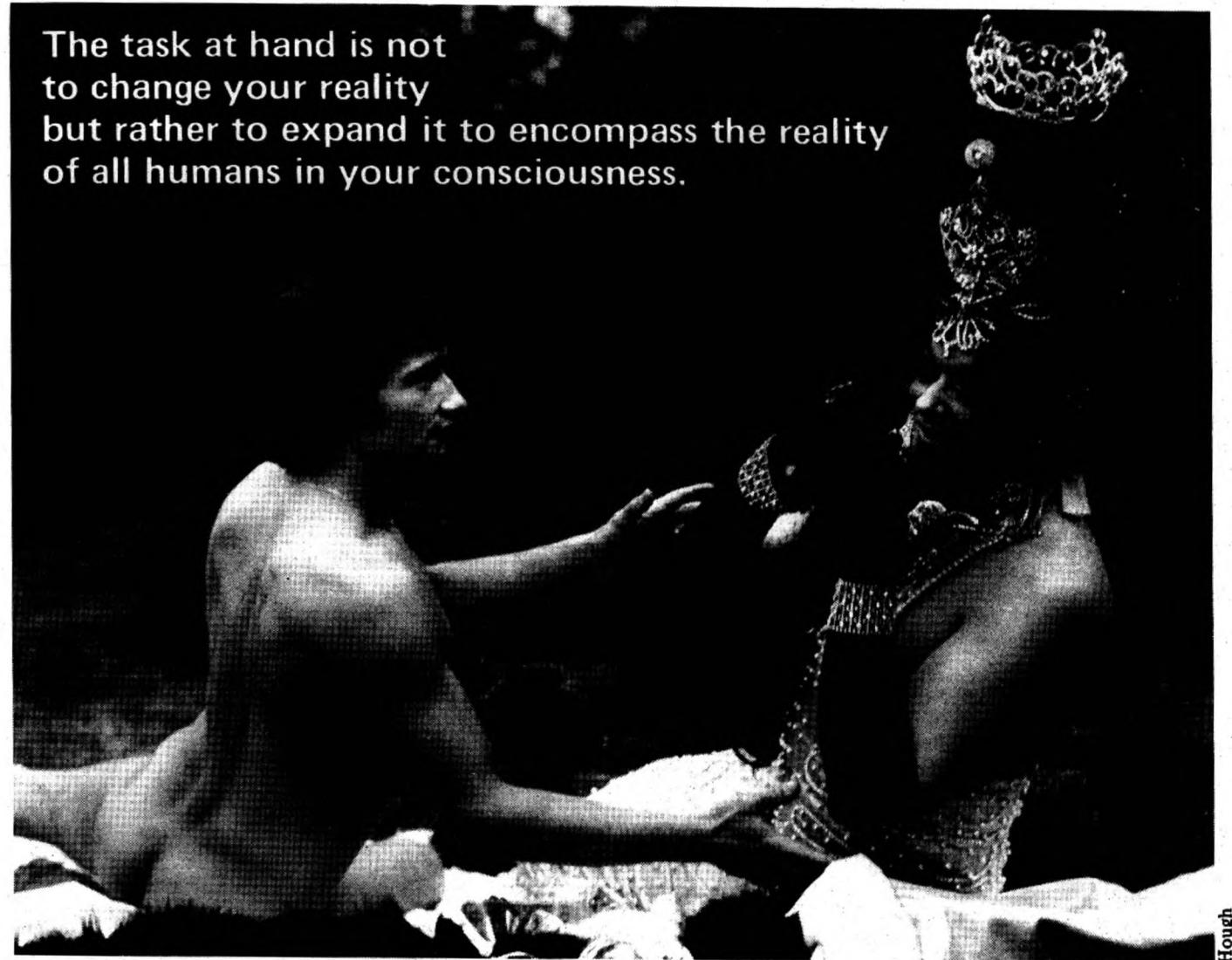
At 7:30 on the night of Carol's reorientation, there were about 300 persons milling around one of the classier San Francisco hotels, with charming women directing persons to seats (right out of the *est* book of procedure—STOP IT and stay open, I ordered my head). What was immediately striking was the amount of joy splashing the area in near overkill. No one was hard "selling" Actualizations; everyone seemed to look absolutely on center, especially the number of good-looking men I assumed to be upfront gay.

Perhaps it was impulse. Perhaps it was the need to support Carol, who leaped upon the stage as soon as Stewart asked who wished to "share" and who discussed our emotional reunion. Perhaps it was Stewart's brilliant use of words (I'm such a sucker for rhetoric). Perhaps it was a desire to hasten the growth that began with the Fisher-Hoffman Process. Or maybe I am just "sucked into the seminar circuit" and a latent therapy addict, but... I signed the book, paid the \$185 (it, like everything else, has gone up to \$225), and two weeks before my workshop started I again was forced to drop Carol because she wouldn't call me up at least every other day. When we had another showdown, on the eve of my Actualizations weekend training, I agreed to keep final decisions open, luckily. Okay. That's how I got there, and why is it so damned difficult for me to share my experience?

WHAT'S THE FORM OF ACTUALIZATIONS?

Actualizations begins on a Thursday night at 7:30 and runs until nearly midnight, followed by a 9 a.m. to midnight session on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. It is limited to exactly 100 persons (of whom in my workshop fifteen were gay). The form consists of one thing—sharing, about which I'll speak in a moment. The first night consists of 100 persons getting up on a platform/stage (a heavy experience for some) and simply stating who they are, what they do for a living, and why they're there. Just as one of the basic structures of the Fisher-Hoffman Process is writing (as a writer, I breezed through that part), I expected that, as an ex-school-teacher used to addressing hundreds of people from a stage, I would breeze through this, too. *Not so!* I knew enough about Actualizations to be able to act out the

The task at hand is not
to change your reality
but rather to expand it to encompass the reality
of all humans in your consciousness.



statement: "Being is more perfect than trying to be." I resolved *not* to put out my credentials, a routine I'd been using all my life to get between *them* and me. "If you don't like me, it's because you're fucked up since I am all of the following wonderful things, which have been validated by national media, etc., etc." Twelve years of the Big Apple taught me the credentials game, and I became a winner (losing, of course, where it really hurt—in relationships, but winning in the arena).

EXPERIENCING EXPERIENCE

The key word in sharing Actualizations is *experience*, and no matter how many times we are told something we can't deal with it adequately until we experience it ourselves. (Which is why writing *about* this trip has a built-in self-destruct attitude. All I can do is tell you about it and I need to contribute more than that.) Thus, when the majority of the 100 persons begin to experience themselves and experience others experiencing themselves, a magic invades the space that is "the miracle" Stewart promises "might but usually does" happen mid-

way into the workshop.

I'M A FORM JUNKIE!

The most dramatic event for me was the experience of being a form junkie. There is no data in Actualizations. The sole routine consists of persons getting up on the stage and sharing their reality—whatever, the goodies, the shitties; the hassles; the frustrations; the unrealities; what's working in your life and what isn't. When it is necessary for data to be presented to help a person, from the back of the room, Stewart holds forth and shares his incredible brain with the group. One such time (everyone's sharing touches everyone else) he was expounding on how many of us are willing to give up the experience for the form. Carol was a perfect case in point. I love her. She loves me. We enjoy being in each other's company. The experience is that we have a loving/supportive relationship. The *form* is that I demand we have daily phone contact. The *form* is that she invite me to dinner at least once a week. The *form* is that she should pledge to my loyalties and stop buying her dope

What I want you to do is meet yourself and fall in love."

—Stewart Emery

from my ex-lover. I was ready, willing, and able to give up the *experience* (our loving relationship) for the *form* (telephone routine). From this concept I realized that a bed did not contribute to my well-being if it was unmade (form); a refrigerator with frost on the freezer was a downer (form); I left teaching not because I was no longer effective, but the kids refused to sit in tight, neat rows (form). At this point I raised my hand to signal my desire to share, was acknowledged by Stewart, ran to the platform, and shouted, "I'm a form junkie, I'm a form junkie!" It was me. It was heavy being on the stage because I was there *only* being me minus the credentials.

Gulping, I paused, let the rush run down, and then started falling into a kind of mental chasm. I looked down at the ninety-nine faces and the sheer force of supportive/loving energy coming off the group—an almost visual aura—carved away the last remaining crud that has stood between me and *them* for all my life. I wasn't trying to be. I was. And later the amount of verbal and physical love was, and still is, buoying me up and keeping me bobbing.

An essential difference between *est* and Actualizations is the fact that you don't have to become another person to get your life to work. The task at hand is not to change your reality but rather to expand it to encompass the reality of all humans in your consciousness. Within our training an upfront hooker managed to get it on with a middle-aged Jesus freak. They found each other's reality and took the plunge, which electrified the rest of the group.

GETTING OUT OF A RELATIONSHIP THAT HURTS

One of the contracts I made with myself before Actualizations was to try to deal with the guilt of having remained with my lover long after I knew the relationship was not supporting to either of us. I couldn't get out, and once I did get out I couldn't let go. The Fisher-Hoffman Process wasn't very much of a help here. The reason was so simple. We were both winners. Stewart places the problem in his usual neat brilliance when he revealed:

THE EVOLUTION OF A CONDITIONED REALITY

EVENT: Failure to contribute joy (as a very young child to parents).

DECISION: I'm not perfect.

PROBLEM: What do I do to please?

SOLUTION: Be who I think will please [a false identity].

EVENT: Failure to please.

DECISION: I'm not okay.

PROBLEM: What do I do to be okay?

SOLUTION: Pretend to be perfect [another false identity].

EVENT: Failure to win.

DECISION: I can't win.

PROBLEM: How do I not lose?

SOLUTION: MAKE SURE NO ONE WINS.

(Don't play, resent ability, destroy perfection, don't accept support, don't contribute, etc.)

It was so simple! We were both winners and remained in this destructive relationship simply because we refused to grant each other the possibility of *winning*. Simple. Noted. Forgotten. CLEARED!!!

So the weekend went. Concept after concept, experience after experience. If you can't play in your relationships or your job or anywhere in your life, you simply *get on with it* and go where you can play. A plant under ideal conditions (in the greenhouse) will grow brilliantly. Remove any single condition (light, air, water) from it and it will die. How many of us are dying daily because we can't take the three steps into the greenhouse? Given the loving/supportive environment of 100 people, many saw those steps, in themselves and through the ninety-nine others, and moved into their own greenhouse.

I've been moving through life like a Sherman tank with the world's most sophisticated weapons poised in readiness to seek and destroy all who interfere with my chosen direction. When in doubt, shoot to kill. After my Actualizations workshop, the tank was stripped down to four soft wheels, and I'm boogying through life with total confidence that I can confront persons, places, and things from a positive energy place; *not making persons wrong* when their reality is not my reality. (And I am having a fantastic time doing it, play, play, play. Yes!

BEING. THAT'S WHAT

In addition to experiencing my form addiction, I realized that throughout my life I've never *been*. Every act of being was sandwiched between something that had happened or was about to happen. Even going to bed was a prelude to getting up and going to work the next morning. Watching *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* was something I did *before* going to sleep. Going to Symphony Chorus rehearsals was something I did *before* watching *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*. Being was a state that eluded me, and, since Actualizations, the state of being (as well as being me) has completely zapped my need of doing dope. I don't want to blur these rainbow edges. I'm having too good a time playing. Already I am seeing patterns and colors where I saw nothing before. I am hearing and smelling and tasting in a different dimension. And when I'm *being* the experience is so complete that considerations of the results of the moment are irrelevant. I'm playing and enjoying moments that flow now instead of sputtering.

I met myself and I fell in love.

When I borrowed copies of Elinor Wylie's poems from the Forbes Library in Northampton, Massachusetts, I observed that they had not been checked out since the 1930s. Although she had been read frequently during the Depression, no one had seemed to care to read Wylie for almost one-third century. I commented on this to the librarian, who observed with wit and precision, "She needs an airing."

And an airing is exactly what I feel Catullus needs, for he has been semi-closeted for at least 600 years. There has been what appears to be a conspiracy on the part of scholars to hide Catullus's sexuality in their translation and in the presentation of critical and biographical information.

As a consequence, gay readers today are lucky to even have access to the poetry of Catullus, for we very nearly did not have that body of work at all. In the second decade of this century Karl Harrington traced the Roman poet's book through the ages and found that there must have been only a limited number of Catullus manuscripts when the Roman Empire broke up. By the fifth century, very few writers, perhaps no more than two, demonstrate what looks like some direct knowledge of the work of the poet.

In the sixth century an African poet, Corippus, apparently knew something about Catullus. Otherwise, knowledge of his work seems to have disappeared from sight for several centuries. Critics do not often accuse churchmen of having been instrumental in destroying copies of Catullus's poems, possibly because tracing what happened is easier than estimating why it happened. And what happened was that early in the fourteenth century, several hundred years after the disappearance of the works of Catullus, according to Harrington, "a single mouldering manuscript was rescued from oblivion."

Legend has it that the last manuscript of the writing of Catullus was found plugging up a wine cask. Perhaps this is untrue, but Kristen von Preisler-Bomben points out

Blowing Catullus's Cover 2,000 Years Later

by DAN ALLEN

the appropriateness of the story when she observes that the Italians say, "If a legend is not true, at least it is told well."

The lone copy that was found during the late Middle Ages disappeared permanently (and somewhat mysteriously), but some time during the next century, the 1400s, copies had been made and these are now in Oxford, Paris, and Rome. These are the chief foundations of our twentieth-century text.

Why did we nearly lose the writings of Catullus? My feeling is that his sexuality has been frightening to scholars, biographers, critics, and teachers. As a consequence, they have let his work disappear and have often busily tried to bury the truth. That is lying, isn't it? Ironically, the truth, which can bring freedom, can be very threatening to puritanical or vulnerable scholars.

THE IVORY CLOSET

One does not have to look very far back to see the fact that motivates scholars. Gilbert Highet in *Poets in a Landscape*, which was published in 1957, says, "It is extraordinarily difficult to read and discuss one of Catullus's poems of passionate love in any classroom; and still more difficult if, two or three pages away, the readers can see another poem which begins and ends with a revolting obscenity."

Teaching Catullus in a gay literature class over the past three years at City College in San Francisco, I find Highet to be, not only timorous and puritanical, but also dangerously homophobic. And he

is wrong: the poems of passionate love are easy and delightful to read and discuss in the classroom.

Two results of puritanism and of homophobia among scholars are mistranslation, which smacks of censorship, and a gross bias in portraying the biography of the Roman poet. Catullus has been bowdlerized so that his life and works come to us as a whole network of spuriously documented and undocumented assertions, which I call *lies*.

Fear of sexuality has caused translators to be evasive, desexing, and otherwise mistranslating the gutsy Roman's demotic diction. While some scholars seem to be appalled puritans, others are waggish dons, intent on keeping any semblance of what Catullus said in its Latin ivory tower, a poisonous and duplicitous place for sophisticated versions of sexist, barnyard talk.

Take as an example Poem 16. Only during the last five years has there been an English translation of this poem that appears to be similar to the original. Reney Myers and Robert Ormsby give as their first line: "I'll fuck you both right up the ass." Translators had handled this line differently in the past.

In 1893 Elmer Merrill published Catullus untranslated from the original Latin in the only brief, sufficiently annotated edition of the poems up till that time. A footnote on Poem 16 had to suffice: "The verbs are not to be understood in the literal sense, but only as conveying vague thoughts, in the gross language of that day."



**'You, both of you,
I shall * you and ** you.'**

Merrill has shown earlier in the same edition that he is deeply distressed that someone, some place, even a couple of millennia before might be enjoying a sexual act. He says in the Introduction, "Virulence of language in invective, especially in the use of terms applied to sexual impurity, was by no means accompanied among the ancients by corresponding intensity of feeling, and is often to be understood as formal and not literal."

One gets the impression that Merrill feels that "fuck" is all right as a violent threat as in "Fuck you, you goddamn son of a bitch." The expression is *verboten*, however as a literal act as in, "Every time we fuck each other, I feel wonderful."

A version of Poem 16, published in 1875 by Theodore Martin, translates what Myers and Ormsby call "fucking up the ass," as "I'll trounce you...and you my wrath shall dearly rue."

Hight, the critic who admitted that he considered Catullus to be revoltingly obscene, translates the promise of Poem 16 as "You, both of you, I shall * you and ** you."

(As I told the gay literature class, I'm sure I'd rather be double-asterisked than single-asterisked.) Hight sounds hilarious when he asserts that, after Catullus has written his last poem to Clodia Metelli Celer (Lesbia), "He can hope for nothing in the future except a succession of orgies."

THIS IS YOUR LIFE, CATULLUS

There is little, if any, basis for the universally held opinion that the Lesbia poems were written to and about Clodia Metelli Celer. In nearly all of the books about Catullus and in every introduction of his poems, an extraordinary amount of space is given to the grossly undocumented story of his love for Clodia. (M. Rothstein is an exception: in "Catullus and Lesbia," written in 1923, he says Lesbia wasn't Clodia, but rather her younger sister.)

The only documentation we have for the real name of Lesbia is that Apuleius, about 200 years after the death of Catullus, said that the real name of Lesbia was

Clodia. From that scholars ran to wild conjecture about Clodia, which they published as facts. We just can't trust data about Catullus. The only three external data we have, besides a few new facts connecting the poet with Verona, are Suetonius's report that Catullus apologized to Caesar for lampooning him, Apuleius' conjecture about Lesbia, and Jerome's assertion that Catullus died in 57 B.C. (Internal evidence proves that Catullus had to be alive in 55 B.C. So it is obvious that external data are erroneous.)

Not until 1968 did anyone seem to question the whole fabrication of Catullus's love for Clodia. In that year, R.G.C. Levens pointed out, "Writers on Catullus, in this century as in the last, have seldom hesitated to give confident accounts of his career, tracing the course of his love-life." Those accounts come from one very questionable statement by Apuleius that Lesbia was a woman named Clodia!

No one seems to want to do more than mention Catullus's love for Juventius. Conjecture about who Juventius was is nearly nonexistent. My opinion is that Lesbia was the name used as a cover for the young man whom Catullus loved before beginning his own version of coming out of the closet. After he was further out, he used the name Juventius (translatable as "Chickie") for the young man he later loved. Lesbia, then, is for Catullus what Albertine is for Marcel Proust.

By choosing the name Lesbia, Catullus was not only acknowledging an admiration for and a debt to Sappho, but he was also having his little joke. Giving a camp name (female name) to a male does not surprise any man who swished his way through the 1950s. Externalizing the prejudice we have internalized, we have at times been as sexist (for example, here where women are ridiculed) as our heterosexual counterparts have been.

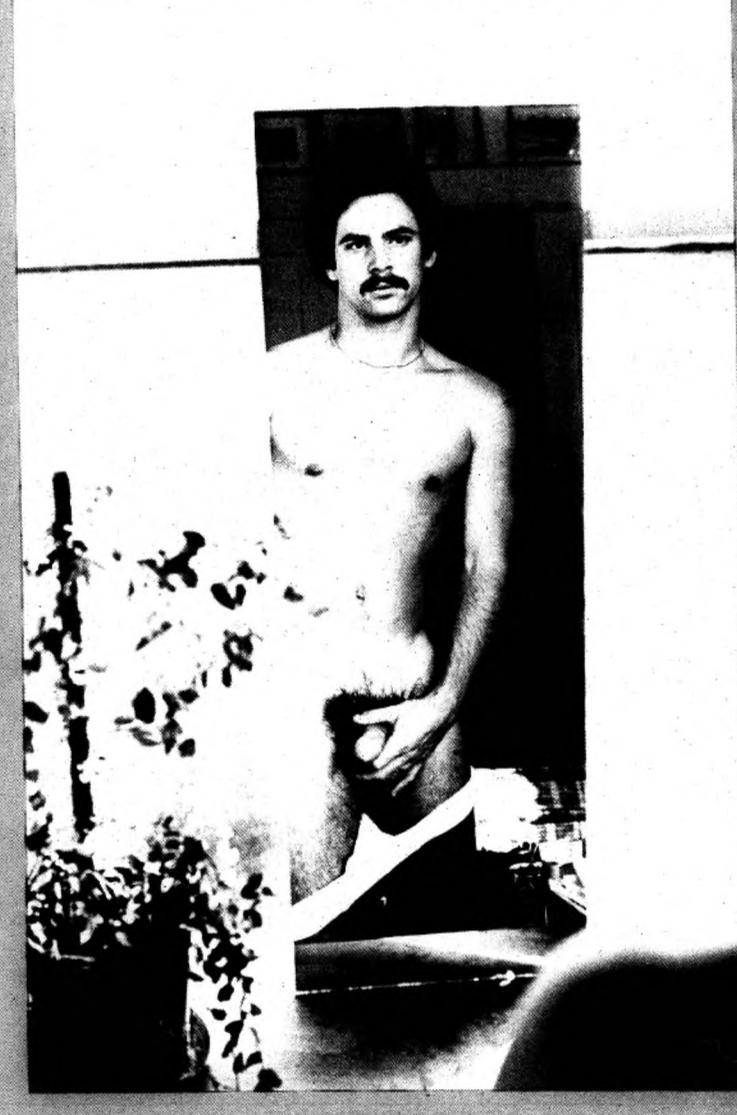
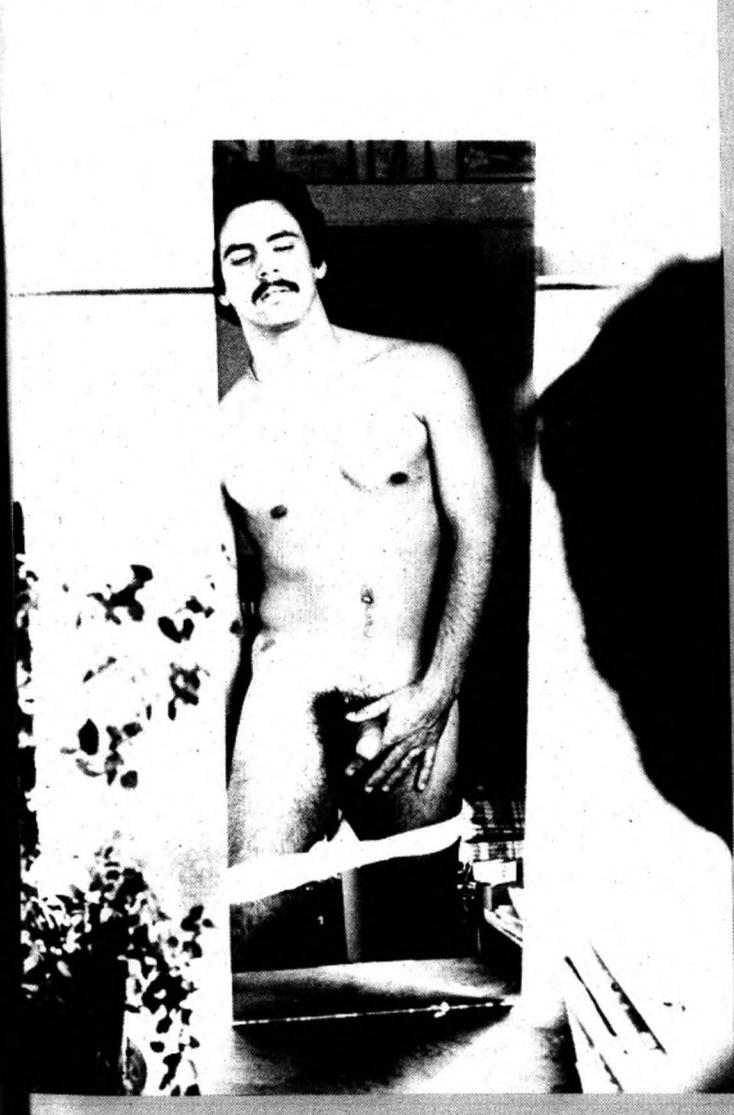
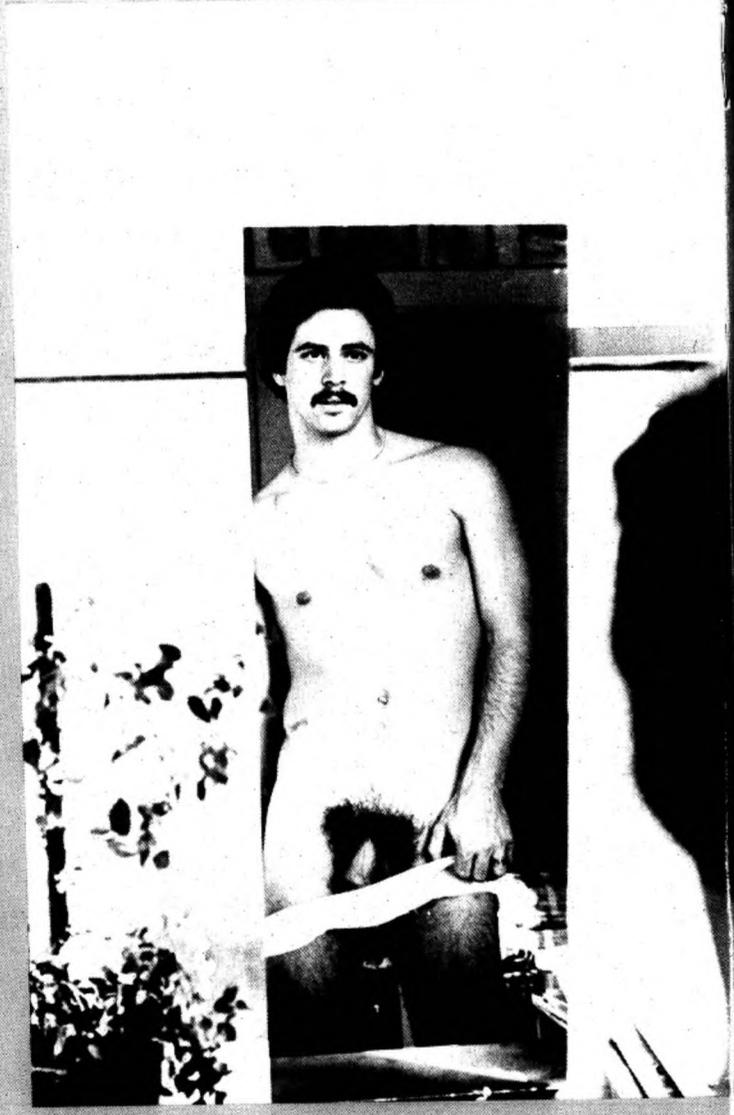
To complicate approaching Catullus, then, one must deal not only with the sexism of his biographers, teachers, translators, and

— Please turn to page 35 —

STEGGIE

photography by STEPHEN COLLIER





critics, but also with the sexism of Catullus himself (to say nothing of the reader's sexism). At times Catullus appears to be an adventurous bisexual, and at other times he seems verbally sadomasochistic. When he writes to Juventius, he is an uncomplicated gay man, simple and warm and moving:

Juventius, if I could kiss
Your eyes
A million times, I'd seek
Those honeyed flowers
Again and yet again....

But more often he is quite homophobic. He deals in epithets that indicate that every man who arouses his anger is the Latin equivalent for the most pejorative term for *queer* that he can find. As with his scholars, the sex act is for Catullus an act of violence used to intimidate and defile. Fucking and sucking are seldom, indeed if ever, pleasurable and good in themselves.

Consequently, a thorough reading of his poetry can leave the reader appalled at Catullan sexism and horrified at the characteristically Roman examples of bias according to class, appearance, and age. But prejudice based on sex attitudes is what I want to examine a little more thoroughly here.

ORAL LATIN

In Poem 80, for instance, he treats oral sex as a degrading act for an acquaintance with whom he is angry. We can see Catullus's attitude and the positions of translators by looking at a few editions of this poem.

Myers & Ormsby, 1970: Is that a truthful tale/That sucking cock is what you love to do?/Poor Victor's busted balls show why you're pale,/your lips as well, smeared with his milked-out goo.

Peter Whigham, 1966: You swallow the taut tumescence of a man's stomach./ One thing is certain/ that Virro's strained thighs/ & your lips flecked with semen/cry out in uni-

son to onlookers.

Horace Gregory, 1931: Then all these stories that they tell of your perversions/are truth itself;/look at his buttocks, see how they've been abused/ witness his lips, they are still moist with evidence of/worse crimes.

Merrill, 1893: (The poem appears only in original Latin, but in his footnote he says, "The allusion is doubtless to the defilement of his lips by unnatural lust.")

Martin, 1875: (He skips from Poem 79 to Poem 82, avoiding the knotty problem completely!)

John Nott, 1795: Too much thou revelest in obscene delight./ Fame whispers right, for thy parched lips must show/Thy lustful flame; nay, Virro tells it, too.

To turn, then, to a side of Catullus that I've only suggested, I must deal with the fact that the poet is almost as rabid in his misogyny as he is in his misandry. (To show you the position of today's society, I'd like to send you on an errand trying to find *misandry* in any of our dictionaries. Scholars just cannot comprehend anyone hating males, perhaps because our society doesn't allow this.)

Catullus calls women prostitutes, and he seldom mentions a woman as anything but a sex object on whom the sex act is invariably performed violently. The sole exception is Lesbia, and she is an exception only occasionally. The gender of Lesbia is, as I've suggested, not nearly so clear to me as to past readers of Catullus. Hasn't any other reader felt with me that there is sometimes something insipid about Lesbia? Reading the poems about her can be not unlike being fed on a diet consisting solely of boiled potatoes.

My cynicism does not allow me to be ecstatic about that stupid bird Lesbia kept for a pet. When the pretty bird dies, I feel a kinship with Oscar Wilde when he observes that it would take a person with a

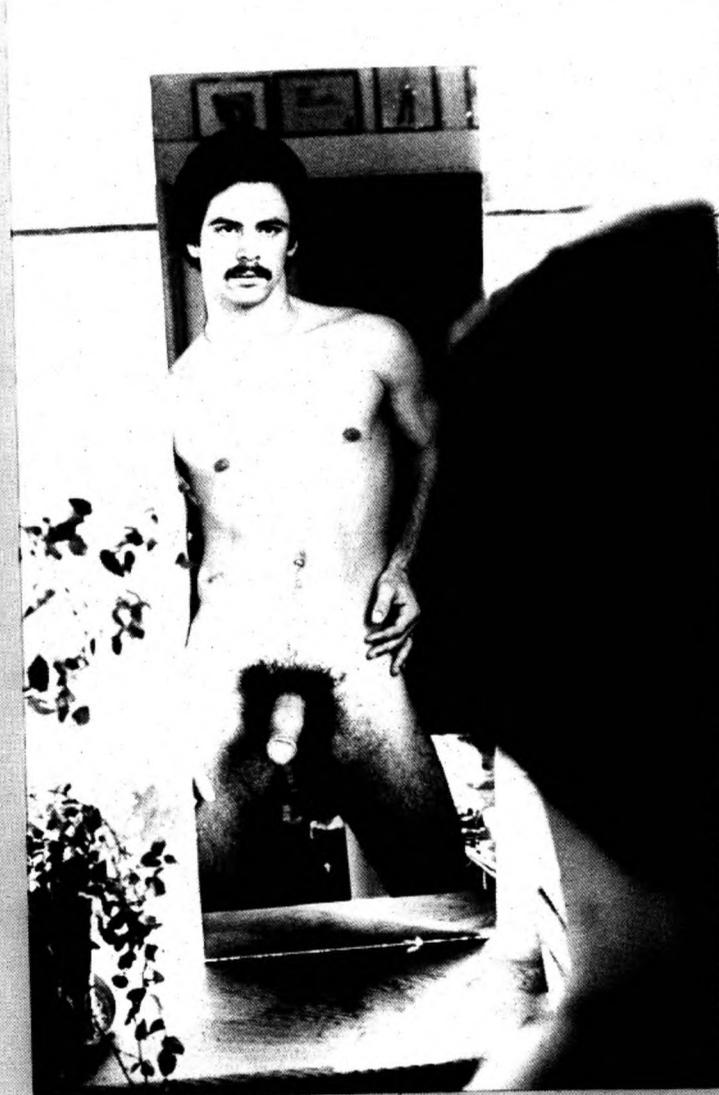
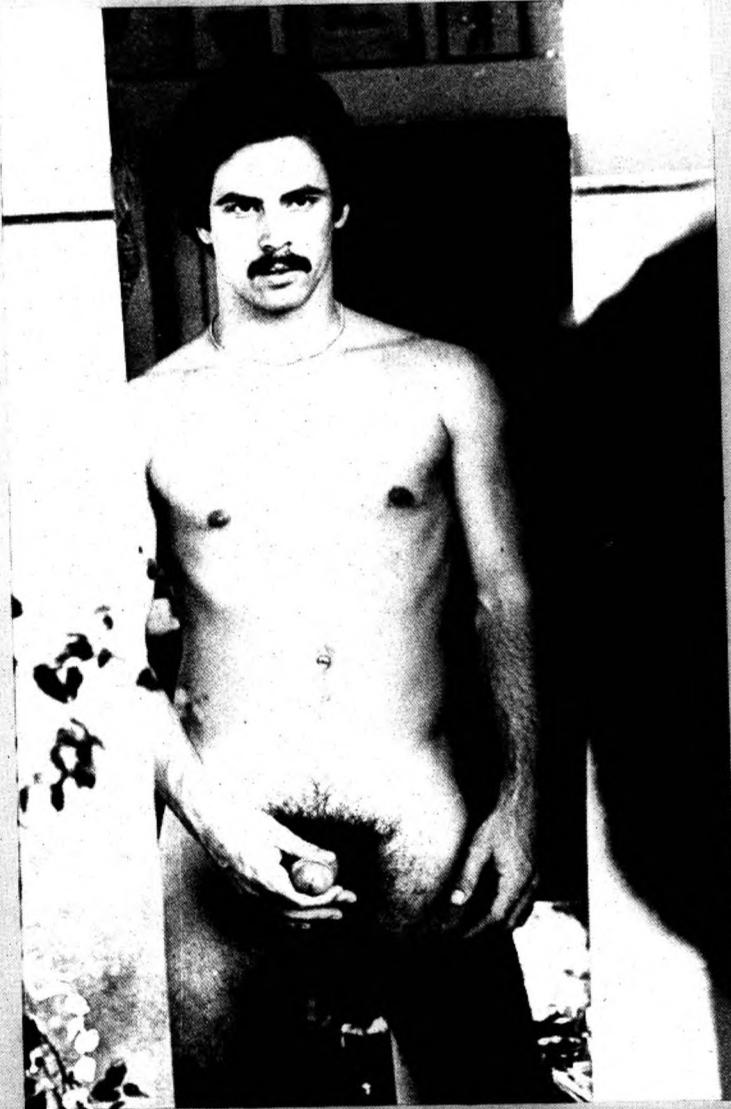


heart of stone not to laugh at the death of Little Nell.

Catullus's lyric voice does soar, though, when he asks Lesbia for so many hundred of thousands of kisses that nobody could possibly keep count of them. (Except it be Gilbert Highet.) This Catullus does in both Poem 5 and Poem 7.

Internal evidence of my contention that Lesbia is the camp name of a gay man can be found by comparing Poems 5 and 7, written to Lesbia, with Poem 48, which the poet wrote to Juventius. In all three of the wondrously musical and emotional verses he promises a multitude of kisses. (All three poems are like Shakespeare's "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" That sonnet, written to a young man, has been used as a heterosexual love song; in fact it has become the stereotypical heterosexual song.) Other critics might contend that Poems 5, 7, and 48 prove nothing other than Catullus's bisexuality, and that would suit me fine; I'm not so intent on Lesbia as a young man as past critics have been on Lesbia as Clodia. The point is we really do not know who Lesbia was. So my conjecture is as possible as any.

How frequently biographers will suggest that Catullus turned to the young man he called Juventius because he was rejected by Clodia! This assumption satisfies biographers in at least two ways: by showing that gay love is secondary and inferior to its heterosexual counterpart and by the unstated premise that women should let men do what they want or else those men might



turn out queer.

Heterosexuality has perhaps fared better at the hands of prudish scholars than reference to gay sexual actions has, but not much better. Here is part of Poem 32 to Ipsithilla:

Myers & Ormsby, 1970:

Tell me none will
Bar your door,
That you're not busy, and
What's more
That you will wait for me
And choose
To give me nine successive
Screws

Whigham, 1966:

but stay at home
and in your room
prepare yourself
to come nine times
straight off together.

C. H. Sisson, 1966:

And don't you go off
Either at the last moment.
But Stay at home and
Organize for us
Nine copulation in
Rapid series.

Barriss Mills, 1966:

Stay at home
and get yourself ready
for nine uninterrupted
bouts of love.

William A. Aiken, 1950:

don't let a foolish
whim to ride aboard
remove you from my
sight, but stay till each
intemperate frolic love
can play has been enjoyed
by us nine times--or more,
if I can further raise the
lustly score!

Merrill, 1893:

(Poem 32 is not translated
from Latin, though the foot-
note says, "Contents, execr-
able. Date, undeterminable.
Metre, Phalaecean.")

Martin, 1875:

(Ever consistent, Martin
omits Poem 32 from his
collection.)

Meanwhile Back Up The Ass

I cannot resist returning to Poem 16, which has become a treasured tradition in the gay literature class at City College, where Don Liles and I share Catullus as unjealously as possible (our version of a gay marriage). It is general knowledge that an excellent translation of a poem is very nearly impossible; "it loses something in the translation" has become a banal joke. Catullus can still be translated more adequately than even Myers and Ormsby translated him, and I've made it obvious that I'm most nearly content with their translation.

I need no queer-fearing heterosexuals or trembling, closeted gays come from the dusty tomes of their local *bibliothèque* to tell me that the words *pediocabo* and *irumbabo* in Poem 16 are translatable in many ways. Notice the cognateness of *pediocabo* and that of "pederast." It is also easy to see "rumba," a dance with a lot of ass movement, in the root of the verb *irumbabo*.

To point up the difficulty of translating this poem, recall all of the common expressions for anal sex you can think of. To suggest a few, I offer these street English versions of the Latin of the streets that Catullus used:

I'll throw it up your
asshole,/you swishing
Aurelius, and brown you,
Furius, you hot little
faggot.

I'll bum fuck you, Aur-
elius, you silly swish,/
And rump fuck you,
Furius, you nelly dish.

I'll cornhole you, Aurelius/
and stir your chocolate,
Furius,/giving it to both
you queens.

(The third choice here would not do, since it mixes two regional terms. While *cornhole* is Southern *stirring chocolate* is Midwestern; I could not resist including that version to show the many, many pos-

sibilities. You get the idea, don't you?)

With that I must drag myself away from Poem 16. And I want to deal finally with a philosophy of literature. My critical position, when reading and teaching literature, is that the written word has little value except how it relates to the personal experiences of the reader. Catullus is valuable because he has one of the most complicated and unbelievable gay sensibilities in literature. Any gay man can easily identify with him, finding positive as well as negative qualities in common with the poet.

Moreover, gay women can see as clearly as any group of people can that Catullus is a measure of how women can be treated historically, for who else has suffered more than lesbians from the sexism patent in the poems and in their interpretations? Any aware heterosexual, especially women, can understand the same thing.

Life in the Roman Republic bore elements of today's world, and foremost among these is sexism, the violence and power aspects of sexual life. Catullus lived in a thoroughly sexist period, and we today are not really so sexually liberated as some people would prefer to imagine.

Sex is still often a weird power trip for gay people as much as for the heterosexual majority, and we gay people must get our act together, not necessarily cleaning it up, but by making it loving, warm, reciprocal, and really pleasurable for all participants. Catullus can show us what to do as well as what to avoid: Like him, we can let our feelings be known, especially in the way he sometimes lets Lesbia and Juventius know of his strong affection for them.

If we really pay attention to Catullus, in his tender moods, you and I (or you and you and I) can fuck each other and one another with wonder, wholesome strength, and joy. In addition, we can let our affection be known and accept affection as gracefully and lithely as we express it. That sounds all right, doesn't it?

Love Among the Buckeyes

by RICHARD AMORY

I came out in 1949 at age twenty-one in Columbus, Ohio, in a society and during a time that was almost utterly foreign to the world we see around us today. I have to smile at the romantic ease with which coming out is accomplished in San Francisco now—all romping around in Golden Gate Park and setting up housekeeping together, wine and roses, dancing cheek to cheek, blatantly holding hands, my folks know and so do yours . . .

Columbus in '48 and '49 was a very bleak and rocky place indeed for a homosexual. It was, and is, the capital of supermachismo in the form of the Ohio State football team—when State beat Michigan, the town was left in a shambles under the benign eyes of Columbus cops, but oh, boy, didn't the queers have to stay back under the woodwork? Not a single gay bar in town, any kind of cross-dressing by a man was good for an instant arrest, and exposure to the newspapers, and, of course, the most daring graphic publication was *Sunshine and Health*, which had to fight constant running battles with the Post Office, as did *Esquire*, just to stay alive. I distinctly remember the first time I saw the word "piss" in print, in a book by H. Allen Smith as I recall, and remember musing, *Goodness, that's going to cause a ruckus*. The whole nation was in the process, it seemed, of buttoning down in preparation for Joseph McCarthy and the horrible Fifties.

There was an average number of us gays skulking around, to be sure, but it was certainly a problem getting in touch with one another.

My first homosexual experience occurred when I was sixteen years old, quite by accident on my part, and was, I found out later, a thoroughly ordinary type of encounter. I had dropped off my date, a girl, at her house, and was waiting for the Owl Car on North High Street, which after midnight or so ran only once an hour, when an auto pulled up and offered me a ride. I accepted with naive alacrity and within a half mile was propositioned by this young guy wearing glasses; I was shocked, but he was persuasive—I remember muttering that I didn't want to be a fairy—and so we parked on a dark street in North Columbus and jacked each other off. I was impressed but not at all excited by the size of his cock—I attributed it to the fact that he was nineteen—and by the fact that he came in nine strokes by his count, while I scarcely came at all. It seemed like forever, but I finally managed a meager orgasm. Driving me home, he threw his soaked handkerchief out the car window, which I thought was a terrible waste of handkerchiefs.

I formed a vague resolve to write my father, who was stationed in Tucson at the time, and confess the whole experience, asking for his advice, but I didn't. My father had an advanced degree in adolescent psychology, circa 1933, was an ardent admirer of Dr. George Crane, and would probably have suggested nothing more useful than taking boxing lessons to make me more masculine, which I already knew to be rather a lost cause. I couldn't play basketball or baseball for shit. At any rate, I worried for days about the chafed redness on the head of my penis, suspecting

it was syphilis, but, when it went away, I pushed the whole incident way back into the deepest corners of my mind and went on as before: dances, parties, girlfriends, proms, the whole straight charade.

The fact that my masturbation fantasies were totally homosexual bothered me, surely, but, according to the psychology at the time, it was just a passing phase—I was just a little late maturing, that's all, and would eventually grow up to plank every girl in sight just like the rest of the studs. It never occurred to me that I had, in fact, matured early and that any guy who masturbated five, six, seven times a day was hardly what one would call retarded.

The passing phase didn't pass. I desperately and consciously wanted somebody to help me, somebody to talk to, somebody to give me information, but in those days homosexuality was simply not discussed in any kind of polite, rational way. So I hungered in silence. In 1950 I found out how almost totally misinformed even supposedly educated people were when an Air Force shrink brought on by a well-meaning brother-in-law told me that all I had to do to solve my problems was to hop into bed with a girl, but *take off my shoes first*, which said a lot about the level of his own sex life but didn't do me a bit of good. Fortunately, by that time, I knew enough about things to consider him a total asshole, and I quit him flat.

"Things," by my junior year in '47, '48, had rapidly approached the cracking-up point. I developed a heavy, long-distance crush on a gangling English major whose name

I never learned, stalked him through Derby Hall with soulful looks, and choked on my meals at the Union whenever he came shambling in; my kid brother was already screwing all the secretaries in my father's department, and I was still a sissy virgin; my sisters were sleeping around; all my old friends were crowing about the pussy they'd had, and I was still stalking that damned English major, helplessly, not exactly hating myself, but knowing that something was certainly sour in my life.

I suppose I was deeply angry and blindly ready to lash out at the whole world. I developed tics and got into quietly furious conflicts with my father. I began to shun my brother, and almost masturbated my penis off, fantasizing anything masculine I could conjure up. The tics continued, and I stopped speaking to my father entirely, not even to ask him to pass the butter.

There was *nobody* to talk to; I had kept the whole problem bottled up ever since the time of my first waking orgasm while gazing at a picture of the Harvard swimming team of 1941. Nobody, until I ran into Larry during my senior year at State. Nothing to read—I devoured Vidal's *The City and the Pillar*, and that gave me some perspective, but it was the earlier version with the tragic ending; Charles Jackson's *The Fall of Valor* was released, but the reviews indicated it was a downer. So I left it alone. (Years later I discovered that it was a very fine and soul-stirring work.)

Larry, by my snotty North Columbus standards, was something of a drip. He was a member of a crowd that I took to hanging out with at Isaly's, across High Street from the campus. He was mild, gentle, inoffensive, and not exceptionally bright; I don't know how I learned he was gay, but I did learn and decided to lay my neck on the chopping block. I announced to him flatly that I was gay, and was certainly planning to act on it. His bemused reaction was, "But do you have any idea



Sierra Domino

what to do in bed *physically*?"

"No," I answered honestly, "but I'll find out."

Larry proceeded to talk around, unable to keep his mouth shut about the dean's son, me. One of the people he spilled to was a grad in psych named Frank, a thoroughly humorless ex-Communist. Frank was shocked and very distressed by my unrepentant, un-Marxian new decadence, and he advised me, frowning with concern, that what I needed was "a good man."

"I certainly do!" I whooped, and I practically rolled on the grass of the Oval with vicious delight. Frank was as mad as hell because he'd meant a shrink, not a lover, and he spoke to me very seldom after that.

News of the newly reopened

Speedway drifted through the campus like the green of spring elms. I don't know who told me first—perhaps it was Larry, though I doubt it—but I was simply magnetized and knew, knew, that that reputedly gay bar held at least some of the keys to my destiny. I took my time about it but finally climbed into my one suit and headed south on the streetcar into downtown Columbus, for the Speedway, the only black/white integrated bar in town, come what may, and it came fast, with whirlwind directness.

The first was Max, a black Canadian newsman whom I blew on an unlit street close to Crestview Junior High School; then Walter, a crazy high yaller; a few rag-tags after that, one of whom gave me the crabs. It was delirious—I ran into

people I'd known for years (What, you too?)—and dangerous, as when I narrowly missed my own brother who was doing some supercilious slummings. Odds and ends, dates, dancing, a whole new vocabulary.

And then I met Joe and my whole world turned into sweet violets and wild spring perfumes. I was suddenly, utterly dazed, walking around like a thunderstruck fool, the talk of the campus, often breaking into tears of joy and relief, to my parents' utter consternation. Their Oregon upbringing hadn't prepared them for gay tears in oatmeal.

Joe was a guy I had first met in a sociology course entitled, hilariously, *The Family*—he sat behind me and was very pleasant, and I didn't dream that such a nice-looking black guy could have my same dark urges. We met a year later, that fateful spring, in the Speedway, and my response was immediate, electric, headlong rush into love. I swear I don't remember what we did in bed. I don't suppose I was at all proficient, but years of Columbus smut and grime washed off me in an exhilarating rush, and I walked like a man reborn, dizzy with love, suddenly whole, brand new, my own man again for the first time since babyhood. Clean, and suddenly excited with life.

Few homosexuals are given to understand this absolutely indelible experience.

Alas, however, I had taken on all of Columbus and Columbus won, or at least my family did, with their flat, George Crane morality and bland, white, duplicitous, middle-class normalcy. The time came shortly after graduation when my father called me down for a talk and I heard, hardly believing my ears, that he knew what I'd been up to—somebody, probably a brown-nosed student, had tipped him off. My older sister shrewdly guessed about that time, and my younger sister, whom I loved and trusted and in whom I had stupidly confided, came down on me like a vengeful fury.

I had no defense, and so I crumbled. Joe was back home in Springfield, Larry was sympathetic,

but no help at all, and Joe's friends afforded even less help. I was totally isolated with what seemed, and probably was, the whole world ranged against me. Remember, there was no *Vector* in 1949, no *Advocate*, no *Gaynews*, no one to say believably that I was okay, no Gay Lib, no G.A.A., no Christopher Street, no Mattachine Society, and certainly no S.I.R., no Willie Brown Act, no Reverend Troy Perry, and no M.C.C.

Isolated, but not knocked totally senseless, I did what seemed to be the only tolerable thing left to do—I grabbed a bus and fled from Columbus, going first to Omaha, and then to Mexico City, where I could take care of my own head with no outside interference in a mercifully incomprehensible environment. I licked my wounds for a while and then learned Spanish fast, in bed, and shortly found that I had the necessary sand in my craw to keep going on, and Mexico City turned out to be a blast, but that's another story.

I frankly envy, without rancor, those youngsters who were fortunate enough to have come out in the Sixties or Seventies, not in 1949, and to have come out in a congenial environment such as San Francisco, or even San Jose. The changes have been simply incredible to a person of my generation—even Des Moines boasts of two gay bars now and a congregation of the M.C.C., while San Francisco, back in the middle Fifties, had only the Black Cat, the Sea Cow, and two baths, as far as I knew.

The intriguing thing is that, proportionately, there are probably no more gays today than when I came out. I have made a point of seeking out older gays in their sixties and seventies and asking them what it was like back when, and their impressions by and large coincide with mine. Certainly it was difficult coming out in Columbus or Salt Lake City or Fort Worth then, and many gays either went loco or found it convenient to bury their heads in the closet, but, typically, a gay put up a hard battle and *stayed put*, in Raleigh or Morehead City or

Medicine Bow or wherever, and dug in to becoming the village queer, tolerated, if not totally accepted by his relatives and neighbors. Others, I am certain, got married, fathered a few kids, and opted for the nineteenth-century double standard, and found their pleasures where they might, in back alleys and peg houses, on lonely beaches, on cattle drives and gold rushes—curiously we were more, or less, in evidence then, more, and less, understood by the community at large; more spread around, less ghettoized; although here in San Jose, where I live, the woman next door, who occasionally uses my telephone, may make jokes about her queer neighbor behind my back, but she also knows that I don't sprout bristles at the full moon and that I find her five-year-old son pestiferous. Sometimes I do wonder whether straight folks living outside the San Francisco—Fire Island Axis know what a gay is really all about anymore, and, on second or third thought, perhaps the fact that I had come out of Columbus in 1949 made me a tougher, more thick-skinned, warier person, more sensitive and oddly more loving than if I'd bopped around in Greenwich Village from the age of fourteen on.

And on fourth thought I'm rather bored with the shallow, swinging free spirits on Castro and Polk and somehow prefer the black warmth of the old Speedway in Columbus, the jittery closeness of the Arco Iris in Mexico City, of Martick's in Baltimore—not that I want those times ever to return again, or that I'm playing a game of I've-had-it-rougher-than-you, but I am deeply suspicious of this new, very chic, very in, tolerance of gays, and I take little comfort in the fact that my neighbors know I'm gay and still don't spit in my eye. It is well to remember that Jews were better accepted in nineteenth-century Germany than in almost any European nation, and that the gay rights movement there was likewise the most militant, thoughtful, and advanced of the time. And we all know what happened to *them* in the 1930s.

Shigeo laughs

when asked what he likes. Perhaps it is because he seems to like so much of life and the people around him.

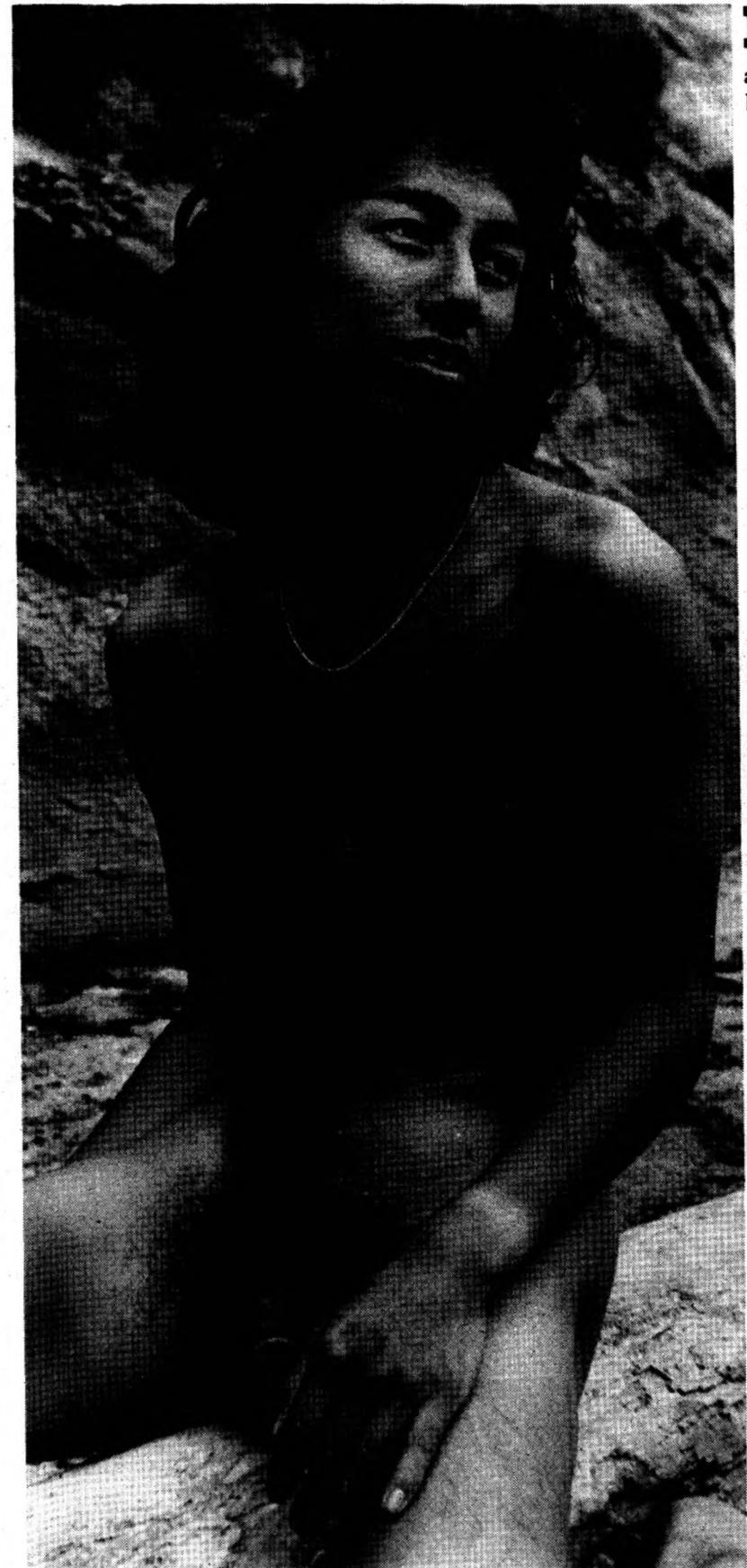
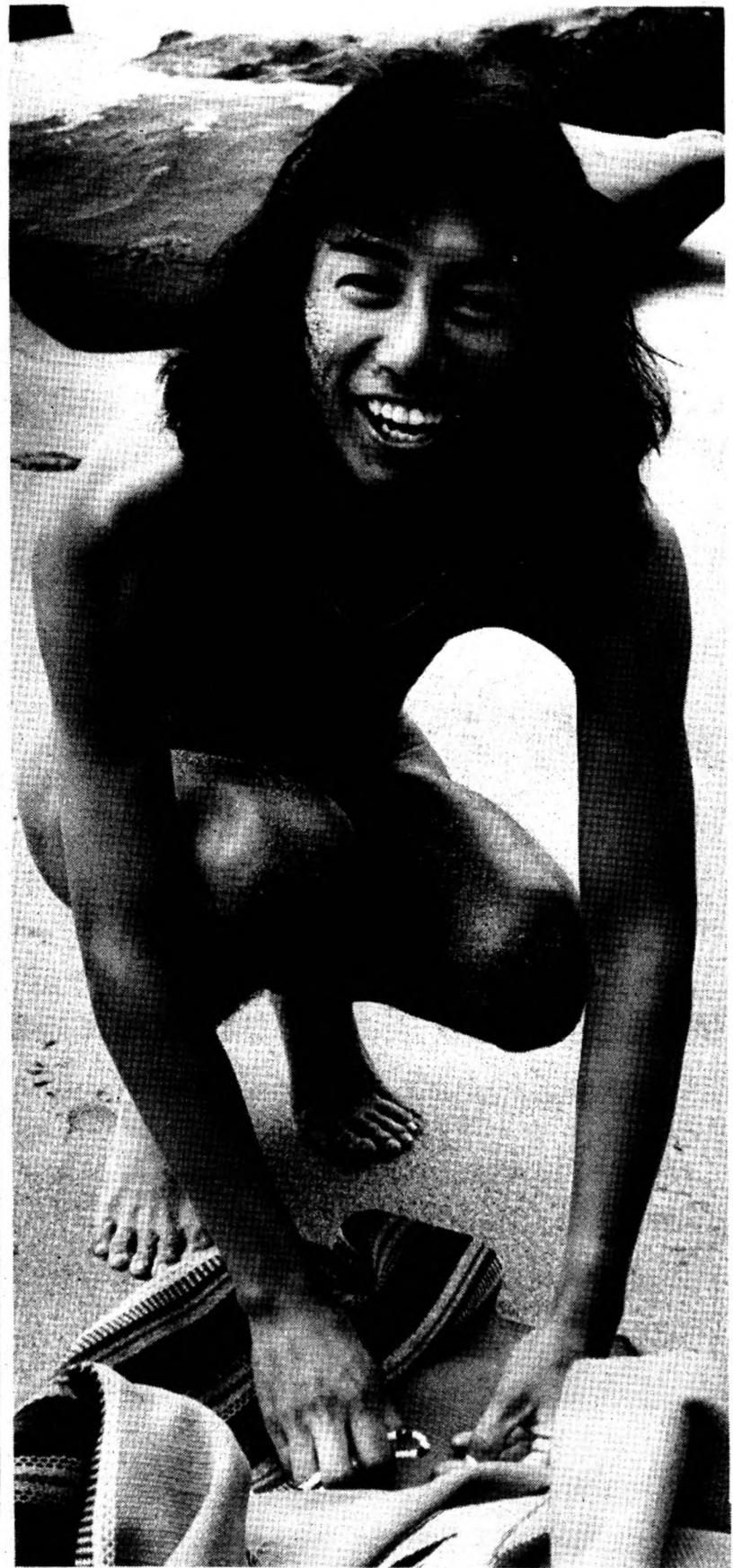
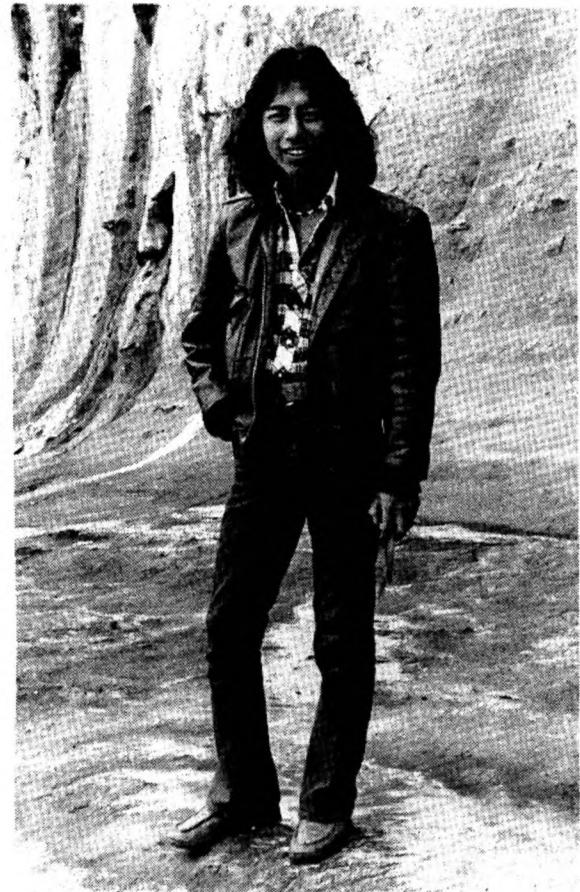
A native of the Bay Area, he has recently returned home from a two-year stay in Florida via Denver and other places.

A recent Sunday afternoon: *dim sum* lunch in Chinatown, a walk, a few hours in a jazz bar, another walk, a visit with some friends.

"Sometimes I like to go to Union Square at four in the morning, just to listen and watch the city start," he says. "I like talking to my old friend, Hester (who is in her seventies). We talk about clouds, death, living life — a sort of Harold and Maude relationship."

Shigeo prefers long, steady relationships, and has had one, with perhaps another one budding.

Photography and Text by FRED WALI



Kyoto Boy

and other poems
by RICHARD CHINN

Kyoto boy all dressed in white
small & delicate to be handled
gently like ancient silks
a smile that glows your face

another name
among many names
having crossed my
tongue many times
& sometimes forgotten
in the length of days
or hours



flowers afraid to bloom for the sun
nocturnal delights moon blossomed
much too delicate for noontime daylight
that would wilt & wither their precious petals

phantoms of phallic fantasies
having been ridden in midnights
years gone & going farther
fancies phallical frolicking
gladsomely gay in minds memory
guide me to these fervid phalluses
i am a stranger here

early morning rising
from softsleep lonenight
dreaming of earlier mornings
to kiss you than arising
& mocha chatter wrapped
in oriental robes
with padded shoulders

outrageous giggles that invite stares
neon blinking like whore winking madly
virgin morning in virgin year all that is virgin
your pliant limbs thrown up to Beulahland
as my hand probes your hospitable hollow
stoned san franciscan mornings 3am



Photo by Boetger of Graven Image

Terry

The Animal with the Huge Tool

by RICHARD JAMES HENRY

I grew up in an average lower-middle-class family. It wasn't until I reached puberty that I came to realize that the love I had for my own kind was considered rotten, evil and dirty by the rest of the world. I couldn't change how I felt, though I tried, nor could I tell anyone or dare even hint about it. So I kept my desires a deep, dark secret.

I kept up a front, liking the girls, as the rest of the boys did, ogling them, whistling as they passed by while we stood around the school yard during lunch hours. Sometimes I wondered what was the big deal about them. A boy is so much more interesting and beautiful.

I never got myself a girlfriend. Never made out with one. Just couldn't bring myself to do it.

Whenever the talk with the gang got onto the subject of sex, and all its mysteries, and invariably went on to talking about queers, I'd naturally laugh along with the others at the fag jokes.

One of the older boys in our group knew some guys who were real queers. When one of those fairies happened to walk by at a time when the gang was gathered together, he'd be pointed out. "Look at that pansyboy," the older fellow would say with undisguised contempt.

But I was becoming confused. My heart told me one thing, and society another. I must be sick, I told myself. That's what I heard some boys say in the gym locker room one day after class. All queers were sick. The rest of the world had to be right. I assured myself. The rest of the world couldn't be wrong and I, just little me, *right!*

Or maybe I was going through a stage. Maybe I had a greater capacity for love than most people, and may-

be it embraced more. My love for men was just a greater embracement of love itself.

Reasons for my condition would change from month to month. Was my destiny to become an effeminate thing, to be a pansyboy, to be jeered at by others? I resolved not to end up that way.

I found, if I didn't come into contact with or notice any handsome boys, my desires would rest. I was half-believing that it all was going away. I would awaken one morning and all would be gone. I would join the rest of society in my sexual desires; then Terry came into my life.

I was in school, working on our weekly history quiz. I hadn't noticed him coming in. But I sure noticed when old Miss Winter, our history teacher, introduced him.

"Class, I want you to meet Terry, your new classmate." I looked up from my test, and my heart started to pound. God, was he beautiful! Soft brown hair and those lovely eyes! I was sick, fearing Miss Winter would move Buckteeth Sally, who sat next to me, and put Terry there.

The other guys in class called Miss Winter Old Fart Bag. I knew she liked the girls more than the boys, but I never hated her, but I sure did that day when the Old Fart Bag put Terry next to me. Every emotion and desire I repressed came rushing over me at once. I couldn't concentrate on my quiz. As a result, I failed.

At first I was shy in getting to know and talk to him. But I realized I'd look like a complete fool if I was indifferent. So we became friends, but not close friends. Whenever I could avoid his company, without looking like a fool, I did. His very presence brought to mind every desire I was trying to repress. Sometimes it was difficult keeping control over my emotions when he was around.

He didn't lack friends, however. The guys liked him because he was a great ballplayer. Basketball, softball, baseball—you name it—he was great at it. Some guy was always

after him to join some team or other.

The girls liked him for his good looks and, as I found out soon after he arrived, for the great times he'd give them in bed. Or in the back seat of a car. It became common knowledge among us kids at school who his conquests were soon after they were made. There was also a joke among us guys about Terry. We called him the Animal with the Huge Tool.

Always after gym class, my last class of the day, we all had to show-

er. The usual antics of rowdy boys, soap and water, would prevail.

"What girl are ya gonna have tonight, Terry?" some kid would ask, somewhat enviously.

I had prided myself on my self-control, which kept me from becoming aroused by the sight of naked male bodies in the shower. I could contain myself, except when Terry was there.

He'd tell the fellows the name of his latest conquest. That's how the others found out what girl was an easy make.

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Then Terry would take his tool in his hand and, shaking it, say, "Any girl that wants this can have it, baby!"

I could hear the pounding of my blood in my ears as I tried squelching desires for him, especially when all the guys called him Terry the Animal. Those words sounded so enticing and deliriating and sensual.

One day Terry wasn't at school. I was glad about that and hoped he wouldn't be in for the rest of the week. Then I shouldn't have to control myself, I thought. But I was

worried, too—worried that he might really be very sick.

That afternoon Miss Winter told us that Terry was home with a cold, and she suggested we might send him a get-well card. It was always a card for the boys, but a "nice gift" for the girls. I was glad he wasn't very sick. I couldn't bear it if he was.

That evening he called me on the phone.

"Hi, Peter. Miss Winter telephoned me today and said I should call you every night to get the

homework and notes. How are you doing, buddy?"

"All right," I said and told him the news about what was going on at school.

"Say, why don't you come over here tonight? I got something real nice to show you."

I hesitated.

"Come on, it's really great! From my bedroom window, with a telescope, you can see this new married couple making out. Every night! Man, do they go at it! What do you say?"

I didn't want to go over to his house. Already my heart was beating anxiously. But what if I refused to look at such an exhibition? He might spread the word. How would it look if others found out? God, if people started saying I was queer!

Maybe, if I went over to see him, my desires would go away after we became closer friends. Maybe all my desires would go away. For good!

"Sure, Terry, it's a great idea. I can't wait," I said with feigned desire. "But what about your parents?"

"My parents are divorced. My mother isn't home anyway. She's gone to visit my aunt for a few days. Actually, she's off with some man. But I'm not supposed to know that. I'm not really sick, Peter. Just a little cold. But my mother makes me stay home like I had the flu or something."

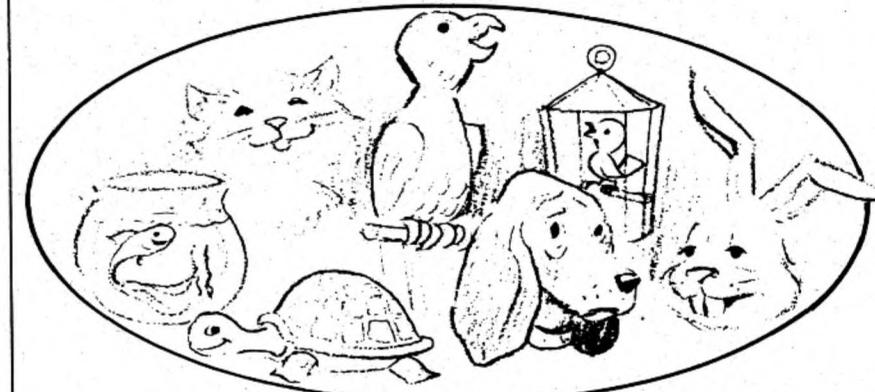
Just put all desire out of your mind, I told myself. Concentrate on the spying. Heck, it should be super. I'd never seen anything like it. I'll just act casual. I'll keep my mind on the show. On anything and everything except Terry.

HE answered the door wearing only his boxer shorts! My heart started to pound. I had gotten myself relaxed by the time I reached his house. Minute by minute I became tense; the beating became louder and louder. It was an effort to talk calmly, as if nothing was raging inside of me.

"I put out my room light and wait until the light goes on next door. It's almost eight o'clock. They should be getting to it any

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time now."

He put out the light in his room and raised the shade. Moonlight flooded in. The light went on next door. A naked couple were in the telescope.

"Really something, eh, Pete?" he asked.

I watched them.

"Wow! She must be something for him to do it every night, eh, Pete?"

I wanted to run away! I felt as if my heart would burst in my chest any second. I wanted to touch Terry. To feel and kiss him. How would it look if I ran away? God! I had to stay and watch.

"Here," I gave him the telescope; "you look, too."

"Wow! What a pair she has!"

Dear God, please, I kept saying to myself, why must I be this way? Kill my desires *please!*

"Pete, you're missing the best part. Here Look."

He turned toward me. Our eyes met. Whatever the consequences, I had to reach out and softly touch his naked stomach.

He drew back abruptly. "What the hell's the matter with you? You crazy or something?" he screamed.

I thought he was going to smash my face with the telescope. "I thought you were a fag when I first met you. You're a filthy pig," he shouted. "Do you know that?"

But his arm fell to his side, letting the telescope fall to the floor, and he began to cry.

"I'm not a queer! I'm not a queer!" he sobbed. "I won't be one! I won't! I'm like everybody else. I am, I tell you."

The moonlight reflected on his tears. All I could see was his eyes and half of his face twisting away from me.

"No, no, I won't be one!"

I reached out slowly and again touched his soft, yet firm, belly. He made no protest. I slipped off his shorts and undressed myself. To me it was an explosion as our warm bodies met.

I told him how I felt within and how I couldn't change it, no matter what or how hard I tried. "So why fight it, Terry? Let's be ourselves,

no matter what the world thinks. I love you, Terry."

We stood that way a while, then lay on his bed, for maybe two hours. His sobbing slowly ended. Then we explored each other with unquenchable hunger. All our pent-up emotions burst from our young bodies.

TERRY and I became the best of friends after that night. That's when I let myself be myself. When daydreams of him, or of other boys, didn't cause me pain.

We met many times at his house and explored our bodies and feelings further and pondered the nature of the love that was ours. A kind of love that is innately integral to my very self.

Richard James Henry lives in New York City with his lover of ten years, a Cancer. He writes.



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Father Knew Best

by Hal Ross

The hottest summer in Texas history passed as I turned thirteen. We succeeded in frying eggs on the sidewalk. We dug forts in the fields around our house. We did everything we could think of to stay cool until our vacation. The giant family reunion was to be held in August.

When the time came, my father decided we should drive to my grandmother's house without any rest stops. He thought we could make the 600 miles in about eight hours. The trip was easy enough. We had made it every summer for as long as I could remember. The heat was what undid our plans.

We arrived in Abilene at sundown and made our way through crosstown traffic to the outskirts where my grandmother lived. We found her somewhat befuddled. A surprising number of relatives had shown up, which caused things to be cramped. People were parceled out to this house and that one. Cousins who hadn't seen each other for years once again found themselves to be strange bedfellows. My own family was somewhat disjointed from having traveled so far in the heat; so we agreed to almost anything that would promise a cool sleeping place. The outcome provided that my two sisters would sleep together on the floor, and my mother would be required to sleep on the sofa next to them because the younger one had become ill from the heat, and I would be left to sleep with my father in the other bedroom. Late in the evening I became increasingly aware of a sort of nausea. I eventually realized it was the anticipation of sleeping in the same bed with *him*. Of course, I was no stranger to that kind of thing. I had spent several previous summer's vacations in bed with my bachelor uncle, completely explored the body of one cousin, and developed fleeting relationships with several members of my family, male and female. I had unknowingly proved the old saw, "Incest is best." So the thought of having the family member in bed was so exhilarating that I very nearly made myself sick.

As everyone got ready for bed, I came to an impasse and spent some time in the bathroom changing into my pajamas. My quandary was how to approach my father. Most of my experiences had been mutually agreed to or initiated by the older person. I could not conceive of a way to bridge that space between us gracefully.

As I pulled back the covers, my father asked why I hadn't removed my pajamas' top. It was still very warm; so I removed it and crawled under the sheets. My father customarily slept in only his underwear. The quick glimpse I got as I slipped into the bed was just enough

to set my heart racing. I turned on my side to face away from him and tried to concentrate on something else so that I could go to sleep. After an eternity of heartbeats pounding in my ears, I was able to relax enough to hear something else. A soft breathing came from the other side of the bed. The intimate relationship that had developed with my uncle seemed so distant. I tried to remember how we started. How strange it felt to be in bed with a warm human being and not able to caress that body's beauty. I finally remembered the beginning with my uncle. I thought maybe I could use the same technique on my father as my uncle had used on me. So, with great deliberation and a few wrenching turns, I managed to turn over and move my hand close to his body. There were no noticeable signs of rejection. I had closed part of the gap. I was closer to his body. Still only soft breathing came from his side of the bed.

The most difficult step was going to be actually touching his body. At first, only my extended finger was allowed to reach out. I touched his wrist. There was still soft breathing. Then I extended another finger. Eventually I gently stroked his forearm. The rustle of the sheets momentarily stilled the soft breathing. Panic struck my heart. I froze into a solid block of sweating ice. The soft breathing returned. My arm began to numb from the tension. I couldn't decide whether to pull it back safely or let it gently come to rest where it might. As the decision loomed larger and larger in my mind, I decided to let things fall into place, and my hand floated down to my father's abdomen very close to that spur of a bone we both have on our pelvises. Somehow I sensed that there would be no resistance to my hand. It seemed to develop a will of its own.

My father always wore Jockey briefs. I lay on his right side, which enabled me to slip in without a great deal of disturbance, calculating the distance and being sure not to exert too much pressure. The cotton opening gave way to the slightest touch. The fingers once again touched skin, rigid skin. Hosana! His flesh was as excited as mine. My first touch of the flesh that fathered me. Exhilaration! His cock had become swollen before I touched it. It grew larger as I began lightly fingering the flesh. I realized that he wasn't dreaming and neither was I. I took a firm grip on myself and decided to continue at all costs. I edged closer. Both hands were then able to move with ease. One hand slipped under the leg of the briefs and found the testicle hanging loosely. His cock jumped every time I touched his balls. Suddenly I was overcome with the desire to abase myself before his altar. I moved down under the sheet and

Move Over, Valentino

SWEPT AWAY...
A film by Lina Wertmuller

I've never been into dressing up in drag, but I wouldn't think twice about slipping into a dress and a blond wig if there was a chance in the world I could get marooned on a desert island with Giancarlo Giannini as Mariangela Melato does in *Swept Away* by an *Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August*. Giancarlo has got to be one of

the sexiest Italians to show up in movies since Rudolph Valentino's super rough-and-tumble tent tricks. He's got this kind of engaging macho quality made soft by wide-eyed innocence and a continual awe-struck incredulity.

The incredulousness reflected on Giancarlo's handsome face is no doubt due to the fact that he finds himself in the fantasy universe created by an important filmmaker who's just now coming to promi-

ence in the United States, Lina Wertmuller. *Swept Away*... is only her third film that has had a wide distribution in this country, following *The Seduction of Mimi* and *Love and Anarchy*. Giancarlo plays in all three, including a new one, *Seven Beauties*, which I haven't seen because, as of this writing, it hasn't yet hit San Francisco, but the noise from New York is "Masterpiece!"

Swept Away... is an S&M movie. It's also an expertly crafted work of art, bursting with vitality, style, political savvy, and integrity. Giancarlo plays a Sicilian seaman who is also a male chauvinist Communist pig working on a luxury yacht full of pampered darlings of society. Mariangela Melato plays the rich fascist bitch who drives him crazy with her constant political harangue and complaints. The spaghetti's too soft, the coffee's not fresh, and his tee-shirt stinks. She's a hard master.

Anyway, she sleeps late into the afternoon one day and wakes to find her friends have gone off to a cove to swim without her; so she has Giancarlo crank up a spare dinghy and sets off to find them. The outboard motor konks out, of

pulled out his cock. The moon was shining through the window and onto the bed. I could just barely see the outline of his hairy stomach and thighs. I moved closer, creating an enormous tent with the sheet. I hovered over his groin, staring at my beginning. I had to consume it. Slowly I bent to touch the tip with my tongue. Then, without hesitation, I took it all. With not more than three stroking motions, I had a mouthful of myself. There had been no body tension or moans of forewarning. It came as a complete surprise; maybe to both of us.

I suddenly became uncomfortably conscious of the fact that I had to get up to wipe off my belly, because I had been so excited I had climaxed too. I went to the bathroom to clean up and to contemplate whether or not I should run out into the wilds of West Texas to destroy myself or go back into the bedroom to try to sleep. Reason overruled panic. There had been no resistance and absolutely no rejection, but I *was* beginning to wonder whether he'd been awake. I could be certain he was awake now. How could I walk back into that room as if nothing had happened? As if there had been nothing between us? What would happen if he



finally got into the bed. I was facing away from him and trying not to cry from anxiety, trying not to leap into his arms to ask forgiveness, trying not to be electrocuted by my own excitement. The sheets moved and I cringed in pain. Then I felt his hand on my shoulder. I started to leap out of bed, but his grip was firm. His arm slid over my chest, and he pulled me towards him. I couldn't imagine what was happening. His arm moved down my body. I was paralyzed. He moved my hips closer to him. I could feel what was happening. It seemed familiar and very comfortable. I snuggled up to him. He had an erection. So did I. He held me close and caressed my body. His flesh made me tingle. There were a thousand things fleeting through my mind.

He seemed to have his own ideas. My pajamas slid down to my knees. I had remembered to remove my shorts. He fondled my erection, and his grew harder. It pressed through the cotton into the crease of my ass. I had been accommodating my uncle for some but I wasn't sure whether my father would fit. I reached around to feel his cock. His briefs were sticky where the head was. It was much bigger than I had remembered it to be

were to ask me why I had done that? I eventually opened the door and was reassured with the contented snore, heard through the walls of many nights.

The sun came up the next day. I lay in the bed until I could no longer pretend I was still sleeping. I moved around like a zombie. Fear sapped every ounce of energy from me. I was fairly certain that at any moment my father was going to jump up and shout to the world, "He sucked my dick last night! He's a faggot cocksucker!" It was all I could do to look into anyone's face. They all knew every detail. They knew I had sucked my father's dick and swallowed his come.

As it happened, day turned into night, and I turned into a maniac. I protested the sleeping arrangements and complained about the bed hurting my back. It was all for naught. My father said he thought things were okay for the time being.

As I got ready for bed, I remembered the night before and left off my pajama top. I slipped into bed first and tried to pretend I was sleeping. I tried counting sheep; I really tried to go to sleep. I wanted to forget the agony of that day, of facing all those knowing looks.

The door opened. My father walked into the bedroom. He had on only his underwear. My heart pounded. I knew he could hear my heartbeats. Was he going to beat me? I kept seeing his erection under the sheet. He

from the night before. It wasn't huge, but very fleshy. My uncle had always had a lubricant handy. I was wondering how my father was going to breach the gap when I felt two wet fingers searching for the hole. It seemed familiar territory to him. Carefully the fingers entered and retreated. Just as carefully he pulled me closer, pushed me up in the bed, and pulled me down onto his cock. The head seemed enormous and tore its way through me. I helped as much as I could, but he was so strong that I felt like putty. As soon as he was in, he reached one hand around to my groin and seemed somehow surprised to find a cock, but he began to fondle my softness anyway. By the time he got ready to shoot, I was ecstatic and could barely stifle my enthusiastic moans. He was much better and more affectionate than my uncle. When the release finally came, he squeezed me so hard I thought I would be crushed. His powerful arms relaxed and dropped down to my already sticky groin. He sighed an approval. We had climaxed together. He slipped himself out and rolled over and went to sleep. I cried until I finally drifted into unconsciousness.

The next morning I had post-partum depression. I didn't seem to be real anymore. I had no guilt about it and my father never mentioned it. Neither did I, but we always seemed to see it in each other's eyes.

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course, and the two natural enemies are swept away to a deserted island. "But this is the Mediterranean," she screams. "There must be a hotel, a highway!" Fed up, Giancarlo quits his job and sets off to explore and survive on his own, leaving the lady to her own devices.

It's not long before a wretched Mariangela comes sniffing around his campfire, where he's doing up some lobster, and submits to his will. Revenge is sweet, but the Sicilian seaman turns out to be every bit as hard a master as the fascist bitch was. Sex rears its lovely head, and she ends up licking his feet.

The first time I saw the film I was in the company of a women's liberation activist who got so pissed off at Mariangela's passive submission to Giancarlo's severe treatment that she was ready to

storm the projection booth. Lina, she felt, had sold out the movement for some hilarious *Taming of the Shrew* type comedy. I think she missed the point. What Wertmuller is showing us in *Swept Away* . . . is the tenuous nature of the decadent rich's dominance and that the working class, once in power, is equally capable of tyranny. And that's only the political side. On the level of lover relationships we see the genuine satisfaction possible between master and slave. A gay audience is certainly able to appreciate this.

I'm looking forward to even greater films from Lina Wertmuller in the future. She has tremendous talent and an expansive imagination, the fruits of which we have only just begun to see.

—Cleve Gallat

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1812 OVERTURE, CAPRICCIO ITALIEN

Everyone's heard of these two "so many times!" Oh, yeah? How many of their melodies can you hum right now? (Except, of course, that part from the puffed wheat TV commercial that goes, "This is the cereal that's shot from guns.") I remember the "1812" from a certain open air concert in Central Park, New

York City. It was in Sheep Meadow (the same place that's pictured on the front of Barbra Streisand's *Happening in Central Park* album). The New York Philharmonic was playing, the city's skyline surrounded the park, and Bloomingdale's shopping bags were everywhere, filled with picnic dinners. It had been announced that the attendance that evening was the largest audience ever assembled at any concert in history (180,000 I believe). The program ended with "1812." Well, the piece was just groovin' along fine and the big loudspeakers kept building more and more excitement from the orchestra down there in the orchestra shell—and then it happened! At the part in the end where the bells start to ring and cannons go off Central Park started to thunder with cannons to the right and to the left, and church bells from all sides clanged and rang, and I swear that all 180,000 spontaneously stood and cheered at the same time. It is not a humdrum piece. It doesn't really take all that much "Show Biz" to bring off either of these pieces, either; they stand well enough just as good listening. The recording I recommend (Mercury Golden Imports SRI 75001,

Antal Dorati, Minneapolis Symphony) was made quite a while back and went out of print for a while; it has been reissued. The best recommendation for this disc is that, when new issues of these pieces come out, the reviewers always give the good and bad points and end up by saying, "But then there is always the reading by Dorati." Time has proved this one.

ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA, TILL EULENSPIEGEL, DON JUAN

It is pronounced "Za-ra-tus-tra," but a better way to say it to most people would be "That thing they used to start *2001: A Space Odyssey*." Yes, that music that made the sun rise was written by Richard Strauss, and he wrote a lot more, which follows the sunrise. There's a lot of speculating about how much influence Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical work of the same name had on Strauss's composition. But you can read the record jackets and decide for yourself. The "Zara" by Ormandy and the Philadelphia is billed on the record jacket as "An Awesome Sonic Experience." Put that together with your recollections of *2001* and you are bound to buy that one. Right? Well, wait. I think there are better buys. Solti and Chicago have a set of three Strauss tone poems so far released in this country as an import but soon readily available to us on the London label. (Decca SXL 6749)

Philadelphia is known for its gorgeous string section, and one would begin to think that this disc is out to prove that point over and over. At first I thought the emphasis on strings was due to technical preparation (microphone placement, electronic mixing, etc.) for this to be an "Awesome QUADRAPHONIC experience" (available in stereo and Quad). So I will credit that to much of my disappointment in balance of orchestral instruments because I used the stereo version.

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Tidbits from Toni

Ormandy—or his engineers—doesn't really give us much of the important parts that sit in the center of the orchestra—the wind instruments. It's difficult enough to hear the many different melodies and other musical ingredients in this piece without being shouted at by violins all the time. The philosophy of "Zara" (whatever *that* is) seems to get so heavy for Ormandy in the slow parts that it pensively dies. It has some great, soaring moments and times of sagacious tension. This is not particularly soothing music (if you are looking for a poignant musical panacea), but life itself isn't always soothing, either. I'd like to see the vitality written into this piece to be able to buck and snort a bit more.

SOLTI'S BOYS IN THE WIND SECTION

The Solti album is a bargain in the first place because it includes the two other actually more popular tone poems. Both of these extras show the young Strauss in some of his best writing. (How they got all that on one disc is a real question!) Just as Philly has its strings, Chicago has its winds. Strauss was known in his day for writing "impossible" parts for the wind instruments. In fact, his own father was a virtuoso horn player of the day and gave young Strauss the advice that the horn parts were unplayable. Nowadays horns and trumpets playing Strauss is like

a tailor putting in buttonholes. It's expected! Solti's boys in the wind section do all the fireworks once thought impossible, and it takes your breath away—not because of the difficulty but because they can crush your bones, make your heart pound, and raise you to the most intense, pleading climaxes that sound can bring on. When Solti conducts and the CSO plays, everything in the music can be heard; the fast notes in the elephantine low register fairly flip out of the big

speakers, *all* the strings of the harp come out, and the glockenspiel sings out, too. Part of this is a result of the expertise of the engineers at the recording sessions, but, from hearing the CSO live on many occasions, I can say that the orchestra not only knows how to perform but also has that special, professional knack of being recording artists as well. I think Strauss would be pleased with this one.

—Eric Larsen

JACKSON'S
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One of the lesser problems of working in the Tenderloin (downtown deeply) or attending an event in the rectum of San Francisco is the utter dearth of quality restaurants within walking distance (or should we say mugging distance?). Well, that's all changed now, and flowering

on the corner of Jones Street and Golden Gate Avenue is the new location of one of the most reputable eateries in town—Jackson's.

Posh is the least we can say about this flower on no-man's land. High quilted leather seats and booths harken to a super-elegant "East Side" men's club. (Charlotte found this a turn-off since it was difficult for her to lust after the bodies with limited viewing.

The menu is a challenge with prices ranging from a Cassoulet de Castelnaudary for \$4.95. ("The classic French dish of beans, goose, pork and sausage.") Steak au poivre is \$9.50.

After a frustrating exchange between the waiter and maitre d' as to exactly what the specials involved (how was the red snapper fixed, whole or filet, and what was the element of Germanness in the German pot roast?) we decided to see for ourselves and ordered one special (the "German") and the endive Bruxelloise (\$5.25), and if these were any indication of total menu quality the Tenderlois is in for multiple treats.

After the usual soup and superb fresh spinach salad a miracle of taste/texture/design arrived which was poached Belgian endive, stuffed with chicken, wrapped in ham and baked in a cheese sauce. The engineering was a marvel and the other trips a delight missing only a characteristic seasoning that became a plus rather than a minus on the third bite. Charlotte's German pot roast was delightfully seasoned in the sweet and sour class keeping her oohing and ahing for days.

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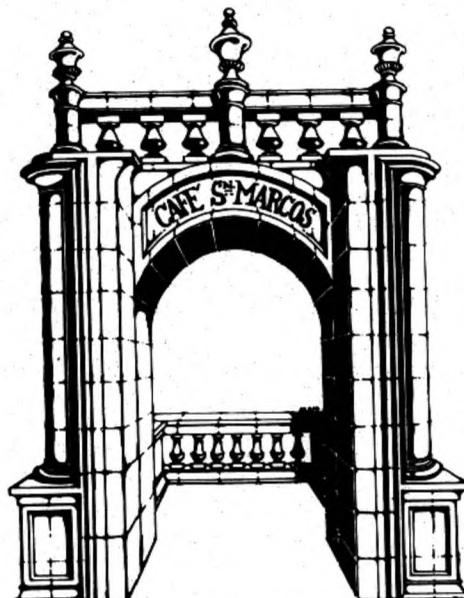
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On a not-too-attractive rainy Sunday afternoon we reluctantly left home and hearth to hear Toni DeSalvo perform operatic tidbits at the Corner Grocery Bar and were totally captivated by this charming establishment and what they are doing (not trying to do but doin' it!)

The tiny campy rococo stage barely holds an old upright piano and a music stand, not to mention the talent. But as Toni DeSalvo opens her mouth her seamless voice production and superb interpretive instincts transported us from Castro to the Elysian fields of absolute music.

CASTRO DIVA

John, newly introduced to serious vocal music, compared the final note of Menotti's "Steal Me" (from *The Old Maid and the Thief*) to watching Olympic figure skaters doing the death spiral, and he wasn't too far off. DeSalvo begins each selection with an introduction, which



Toni DeSalvo

should turn Anna Russell green, and proceeds (unlike Ms. Russell) to create a musically complete moment be it an exquisite Brahms song, a Puccini aria, or a semi-staged hilarious Mozart duet. It ain't the Met yet (thank God), and it most certainly is not slumming, but what it is the ultimate in a sharing of talent leaving every one of us feeling good. And as the lord said, "That's good!"—Ambrose

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Music

Saddle Up!

WILLIE NELSON

When Lorraine Alterman wrote in the *New York Times* that Willie Nelson is making "country music that can move even those of us who think we despise it," part of that "us" included a hefty chunk of the gay population. Willie Nelson's brand of so-called "progressive country music," along with the music of such people as Waylon Jennings, Dianne Davidson, Kris Kristofferson, Emmylou Harris, and Linda Ronstadt, is making traditional American Country-and-Western music palatable to more and more "hip" city folks, and that includes gays. Willie Nelson's latest album, in fact, *Red Headed Stranger* (on Columbia), lends itself even more easily to a soulful experience of a gay people's epic than anything by Barbra Streisand or Bette Midler.

RED HEADED STRANGER

This is no mere collection of beautiful country tunes and ballads. It is, quite simply, the most outstanding song cycle to come out of the American male experience in many years. Willie has had four wives in his forty-three years, and you



Willie Nelson

gotta figure he's not writing about gay people. But, like most great art, his work is universal. His songs deal with people. Anyone who has the capacity to experience the basic emotions of the human condition can identify with *Red Headed Stranger*. If society's oppression of gay people enables us to feel "soul" more keenly and acutely, we'll be able to respond to Willie's love odyssey even more intensely. That's one of the door prizes you get for being society's victim.

The *Red Headed Stranger* is about a dude who gets hurt in love.

He's wild in his sorrow
He's ridin' and hidin' his pain

I'll put Willie's lyrics up against Barry White's as an exponent of the "gay" experience any day of the week.

Don't know why but the one I love
left me
Left me lonely and cold and so weak
And I need someone's arms to hold
me

Til I'm strong enough to get back
on my feet.

Doesn't that sound familiar?

He loved her so dearly he went out
of his mind
When she left him for someone that
she'd left behind
And he cried like a baby and
screamed like a panther
in the middle of the night
And he saddled his pony and he
went for a ride

Intrinsic in the "gay experience, U.S.A.," we get to saddle a lot more ponies, go for a lot more rides. But straight people have those feelings, too.

Willie's plaintive, mellow songs seem like simple love songs. You've got to listen closely before this country boy from—ugh—Texas shatters your being and brings tears to your eyes. But you don't have to if you don't want to. You never do with truly great albums. The album stands as a really good piece of music even without the heavy emotional trip. Shit, there's a lovely C&W instrumental version of "O'er the Waves" (the trapeze song) and a real up honky-tonk saloon music tune, featuring Willie's sister Bobbie on piano, called "Down Yonder." And, of course, Willie's songs are all—every one of them—beautiful. He does Hank Cochran's "Can I Sleep in Your Arms," and the melody (it sounds like "Red River Valley") makes you think you grew up singing it.

But, to tell the truth, I don't believe that there's anyone who really can just get off on the tunes and songs and melodies without sooner or later getting caught up in the essence of what Willie is creating with *Red Headed Stranger*. And I don't believe there's a person alive who won't identify deeply with that essence.

ETTA JAMES IN CONCERT

Some came to dance, some came to listen. Many came unprepared, attracted by word of mouth, and others were primed to applaud at the opening bars of already familiar tunes. The audience was mixed, gay/straight, black/white, but the common denominator lay in the person of an uncommon woman. Etta James, eight months and a week pregnant, fused that audience into a pulsating unity with the fire of her superb voice. The scene at San Francisco's Great American Music Hall was typical of the performances that Ms. James has been giving as she attempts to earn her rightful superstar status. She's big. She's soulful. She can command an audience with a nod of her head, a twist

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Etta James — Photo by Roberto Morrison

of her body, and the magic of her singing. Having recently licked a heroin addiction, which was partly responsible for her flagging career, Etta James is on her way to the top. Just ask the rent-a-cop who tried in vain to keep her frenzied fans from dancing in the aisles. The lady has arrived. Her superior performance came as no surprise to Etta's longtime admirers, who can remember when she was turning out such instant "classics" as "Roll with Me, Henry" and "Tell Mama" for the legendary Chess record label, back in the '50s and early '60s. She got her stage act together as a member of the Johnny Otis Show and as the opening act for Little Richard when she was still in her teens. This was at a time when a black performer had to be something special to get any kind of work and when the attitude was:

Remember if you plan to stay
Those who give might take away
Don't bite the hand that feeds.

Some of the finest R&B vocalists got their starts backing Etta on her early Chess sessions. Talk about credentials. Who else can boast of having employed Marvin Gaye, Ben E. King, and Otis Redding as sidemen? She's done as much to inspire her fellow artists as her audiences, and much of the excitement of an Etta

James concert is due to the interaction between singer and musicians.

In the studio Etta James has space to explore every nuance of a magnificent vocal style that has been compared to Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, and she is able to translate the studio feel of even the most subtle ballads into an awesome stage presentation. Her most recent Chess release, *Come a Little Closer*, covers a lot of territory from the snaky opener, "Out on the Streets Again," to the love-lost ballad "Come a Little Closer." Etta soars, drives, gives, and takes. When she moans, there's a lifetime of ups and painful downs behind it. Donna Sommers might show you a good time tonight, but Etta James is gonna love you forever.

Etta James has been fighting all her life.

Things is hard to come by
Money's hard to get
Only time you get ahead
Is when you place a bet.

Hey, man! Give me the dice and let it roll! She's kicked junk and gained a national reputation in spite of a label that has never properly promoted its people. The musicians who record and perform with her change frequently, and it is ultimately Etta alone, drawing on her huge reserves of energy and talent, who makes the music happen.

Out on the street again
Tryin' to find one friend
People with no faces
They've lost their places.

Etta James if finally finding her place, and she's got an enthusiastic audience that's glad to see her up there where she belongs. —Howie Klein

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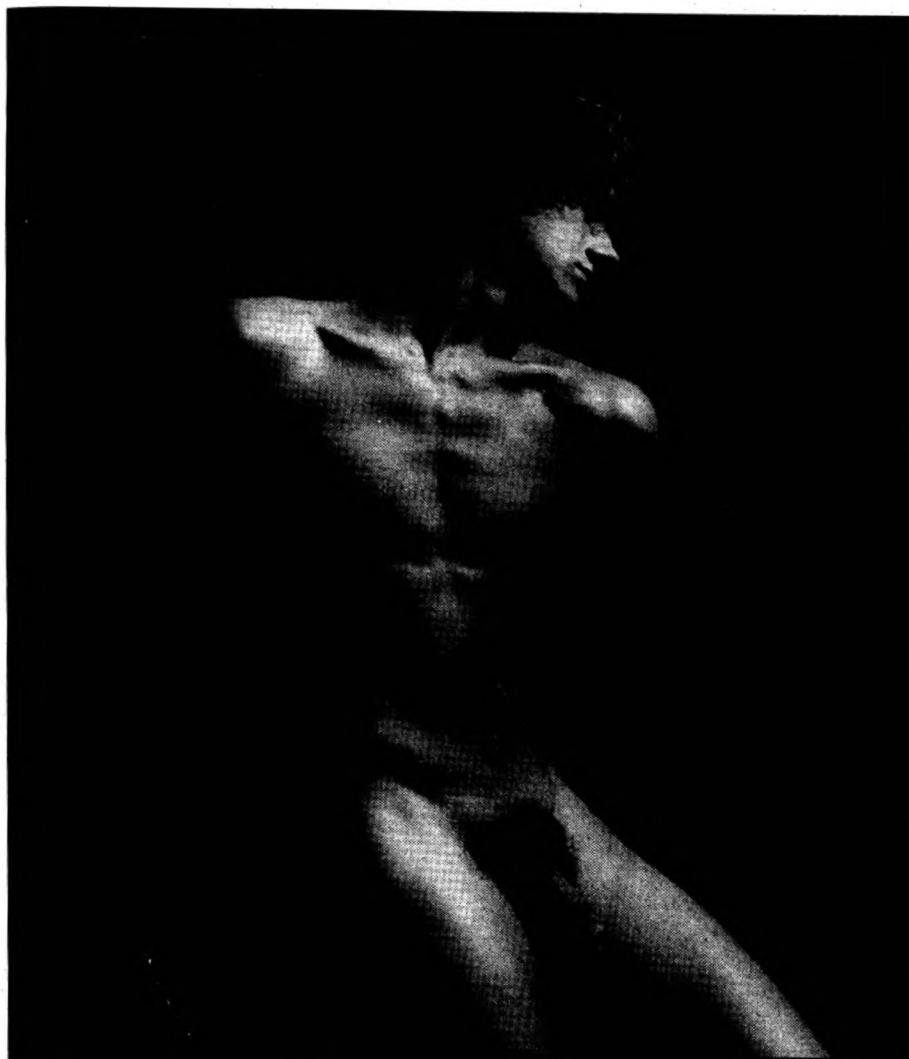
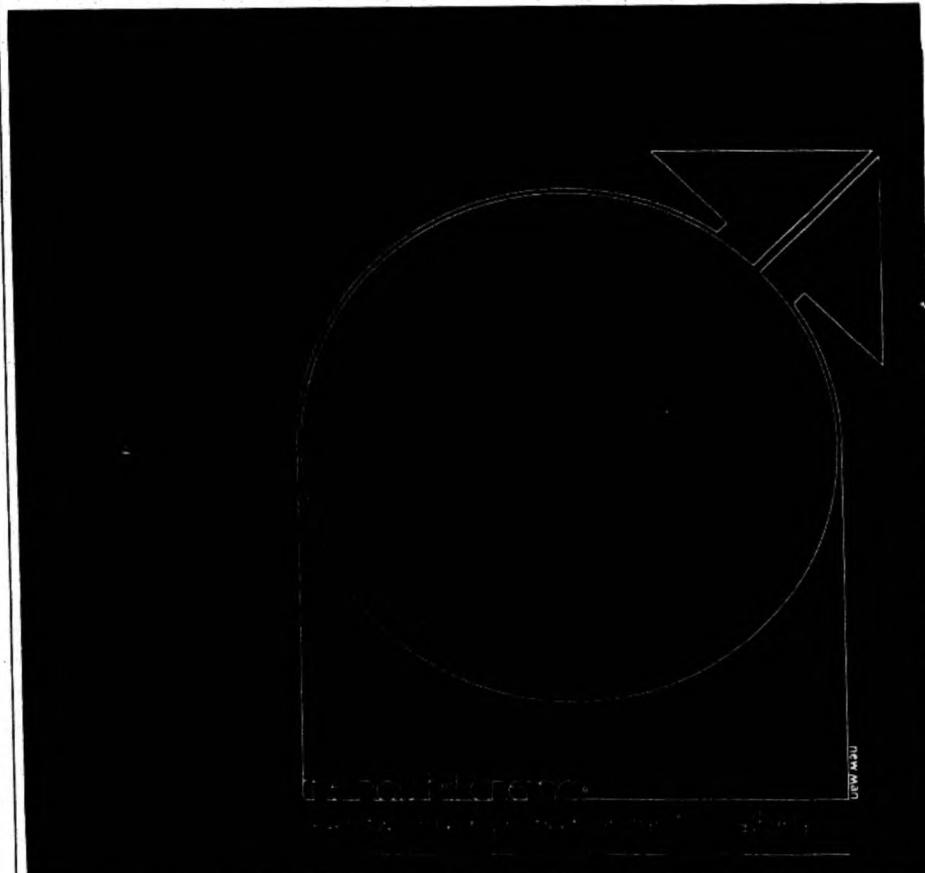
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Making My Cake



Photo by Jarrett

And Eating It, Too by DOMINIC

Fantasies, where would we be without them? Confronted with reality. A shaky word, for we all have our own individual reality. Attitude seems to be the thing that guides us. It's that single ingredient that makes things work or not work for us. I'm concerned at the moment with what makes a bath house experience a success or a failure.

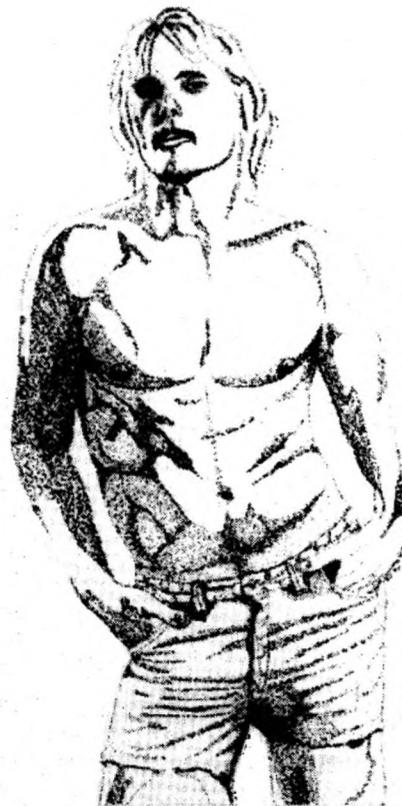
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The surroundings are deliberately all simple, not much in the way of decor and for me that makes the people more noticeable and I like not being caught up in flashy presentation.

The upstairs rooms were still being worked on during my last visit and one anticipates much, much space for accommodations. I don't know if there's going to be a place to just lay back with comfort and quiet. I would find such a space welcomed—away from TV sounds.

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Travel

Sonshine State

One rainy day a few weeks ago I decided that I had had enough, and hopped on the next flight to Miami. It was my first time in Florida, but certainly not my last. After arriving in Miami, I drove to Ft. Lauderdale where I checked into the MARLIN BEACH HOTEL. It is the only good gay hotel in southern Florida and is situated directly across the street from a very cruisy beach. The best part of the hotel was the Lower Deck Disco. The

music was throbbing, and the dancers were hot. I watched several guys through the underwater windows in the pool, and danced until the 5 AM closing. What a fabulous place! The following day, Sunday, I spent the day around the pool, and at tea time enjoyed the open air dancing.

Further down the coast I visited TEE JAY'S in Hollywood, Florida, which was also a great spot. Dancing to the pulsating disco was again the name of the game.

Miami, just 30 miles south of Ft. Lauderdale is a maze of bars and beaches. I spent the days at Dania Beach or Virginia Beach where there were hundreds of beautiful guys. There was some nude sunbathing, but it is not well accepted in the Eastern atmosphere. I heard wild stories about what went on in the bushes, so I had to investigate. The stories are true!

There are several large dance bars in Miami and Miami Beach which cater to the younger and wilder set. Drinking starts late, and the dancing continues until dawn. Since the drinking age in Florida is eighteen, I did find a lot of younger people around. THE HAYLOFT and THE WAREHOUSE VIII are by far the most popular spots, but I have heard there is an even better place that has just opened. These bars are located near the Coconut Grove area of Miami which is a very attractive and very gay shopping area. Sunday afternoons at the HAMLET is the best in town for after-beach fun.

I did not get to Key West as I had hoped, but I heard lots about this little island 130 miles south of Miami. I will save that for my next trip to Florida which will be very soon, I hope. In fact, I hear Easter in Florida cannot be beaten by any resort at any time except maybe New Orleans for Mardi Gras. Travel agencies advertising in Vector are in constant touch with gay travel realities and will be delighted to share their inside information.

—Nikos Iatrides

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GA1-3353
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Wed.—Tues., March 17-23
Gene Kelly—Debbie Reynolds
SINGIN' IN THE RAIN
in Technicolor
Esther Williams—Victor Mature
MILLION DOLLAR MERMAID
in Technicolor

Wed.—Tues., March 24-30
Spencer Tracy—Katharine Hepburn
WOMAN OF THE YEAR
Spencer Tracy—Elizabeth Taylor
FATHER OF THE BRIDE

Wed.—Tues., March 31-April 6
Gene Kelly—Frank Sinatra
ON THE TOWN
in Technicolor
Kathryn Grayson—Mario Lanza
TOAST OF NEW ORLEANS
in Technicolor

Wed.—Tues., April 7-13
Greta Garbo—Melvyn Douglas
TWO-FACED WOMAN
Jean Harlow—William Powell
LIBELED LADY

Wed.—Tues., April 14-20
Earthquake Anniversary Special!
Clark Gable—Jeanette MacDonald
SAN FRANCISCO
Judy Garland—Angela Lansbury
THE HARVEY GIRLS
in Technicolor
& Festival of Historic SF shorts!

Wed.—Tues., April 21-27
Johnny Weissmuller—Maureen O'Sullivan
TARZAN AND HIS MATE
Stewart Granger—Deborah Kerr
KING SOLOMON'S MINES
in Technicolor

Richelieu Cinema

1075 Geary at Van Ness
PR1-5200
San Francisco, California

Wed.—Tues., March 17-23;
Fred Astaire—Ginger Rogers
TOP HAT
Eddie Cantor & the Goldwyn Girls
ROMAN SCANDALS

Wed.—Tues., March 24-30
Louise Rainer—Fernand Gravet
THE GREAT WALTZ
Jeanette MacDonald—Nelson Eddy
NAUGHTY MARIETTA

Wed.—Tues., March 31-April 6
Greta Garbo—Clark Gable
SUSAN LENNOX, HER FALL & RISE
Marie Dresser—Wallace Beery
MIN & BILL

Wed.—Tues., April 7-13
2 Zany Marx Brothers Rib-Tickers
GO WEST
and
THE BIG STORE

Wed.—Tues., April 14-20
Greta Garbo—Ramon Navarro
MATA HARI
Clark Gable—Jean Harlow
RED DUST

Wed.—Tues., April 21-27
Joan Crawford—Clark Gable
DANCING LADY
Jean Harlow—Franchot Tone
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