

# BOOG CITY

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FROM A GROUP OF ARTISTS AND WRITERS BASED IN AND AROUND NEW YORK CITY'S EAST VILLAGE

ISSUE 37 FREE

**POETRY** Jim Behrle, Anselm Berrigan, Edmund Berrigan, Marcella Durand, David Hadbawnik, Bob Holman, Amy King, Basil King, Joel Kuszai, Bill Luoma, Jill Magi, Elinor Nauen, Jean-Paul Pecqueur, Lee Ranaldo, Douglas Rothschild, Lauren Russell, Susan Schultz, Nathaniel Siegel, Joanna Sondheim, Maureen Thorson, Scott MX Turner, Spike Vrusho, Alli Warren

## the baseball issue

### Ammiel Alcalay

Park Slope, Brooklyn

#### Bob Tillman's Frame

There is the poem, and the frame, which is also an inning. There is me, the poet, and Bob Tillman, the catcher. And there's also Satchel Paige, the pitcher. This business of pitching and catching can get pretty damn confusing, whether in sex or in baseball. Jack Spicer got all balled up talking about this in Vancouver in 1965, when he said: "You're both catcher and pitcher, I guess, as a poet." This discussion went on for some time with George Bowering saying quite a number of things to Jack, including, at some point, "Lay off Ted Williams, that's all." When I first started thinking about this poem, I wasn't sure if Bob Tillman was dead or alive but I soon found out that he'd moved on, a little more than six years ago. Bob Tillman, born March 27, 1937, in Nashville, major league debut on April 15, 1962, final game on October 1st, 1970, dead of a heart attack on June 23rd, 2000, in Gallatin, also in Tennessee. The first catcher I ever really followed, or had to follow, when I started walking the ten or twelve blocks from home to Fenway Park, circa 1964. That's when Tillman hit .278 with 17 homers and 61 RBIs, his best year, and only made 11 errors, fielding .989. He caught Bill Monbouquette the first game I ever went to, a 1-0 loss against the Twins in which Monbo pitched an absolute gem, just giving up one hit, a homer to Jim Hall that snuck over the wall and into the bullpen. In '65 though, Tillman only hit .215. Listen Satchel, and you too, Bowering, there's a hell of a lot more to this than meets the eye. To begin with, I was at Fenway Park in 1965, watching the Sox play Charlie Finley's crazy Kansas City A's, the year he brought you, Satchel, back into the picture, as a latter day barnstorming gimmick, of course, but also to honor you. You sat out in the bullpen in a rocking chair with a basket full of candy next to you and you kept throwing handfuls of it out to us cheering kids sitting in the bleachers right behind you, as you yelled "Candy City, Candy City." I'm positive you took the mound that day and I've spent many many hours scouring the accounts and records but I can find absolutely nothing to verify what I know I saw and it's beginning to drive me crazy. Strangely enough, Bob Tillman didn't even catch that day, sitting the game out. And there's also no way of knowing what he thought about poetry though he did once say that he "couldn't hit a curveball with an oar" and that's not anything if not poetic. I do know this, though: it's now 2006 and it looks like the world has gone to hell in a hand basket, what we once thought of as our country seems to have disappeared into the undulating folds of bloated, indistinguishable time. Yet, I've noticed – and I'm not the only one – that all kinds of strange records that haven't been touched in decades are getting broken this year, for instance: Corey Sullivan of the Rockies tripled twice in the same inning, a feat that hadn't been accomplished in over 50 years; with an extra base hit in his 14th straight game, Chipper Jones tied a major league record set by Paul Waner in 1927; two consecutive shutouts were thrown at Fenway, something that hadn't happened since 1916; Luke Hudson of the Kansas City Royals gave up 11 runs in the first inning, something that hadn't been done since it happened to Kid Nichols, in 1897, against the Brooklyn Bridegrooms. Call me crazy, but I know all this means something, just like I know I saw you, Satch, take the mound at Fenway that day in 1965. And like my old friend Danny writes "the interregnum is over and the final days have begun." Is it not too much to hope for some John Brown to stop the noise drowning out the timeless banter between innings, to light the fire that redeems Josh Gibson's rage and madness, and redeems your style, Satchel, and patience, that redeems the Tennessee that bred Bob Tillman, and takes us back to ballgames of the land, buried deep in the rifts of this, our very continent?

Ammiel Alcalay has played for *Singing Horse*, *City Lights*, *Beyond Baroque*, and numerous other franchises. After some time on the DL, 2006 promises to be quite a season for Alcalay, with *A Little History* due out from *Beyond Baroque*, and *scrapmetal* from the *Heretical Texts* series at *Factory School*.

Bob Tillman was born in 1937 and died in 2000. He began his major league career for the Boston Red Sox, playing for them from 1962 to the middle of the 1967 season, when he was traded to the New York Yankees. He finished his career playing for the Atlanta Braves from 1968-1970. His lifetime fielding percentage, in a total of 725 games, was a very respectable .988, with only 55 career errors.



Melissa Zexter **Carlton Fisk Fan**. Silver gelatin print, thread, 20" x 24"

### George Bowering

Vancouver, British Columbia

#### Satchel Paige

July 7, 2006, according to some books  
Satch is a hundred years old today.

He's pitching somewhere. It's from Leroy  
we learned that looking goofy

is a way to be hip as you'll never be.  
We knew the Globetrotters could have

whipped the Fort Wayne Pistons. Satch  
wasn't about to fetch it, he told us

baseball turned him from a second class  
citizen into a second class immortal.

Too bad baseball got played in the U.S.,  
where Ty Cobb was afraid of Darkies, where

Babe Ruth got 60 home runs off tired white men  
the year Satch turned twenty-one, you know,

the year you're called a man?

George Bowering is the Official Loudmouth Fan of the Vancouver Canadians, Oakland's Single-A team in the Northwest League. Talonbooks has just published his Vermeer's Light: Poems 1996-2006. They published his travel-memoir *Baseball Love* this past spring.

Like Dizzy Dean, Satchel Paige had a lot of different birthdays, but they average out to July 7, 1905. Or maybe 1906. In 1965 he threw three scoreless innings for the Kansas City Athletics.

He was the best 60-year-old pitcher in baseball, even if he was only 59. Well, he was the best pitcher of all time. If the strike zone was over a cigarette butt, he could hit it five times out of six. And he did. Paige was a great showman and a great raconteur. His remarks use up a lot of pages in any U.S. book of quotations. "Work like you don't need the money," he said. "Love like you've never been hurt. Dance like nobody's watching." If the U.S. had allowed Satch to pitch in the American League before he turned 43, Joe DiMaggio never would have had a 56-game hitting streak, and Ted Williams never would have hit .406.

# Elinor Nauen

The East Village

## Buck: Yeah

### The Buck Starts Here

My father played on the baseball team of my little hometown of Carabelle, Florida.

### Buck Up

It is a religion. If you go by the rules, it is a right. The things that you can do. The things that you can't do, that you aren't supposed to do. And if these are carried out, it makes a beautiful picture overall.

### Buck Up

The black ballplayer had to get out of the cotton field, the celery fields. Baseball was the out.

### Buck the Trend

Out of that celery field. Improving my life. I said, I'm going to be a ballplayer. When you stop learning, you're through.

### Bucking John

John Jordan O'Neil, nicknamed after co-owner of the semi-pro Miami Giants, Buck O'Neil.

### Buck: Rear Jump Kick

Can you imagine, a ballclub with eight or nine Rickey Hendersons? Nothing quicker. Yeah.

### Buck: Call of the Wild

You could get a seven-passenger car for \$150. Nine of us in a seven-passenger car.

### Buckskin

The Macon, Georgia, Ku Klux Klan told us they're going to march in that ballfield. We got back in that car and took off.

### Buck: Challenge, Resist

One thing about it though, you know there always will be a tomorrow. Yeah. You got me today, but I'm coming back.

### Buck Knife

We've done a whole lot of things to hurt it, but you can't kill baseball.

### Buck: Dollar Dough

The war, and all the good ballplayers gone. Branch Rickey saw us play before 50,000 in Comiskey Park, 40,000 in Yankee Stadium. A new source of revenue: He got people that had never seen a major league baseball game coming out to see Jackie.

### Passing the Buck

That's progress, progress. Like the first black guy that went to the University of Mississippi. I can't go, but I'm so happy you are there 'cause I know that means my son and my grandson will be there.

### Pass the Buck

We did our part and we turned it over to another generation and it's still changing – which is the way it should be.

Yeah!

*Elinor Nauen edited Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend: Women Writers on Baseball (Faber & Faber, 1994). Her baseball poetry and prose have appeared in many anthologies and magazines including Up Late: American Poetry Since 1970, Cult Baseball Players, Line Drives: 100 Contemporary Baseball Poems, for which she also wrote the foreword, Baseball Diary, Elysian Fields Quarterly, Aethlon, Sports Illustrated for Women, and Nine. She has thrown out the first pitch (a strike!) at a St. Paul (Minn.) Saints game. Among her other books are American Guys (Hanging Loose, 1997), Ladies, Start Your Engines: Women Writers on Cars & the Road (Faber & Faber, 1997), and Cars & Other Poems (o.o.p.).*

*Negro Leagues All-Star John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil (1911-2006) was a first baseman and manager from 1937-55, mostly for the Kansas City Monarchs. In 1942, he led the Monarchs to a Negro American League title, then hit .353 as the Monarchs swept the Homestead Grays in four games in the Negro World Series. O'Neil won batting titles in 1940 and 1946. As a scout for the Chicago Cubs, he signed Ernie Banks, Lou Brock, Joe Carter, and Lee Smith, among others. He served as a charismatic and enthusiastic ambassador for baseball through the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, where he was board chairman (www.nlbm.com/s/chair.htm), and elsewhere.*

# Bill Luoma

Berkeley, Calif.

## Robinson Cano

Robinson Cano,  
you were named after Jackie Robinson by father Jose.  
His work and yours belong  
to the whole pompatus of love.

Robinson Cano,  
chief happiness officer,  
I did for #6 in tribute  
play for the Yankees  
with a damaged hamstring  
pulled by Gert and again by Hurt.

Robinson Cano,  
I am sorry for #22 jersey on ebay  
and wearing it due to a poor slugging percentage  
and then hitting doubles.

Robinson Cano,  
I felt bad for taking your number  
and making you go on the DL.  
wtf! I'm working from home!

Robinson Cano,  
taking the splitter deep to right cane field.  
You made a nice play  
to throw out Scott Posednik  
at third.

Robinson Cano,  
in San Pedro,  
you keep your hands to yourself.  
That's what you are!

*Bill Luoma*  
#22  
Shortstop  
San Francisco Yankees  
Height: 5-9  
Weight: 175  
Bats: R  
Throws: R  
Born: Nov. 18, 1960  
Home: Berkeley, CA, United States of America  
College: University of Hawaii  
Draft: None

*Robinson Cano*  
#22  
Second Base  
New York Yankees  
Height: 6-0  
Weight: 190  
Bats: L  
Throws: R  
Born: Oct. 22, 1982  
Home: San Pedro de Macoris, Dominican Republic  
College: None  
Draft: None

# EDITORIAL

This is the fifth time a Boog publication has featured baseball poetry, twice in our old litzine *Booglit* and this, the third time in *Boog City*.

This time around I decided to put together a baseball poetry roster. A major league roster has 25 players on it, so I found 25 poets I dig who were willing to write an original baseball poem. I then assigned them each a position on a baseball team, from starting pitcher to backup

first baseman, and everything in between. They were then told to pick anyone in the history of baseball who has ever played their position, be it in Major League Baseball, the Negro Leagues, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, the minor leagues, college, a kid from the schoolyard, or anyone else and write a new poem about them.

I gathered all of the art in these pages from Melissa Zexter, who previously contributed her work to our last baseball issue in the spring of 2002.

Three months in the making, enjoy these 25 newest entries in the baseball poem world. —DAK

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# Bob Holman

## The Bowery

### Frank Robinson

Oh racist Cincinnati! Crosley Field with Robby in left!  
Elegant impassive burning  
Here's the five who hit more homers:  
Aaron, Bonds, Ruth, Mays, Sosa.  
That's It List, Hit List!

#### Racism and Free Agency

So Curt Flood played right those first two years  
(Frank: Rookie of Year 1956),  
but Cincinnati couldn't have so many blacks on team.  
Flood is told no raise because of franchise financial problems,  
gets huffy and is traded to Cards - racism at root  
Of Free Agency, you heard it here first,  
Read poem all about it!

#### The Worst Trade Ever

Robinson to Baltimore, 1966.  
Reds left behind and white to become Big Red Machine.  
Pete Rose, outsider, hung with Robby and Vada Pinson.  
Does Robinson's departure push Rose into bookies' arms?  
Frank Robinson, first black manager in majors,  
recently dismissed Nationals' manager.

#### Robinson in Washington

So maybe that's where he gets W's attention,  
awarded Presidential Medal of Freedom, 2005.  
In photo it's Robinson as President,  
little shuffling white guy, the embarrassed recipient.  
Aretha Franklin is seated behind them, she knows who to sing  
"Respect" for...

#### Respect For

Frank Robinson, who was traded "an old 30"  
says Reds front office, translates "too many  
blacks on team" to the Orioles for Milt (Who?)  
Pappas, 1966, same year I leave Cincy  
("Porkopolis" Mapplethorpe art bust et al)  
for New York, Frank O'Hara dies, Robinson wins  
Triple Crown, AL MVP (only player to win MVP  
in both leagues), leads Baltimore to World Championship....

#### Robby Approaches 2nd on a Potential Double Play

Run gunning full clock speed handle axe  
Hands clawing high in air aim direct pivot man  
At last possible moment fear wait slide  
Tumbling UP (impossible) dust to rolling body block  
How's that for a finish and if he happens to be somewhere  
In the vicinity of second so much the better

Bob Holman's eighth book is *A Couple of Ways of Doing Something*, a collaboration with Chuck Close (*Aperture*), released this fall. He was a founder of *Mouth Almighty/Mercury Records*, the first major label devoted to poetry, and created *The United States of Poetry* for PBS. He is chief curator of the *People's Poetry Gathering*, poetry guide at *About.com*, and proprietor of the *Bowery Poetry Club* ([www.bowerypoetry.com](http://www.bowerypoetry.com)). He was recently appointed visiting professor of writing at *Columbia University* and received the 2003 *Barnes & Noble "Writers for Writers" Award*.

Frank Robinson, possibly the most underrated player in baseball history, ranks sixth in lifetime homers (he was fourth when he retired). He joined the N.L.'s Cincinnati Reds in 1956, hit 38 home runs, led the league in runs scored with 122, and was named the league's rookie of the year.

He led the N.L. in slugging with a .595 percentage in 1960 and with a .611 percentage in 1961, when he batted .323 with 37 home runs and 124 RBI to win the most valuable player award. Robinson had an even better year in 1962, batting .342 with 39 home runs and 136 RBI and leading the league with a .624 slugging percentage, 134 runs scored, and 51 doubles. His production dropped somewhat during the next three seasons in part because of injuries.

The Reds traded him to the Baltimore Orioles in 1966 and he responded with the best season of his career. Robinson won the triple crown with a .316 average, 49 home runs, and 122 RBI, also leading the A.L. with 122 runs scored and a .637 slugging percentage.

Robinson was named most valuable player for that performance, becoming the only man ever to win the MVP award in both leagues. He was also named male athlete of the year by the Associated Press.

He was traded to the Los Angeles Dodgers after hitting only .281 in 1971. The Dodgers sent him to the California Angels the following year. Two years later the Angels sent him to the Cleveland Indians. Robinson was named playing manager of the Indians in 1975, the first Black manager in major league history.

He retired as a player after the 1976 season and was fired as manager in 1977. Robinson also managed the San Francisco Giants from 1981-1984 and Baltimore from 1988-1991. He was awarded the A.L. Manager of the Year award in 1989 for leading the Orioles to an 87-75 record. He took over the Montreal Expos in 2002, and managed them for three seasons, before they became the Washington Nationals, where he continued for two more years, before his contract was not renewed late last month.



Melissa Zexter **Baseball Card Collection 1**. Silver gelatin print, thread, acrylic, 20" x 24"

# Susan M. Schultz

## Kane`ohe, Hawai`i

### The Love Song of Albert Pujols

Oh happy happy Cards!  
He bats third, my love, my homer happy  
Albert, love thighs flexed, his beautiful pecs  
apoplect-ick! They take the field, the Sox,  
dandelion eyes ablaze, their coral  
helmets, their dreary clubs! My Albert,  
his cheeks roses, nostrils alert as  
a torro's, his bat a lance to slay the screw-  
ball dragon! He strides to the plate, spikes  
lavish in the St. Louis sun, as from his face  
a happy vision comes: and when he hits,  
immaculate conception of stars, my own  
thighs shiver with delight. I am one  
with you, Albert Pujols, oh god of  
the diamond deific, and of our union  
comes my exquisite non-rhyme, this mon-  
ument of verse to outlast your supple  
calves, your sweet-hinged knees,  
your dulcet Dominican tones. Say  
my name, oh Pujols, that I may truly live!

Susan M. Schultz has been a fan of the St. Louis Cardinals for upward of 40 years. Her baseball memoir can be found at [www.hawaii.edu/vice-versa/](http://www.hawaii.edu/vice-versa/). She professes English at the University of Hawai`i-Manoa, has authored three books of poems, one book of literary criticism, and edited a book on John Ashbery. She edits *Tinfish Press* out of her home on the island of Oahu, and looks forward to the revival of Hawai`i Winter Baseball this season.

Jose Albert Pujols was born Jan. 16, 1980 in Santo Domingo, DR; his family later moved to Independence, MO. Pujols was called up as a third baseman for the St. Louis Cardinals in 2000; since then, his offensive statistics rival such players as Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio. Pujols and his wife, Deirdre, have four children, including one with Down Syndrome. They launched the Pujols Family Foundation in 2005, dedicated to "the love, care and development of people with Down syndrome and their families."

# Anselm Berrigan

## East Village

## To Bernie Williams

Bernie, Mel Hall - he of the pet jaguars - called you Bambi and mocked yr glasses. I'm sorry. Maybe Mel was jealous of your ability to speak four languages, play guitar and choose baseball over med school. Maybe Mel was scared.

Bernie, when those protesters in Kansas City screamed at the Yankees for wrecking baseball's competitive balance it was not, as you stated, "like the sixties". But you sounded like an everyday American trained to be freaked by protests in general, so only me and George Vecsey seemed to notice.

Bernie, Mel was just a prick. The Hitman took care of him. You just made the mistake of bringing your brain to work. Thankfully Stick didn't let King George trade you.

Bernie, everything in baseball is unintentionally surreal. You know this. Your boss thinks he's Patton. A family man outside the ballpark, you're called a switch-hitter inside, in public, playing a game. Then they say you lack instincts.

Bernie, you hugged a woman who probably lost someone in the WTC. You got asked about it a thousand times. You still get asked about it. You answer carefully. Is it weird?

Bernie, you're routinely called nice by the press, but you're almost old enough to qualify as a full-time scoundrel. You raced home in the '96 LCS against Baltimore when the infielder dropped the ball - like Country Slaughter in '46, like a good scoundrel.

Bernie, the stat-heads freak when the fans in the Bronx scream their love for you. How can they understand such purity? The purity of your being almost normally weird enough to be an average NYC oddball stranger.

Bernie, your shoulders are shot. Every time you throw I cringe. I'll buy you a beer for each shoulder if you can find me.

Bernie, sentimentality is bullshit and baseball bathes in it.

Bernie, when you stop playing who will be left on the Yankees to be human?

*Anselm Berrigan was raised in Manhattan's East Village and lives there now. All of his poems lately have been called Have A Good One. He's the artistic director of the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church, and a shameless Yankee fan. He remembers Oscar Gamble, and Reggie's Jackson's remark that Gamble hit like he was worth his contract and played the field as if the whole amount was bulging out of his uniform.*

*Bernie Williams was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and has been playing baseball for the New York Yankees since 1991. He is a lifetime .297 hitter, a four-time A.L. Gold Glove outfielder, and one of the few players of his generation to spend his entire, 10-plus year career, thus far, with one team. He has hit 287 home runs, driven in 1,257 runs, has 2,336 hits, and has been a key member of four World Series-winning teams.*

# Douglas Rothschild

## Albany, NY

## Poem for a Shortstop

It is a grey  
rainy Autumn  
day in Albany.

i wonder if  
we'll get a  
green flash?

*Douglas Rothschild is a pseudonym first adopted by a group of second generation post-war Italian Futurists living in Oak Park, IL [60301] in the early part of the final quarter of the 20th century. Subsequently, it has been used by any number of poets when they feel the need to "act the gadfly," most notably at the tail end of the last*

# Jim Behrle

## North Flatbush, Brooklyn

## Phenom Fan

*for Fernando Valenzuela*

First a turn toward second  
And then out comes the gut  
like the night's garbage  
Pushed to the curb,  
Eyes as far up as an appex,  
Arms looped in a gold arch.

The last great screwball known  
To man, belonging to the last  
Great phenom: a young Cy, man  
behind the -mania.

Archie Bunker hassling  
Reggie Jackson, saying how did  
The Yankees miss out on "that  
Fat Mexican kid? \*Hunh\*?"  
Reggie shrugs.

Roger, Dodger. They come and go.  
Pitch every day as if it were your  
last start. Princess Leia puffs of  
Hair bun your ears on the front  
Of a Corn Flakes box. Not even  
E-bay sells anything that says  
"Fernandomania." What baseball forgets  
Stays forgot. To be only a tickle  
Upon the lips of the great Vin Scully.

*Jim Behrle's She's My Best Friend is due out this fall from Pressed Wafer.*

*Fernando Valenzuela Anguamea (b. November 1, 1960) was a star left-handed pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers Major League Baseball team during the 1980s, and one of the few players from Mexico to achieve baseball superstardom in recent years.*

*century in NYC's post-"L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E" scene (after it's major luminaries had moved on).*

*Marty Marion 6'1" [or 2"] 170 lbs.  
Bats: R Throws: R St.L. (both leagues) 1940 to 1953  
Year Ag Tm Lg Pos G PO A E DP FP  
Position Total SS 1547 2986 4829 252 978 .969*

*David called tonight and asked if I had gotten around to writing his poem about a baseball player nicknamed "Mr. Shortstop" at the time that Phil Rizzuto, Pee Wee Reese, Lou Boudreau, & Luke Appling were playing short. This is what I have learned: First, the moniker "Mr. Shortstop" was just a marketing scheme someone at Rawlings came up with.*

*Then I discovered that the reference book Total Baseball: The Official Encyclopedia of Major League Baseball lists only one fielding statistic in it's player records (%\*) [Does this—"total baseball" not apparently including fielding—help to explain Steve Phillips?]*

*As my research continued I discovered that there is apparently only one source for short biographical information on Marty Marion and everyone else is copying it. [What exactly is so appealing about the rather clunky phrase: "Marion disproved the theory that shortstops had to be small men. His unusually long arms, which reached for ground*

# Marcella Durand

## Alphabet City

## Fun

Far be it for it to be about  
Unlikable characters milling  
Nowhere and everywhere at once with

Foreigners streaming in and  
Umbrish afternoons followed by gleaming  
Noons the next day and the day after

Facing before you know it a week to  
Undo all that has come before you.  
No-no and don't attempt to do it again.

Fast and like taken over.  
Under which you bleed  
Nonsensical and yet it continues

Fragile, even slightly transparent.  
Usury and I wish for  
No obeying or self-

Flagellation. Bowing,  
Uncovering, resurrecting. I expected  
Numbers and received rebates.

*Marcella Durand is the author of The Anatomy of Oil (Belladonna Books) and Western Capital Rhapsodies (Faux Press). She grew up in New York City.*

*Paul O'Neill was traded by the Cincinnati Reds in 1992 to the New York Yankees, with whom he played until 2001, as a right fielder and clutch hitter. His sister is food critic Molly O'Neill. Since his retirement, his number 21 has not been worn by any other Yankee.*

*balls like tentacles, prompted writers to dub him 'The Octopus.'" And the entirely inaccurate: "Marion was the premier defensive NL shortstop of his day." [For as the statistics show, his number of putouts, assists, and double plays, were comparable to, but consistently lower than Boudreau's (Of whom it is said "He blew his nose and blew the pennant."—and for which there is no direct evidence, as Cleveland and later Boston never finished two or three games out in second place); Reese's (Hall of Fame); the long suffering Phil Rizzuto (who might not actually deserve [whatever that means] to be in the Hall—though he is rather famous); and Luke Appling (of the eye black)—10 years Marion's senior].*

*Finally, I learned that it is hard to actually write a good poem based upon a "notion" that some sound bite [in this case "Mr. Shortstop"] might actually be accurate. [There is nothing inherently poetical about research.]...Perhaps I really wanted to write a poem about Rabbit Maranville. Marion served the Cards well for 10 years helping them to four Pennants and three World Series. With Marty plugging the middle, they never finished lower than second place. But perhaps (given the biographical information I kept reading) his greatest contribution to the game was that he made Robin Yount possible.*

*\*Note: Vince Coleman scored from third on an F3 with the All-Time fielding % leader at first.*

## Basil King

Park Slope, Brooklyn

### Sandy Koufax/Southpaw

throws fast balls, curves.  
America, Don't strike the batter.  
Strike the zone that constrains  
the Blacks to separate water  
fountains, toilets, and hotels.  
Strike for better pay. Better  
hospitals. Better schools.  
Better food.

Hungry. Home plate is a fortress  
of human inconsistencies. Thirsty  
for the things that cannot be bought  
that are not for sale.

I'm 6' 2" and they call me The  
Big Jew. I wanted to play basketball  
for the Knicks before I started playing  
baseball. I've been married twice and  
divorced both times. I eat pork, love  
ketchup. Smoke. Drive a car on the  
Sabbath. But when it comes to the High  
Holy Days I don't play ball. I renew my  
faith in reason and reinvent myself.

"Home is not just a place,  
but also a time."

*Basil King is currently painting "Basil's Arc"—a cycle of paintings in oil, paste, chalks, and pastel, creating graphics in many media, and continuing work on his next book, Learning to Draw.*

*Sandy Koufax*

*Born: December 30, 1935, Brooklyn, N.Y.*

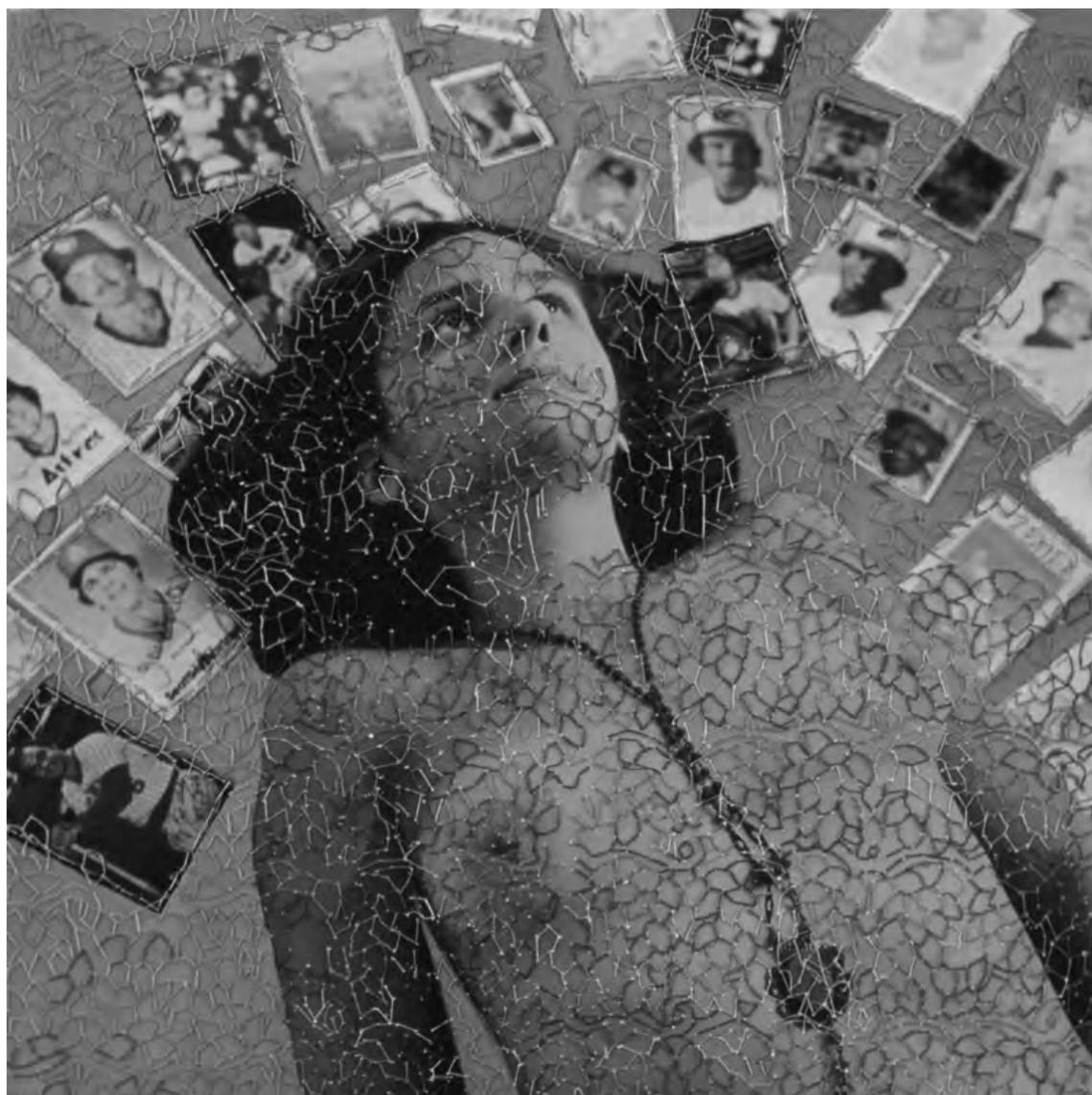
*Batted right, threw left*

*Debut: June 24, 1955, Brooklyn Dodgers*

*Played for the Brooklyn Dodgers 1955-1957 and for the Los Angeles Dodgers 1958-1966*

*Twelve seasons in the majors: six of them indifferent, and for six years he was brilliant. His last year, pitching with a crippled, arthritic arm, he won 27 games and completed as many. He won the Cy Young Award three times (when only one trophy was awarded for both leagues), the World Series MVP award twice, and was named Player of the Decade.*

*On the evening of Sept. 9, 1965, he pitched a perfect game against the Chicago Cubs. Less than a month later, on Oct. 6, he achieved another kind of perfection by refusing to pitch the opening game of the World Series because it fell on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year.*



Melissa Zexter **Baseball Card Collection #2**. Silver gelatin print, thread, acrylic, 20" x 24"

## Jean-Paul Pecqueur

Bay Ridge, Brooklyn

### Just the Thing

In John Carpenter's film version, an air  
of menace mingles  
with the spirit of adventurism  
to produce an abstinence policy pervasive  
as fog. Yet the species survives. We  
survive, mud in our cuffs, rue  
in our throats, our opinions challenged  
and found untenable. Sure it hurts.  
Sure the blessings elude the curses  
only because their superior cosmetics  
exploit the puzzling aura of gold lamé.  
But what do we care, ultimately;  
we can always change if we want.  
Fact is we can't help it. Benjamin  
J. Grimm boards a rocket ship  
and next thing he knows  
his skin has morphed into orange stone.  
And he is not alone. One day  
Alex arrives to deliver the mail  
with both his eyes beaten shut.  
*It's nothing*, he insists, and everyone  
seems to believe him, continuing  
their conversations as though  
a short fuse had not just been lit.  
I remember it was late in the season.  
A game was on the radio—top  
of the ninth with two outs and Kazu  
astride the mound, was working  
"the thang" again, that nasty splitter,  
like it really was nothing at all.

*Jean-Paul Pecqueur is an unapologetic Mariners and Sonics fan from Tacoma, Wash. His first book, The Case Against Happiness, is due later this year from Alice James Books.*

*Kazuhiro Sasaki played for the Yokohama Whales/Bay Stars for nine years before signing with the Seattle Mariners in 2000. During his career in Japan, Sasaki was a five-time Central League Fireman of the Year, a perennial All Star, and the 1997 Japan Series MVP. While in Seattle, he led the Mariners to their best season ever, an MLB-single season, record-tying 116 wins. And although his career as a Mariner came to an inglorious end with a freak suitcase lifting accident, he will always be loved in Seattle for giving the fans a reason to learn about, and thus enjoy, baseball.*

# Lee Ranaldo

TriBeCa

## Knuckle Under (Hoyt Wilhelm)

my apologies to all the southpaw relievers  
bicentennial contenders and burning basemen  
telescopic longball hitters eye the cameras  
gaslight eyesight going bush league  
schizophrenic saloonkeepers' metaphoric rum  
reporter's notebooks full of paraphernalia  
game stat strategists smelling of rosin and hot dogs  
combustible hitters working out Bernoulli's theorems  
workman-like relievers, house keepers  
nagging centerfield commentators  
weeping baseball widows

*if diamonds are a girls best friend  
why do so many girls get mad  
when you wanna go to the ballpark?*

citywide heroes make like plato  
alleviate the need for extra innings  
sages whupping little leather pellets  
restorative tonic for the scandal-weary fan  
avail yrself of a cold beer and  
watch me get this last guy out  
three straight knucklers is all I need buckaroo  
random philanthropic chagrin  
chaotic airflow

the familiar perimeter of the warning track  
vivacious reservoir of auburn thighs  
sculptural rotation on the mound  
wonderful bauble, vague shadow, metaphysical orb  
ain't me gonna drop the ball

*Lee Ranaldo is an original member of the group Sonic Youth, formed in 1981 in New York City. His books include Lengths & Breaths, Road Movie, and Jrnl80s. Recent recordings include Rather Ripped (with Sonic Youth), The Celestial Answer (with William Hooker), and Metal Box (with Text of Light). Visual works have been shown at the Mercer Union, Toronto; Gigantic Art Space, NYC; Hayward Gallery, London; Sydney Museum of Contemporary Art; and Vienna Kunsthalle.*

*Hoyt Wilhelm played from 1952-1972 for 10 teams, including the Giants, Orioles, and White Sox. The knuckleballer is third all-time in games pitched (1,070), and first in games finished (651) and games won in relief (123). He has a career E.R.A. of 2.52 and 227 saves, is the first reliever inducted into the Hall of Fame (1985), threw a no-hitter vs. the N.Y. Yankees (1958), hit the lone home run of his career in his first major league at bat (1952), and won a Purple Heart at the Battle of the Bulge.*

*"He had the best knuckleball you'd ever want to see. He knew where it was going when he threw it, but when he got two strikes on you, he'd break out one that even he didn't know where it was going."*

—Brooks Robinson

# Edmund Berrigan

South Slope, Brooklyn

## Shiver Theory

for Jack Warhop

Go flotted turnip  
& stutter the neverant pitchearth  
no blown out reorderings for fake ediction  
go basalt scrounge mortifier  
soaked in sprite sort

folio ham is a mighty yarn  
a palfully selfaware bullet of bread crusts  
wagering hugely on an empty veil

he was the soda we meant to tackle  
matter-of-fact in a cage match

you can pretend yourself until final believing  
bellying sort strung self-impaired

or be lucky enough never to believe your own story

*Edmund Berrigan is a pillow for quadrupeds.*

*John Milton Warhop (1884-1960) was a right-handed pitcher for the New York Highlanders (who would become the Yankees in 1913) from 1908-15. Warhop was a sub-.500 pitcher who only ever led the league in hits batsmen and home runs allowed. He's best remembered for giving up Babe Ruth's first home run.*

# Joanna Sondheim

Fort Greene, Brooklyn

## I Don't Know

## What My Position Is

To go towards, slippery instrument  
Release Michigan, a bottomless California truck  
Bodily glee, but lately, states tried to grab  
Unsure, of position and what the ball does in the air

What was suspended, I don't know the story  
frought if name a game

But if average is fined and sleeping in? If the numbers fly?  
Settles grief and lands a Dodger, a Yankee, a Canary

Blowing through this was  
What a  
Trying for pickup, the rollover, felt good  
Beat this: in thirty years, entered, I  
Raise my hand to the air

*Joanna Sondheim's poems have appeared in sonaweb, Fishdrum, bird dog, and canwehaveourballback, among others. Her chapbook, The Fit, is available from Sona Books.*

*Steve Howe's extraordinary and short-lived career as a left-handed relief pitcher for the Dodgers, Twins, Rangers, and Yankees was cut short by his lifelong addiction to alcohol and drugs. After numerous suspensions, including from his post as a volunteer coach for his daughter's softball team, he died in April of this year when his truck rolled over in Coachella, Calif.*

# Joel Kuszai

Jackson Heights, Queens

## For a Future Fireman of the Year

Can you anticipate a future heart attack?  
Mid-Summer relief work a typology of the thankless  
A ball of light exploding out of the hand  
A day-night doubleheader with the Yankees  
Smoke drifts high above the left field roof  
The game is no longer on the line  
Mickey Lolich lost his tenth straight in the opener  
News in waves rumbles through 34,000 trembling fans  
The city burning and everyone is mad  
Working the mound in middle relief  
John Hiller got his first win; Mike Marshall got the save  
Later, cut to Willie Horton standing on a car  
His homer in the fourth sparked the victory  
Still in his uniform with its old English D  
At the intersection of solemn pallbearers  
Of a whites-only democracy  
And the flesh-metal ruckus of a night on fire  
"North of Windsor," crying for them to stop  
Not a token but hometown hero  
Not a simple ambassador for Enlightenment values  
Not a script for a sappy movie about redemption and renewal  
Not a documentary, I cannot say "Do not blow yourself up"  
Or burn yourself down, the insane moth over the cartoon cliff.  
Scientism necessitates that everyone throws regularly  
The broken machinery of the human  
Mitigated by ever-ready capacity  
Tough saves and matchups

What do you do when your heart sinks, slips, or stops?  
Do you hold your breath and hope he can save the city?  
An alien, I will go home someday.  
Small quips of solidarity to my irrational solo actors  
Elegant crickets against brackish ambience.

*Joel Kuszai was born in Michigan only days after the 12th Street riot in 1967. A co-founder of Factory School learning and production collective, he teaches writing and cultural rhetoric at Queensborough College.*

*John Hiller, a Toronto native, got his first win on the day the Detroit riots broke out. In 1971 he suffered a massive heart attack, but began a comeback that culminated with his 38 saves in 1973. That year he was named "Fireman of the Year" and received many accolades for his courage. He retired from baseball in 1980.*

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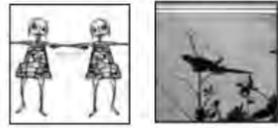
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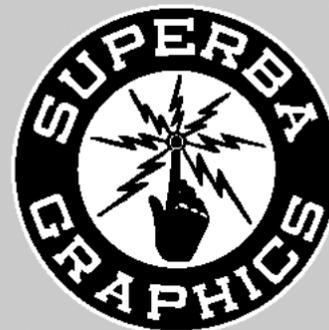
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# Jill Magi

Bay Ridge, Brooklyn

## Who is Laura Rose?

There is no rule,  
but starting would  
be relief in men's.

Writer of romantic  
suspense, daughter  
of Laura Wilder,  
country music star  
or worker  
in the front office.

Holding a Phd  
in astrophysics,  
the first to play.

Her glove  
displayed  
is not history.

Or Sabrina Sexton,  
Ashley Cook,  
Jennifer Hunter,  
Trista Russo.

Belly dancer  
since she was born.

I threw my back out  
but running fast  
was enjoyable, impressing,  
I made a good stop.

This subject is yours  
and obvious.

Afraid of a publicity stunt  
like signing a midget, Mrs. Engle  
was barred from the position.

To celebrate  
greatness in sport or  
the other.

Or Donna Mills,  
Lilly Jacobson,  
Keri Lemasters,  
Tamara Ivie,  
Malaika Underwood,  
Jane Uh.

Have always been  
there.

We enjoy excellence  
as the best possible  
miles per hour.

Although the size  
hasn't been defined,  
little men now are barred.

"Don't throw like a girl"  
or hit, or clubhouse,  
roster, trainer, bat  
boy, owners.  
>>>

Forming a cohesive  
team and good at that.

It was 1952 and she  
was subject  
to severe penalties.

Aware and still  
they say I love this game,  
truthfully, rooting.

What's available.

Editing Laura Rose  
to a page  
that doesn't exist yet.

She is back  
pounding a typewriter  
in the state capitol.

*Jill Magi lives in Brooklyn, teaches at CCNY and Eugene Lang College, and runs Sona Books. Her book, Threads, is forthcoming this fall from Futurepoem Books.*

*Laura Rose is a starting pitcher for the Women's National Team of the U.S.A. Baseball League. She was voted Most Valuable Pitcher in the first ever Women's World Cup in 2004, and was also a member of the 2006 Women's National Team. Rose is from Hollywood, Fla.*

## Spike Vrusho

Rhinebeck, N.Y.

### Band name idea

Bob Veale threw great balls of fire to Jerry Lee...May  
Dock Ellis threw him lysergic imprecision in San Diego  
for that no-hitter on acid which would come down, man, and  
create legions of shallow baseball hipsters 20 years later, when  
not one of them could name Ellis's sober catcher that day.

It was Jerry Lee May, the Pride of Parnassus  
Who wore no curlers in his hair  
and honed his youthful skills in Gypsy Hill Park.  
(Dare you to call it that now).

Dock took the tabs and Spiezio took the pitch.

Damned if the Man didn't call it strike three.

What the hell do we do now?

Maybe visit some buddies from Norfolk

*Spike Vrusho published and edited the fanzine Murtaugh and went on to write for ESPN Classic and MLB Productions as well as serving as editor of the weekly New York Sports Express. He is writing a book about baseball fights for Lyons Press.*

*Jerry May was born on Tues., Dec. 14, 1943, in Staunton, Va. May was 20-years-old when he broke into the big leagues on Sept. 19, 1964, with the Pittsburgh Pirates. By 1967, he earned the starting catcher job, but quickly lost it to Manny Sanguillen after an injury in Montreal. May was known more for his defense than his hitting. He played three seasons with the Kansas City Royals and half a season with the New York Mets. He died in 1996 near his hometown, where they named a youth ballfield in his honor.*

## Alli Warren

San Francisco

### A Biography of Rollie Fingers

Rollie Fingers was a man, a great man  
At that. He gave himself up  
To context, being formally or directed  
By it. Rollie absorbed his base  
Like a class clown, or pulpit.  
With his trademark stump  
And untouchable discursive procedures,  
He pitched some of the most textured  
Site-specific fits/throes this writer  
Has ever seen. I first sought Rollie out  
As a father. My pop, it turned out  
Was not real, that is, a sham, and my mother,  
A horror. So goes the story of how I set out  
To meet my dad, Rollie Fingers.  
It was a hot July afternoon in the town  
Where they make the beer. Well I walked  
And I rode, I strutted and I pranced  
Till I came upon a great handlebar moustache  
Forking the road. It was like a premonition,  
A disembodied eye. And that is the story  
of how I met the mound animal, the heat-seeker.  
Now Fingers threw one heck of a spitball.  
He could do this because of the indivisible  
Relationship between the work and the site.  
When the mound, the ball, and the batter are one  
You've got yourself a turkey just itching  
To hatch. The sun shines on a beautiful  
Ballpark in the physical presence of the viewer.  
The fans do the wave as Rollie relocates meaning  
From sticky cleats and cups to what is not unrelated:  
Saliva. This kind of radical restructuring  
Distributes focus to lived bodily experience,  
To squirts, bloopers and high hard ones.  
Without the slightest effort, meat produces  
Every sound contained in human language.  
Voila, Rollie's a pop. Long live actuality.

*In the 23-year career of Alli Warren, she has lived in the San Fernando Valley, Santa Cruz, and San Francisco. Alli has a handlebar mustache. Old Alli is a poet who wrote Yoke and Hounds and Cousins (forthcoming). Arguably, her greatest year is 2006, when she cooked pork chops in the Mission District and finished books. That year, in addition, Alli Warren did not balk.*

*In the 17-year career of Rollie Fingers, he pitched for the Athletics, Padres, and Brewers. Fingers had a handlebar mustache. Old Rollie was one of the first true closers, as that role became more prominent after the advent of the designated hitter rule. Arguably, his greatest year was 1981, when he won the A.L. MVP and Cy Young awards, posting a 3.44 E.R.A. with 28 saves. That year, in addition, Rollie Fingers did not balk.*

Bios by Brandon Brown

# Lauren Russell

Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn

## Reckoning at Keystone Sack: The Peculiar Career of Bud Fowler

who thinks of a Negro when he says "American"?  
— Thomas Dixon, Jr., 1905<sup>1</sup>

Selecting the appropriate deportment, the sacrificial second baseman

—called "coon," "dusky," "proof against sunburn," "import," "disgrace"—  
once pitcher once catcher many times barber often curiosity—  
again chased by his intentions or maybe mania maybe packhorse security  
in cross-riding spike-fielding hard-hitting trails (but who knew  
this National Pastime would have so many innings?:

*It is in fact the deep-seated objection to Afro-Americans that gave rise to the feet-  
first slide.*<sup>2</sup>

and

*About half the pitchers try their best to hit these colored players when at bat.*<sup>3</sup>

and

*We, the undersigned members of the Binghamton Base Ball Club, hereby refuse to  
play ball if the colored players, who have been the cause of all our trouble, are  
not released at once.*<sup>4</sup>

and

*Gone coons - Fowler and Renfro.*<sup>5</sup>

and

*The Board finally directed Secretary White to approve no more contracts with  
colored men.*<sup>6</sup>

and  
and  
and  
and)—

the least expendable son of Cooperstown, born 1858 too black  
for "Spaniard," "Mulatto," "Cherokee," a talent so distasteful  
as to prompt the invention of shin guards—  
not race won but race born, representative of no nation, state, club or team  
but of skin no barbershop diplomacy can strike,  
no life-sized portrait, pennant or proof—  
not import but inmate, this diamond too narrow, these bleachers too wide  
(the batters reload and the umpire falls down)—

straddling the line between brown dirt and green field, hand to thigh, feet poised  
to spring, awaits the crack of the bat.

<sup>1</sup>Dixon, Thomas, Jr. "Booker T. Washington and the Negro." *The Saturday Evening Post*, August 19, 1905. Microfilm, New York Public Library. Dixon's novels *The Leopard's Spots* (1902) and *The Clansman* (1905) served as the basis for America's first feature film, *The Birth of a Nation*.

<sup>2</sup>*Sporting Life*, 10/24/1891, quoting Ned Williamson, reprinted in *Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball, with Other Documents of the Early Black Game 1886-1936*. Ed. Jerry Malloy. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. p. 140

<sup>3</sup>*The Sporting News*, 3/23/1889, quoting anonymous International League player, reprinted in *Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball, with Other Documents of the Early Black Game 1886-1936*. p. 138.

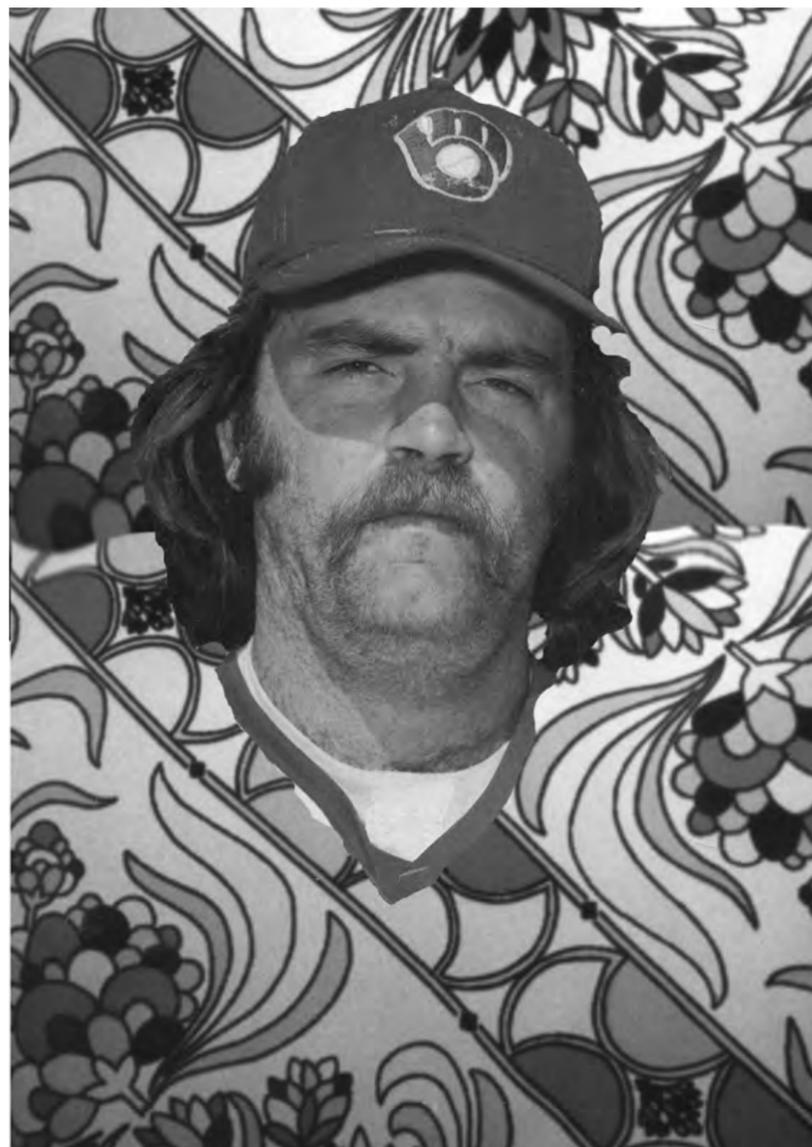
<sup>4</sup>*The Binghamton Daily Republican*, 8/9/1887, reprinted in "Baseball's John Fowler: The 1887 Season in Binghamton, New York." Richard White. *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History* 16.1 (January 1992). p. 7

<sup>5</sup>*The Binghamton Daily Leader*, 7/13/1887, reprinted in "Baseball's John Fowler: The 1887 Season in Binghamton, New York."

<sup>6</sup>*The Binghamton Daily Leader*, 7/16/1887, reprinted in "Baseball's John Fowler: The 1887 Season in Binghamton, New York."

Lauren Russell is a poet and cat-companion who dislikes baseball. Her work may be found in the most recent issues of *The Recluse* and *Van Gogh's Ear*.

Bud Fowler was born John W. Jackson in Fort Plain, N.Y. in 1858. He grew up in Cooperstown and made his professional baseball debut in 1878, becoming the first of at least 30 Black players to play on integrated teams before 1899, when the "gentleman's agreement" barring Blacks and dark-skinned Latinos from professional baseball became the law of the land. He played in at least 10 minor leagues over as many scattered seasons and on several all-Black barnstorming teams, including the Page Fence Giants, which he founded. Competent at any position, Fowler excelled as a second baseman. He retired from baseball in 1904, died of a rare blood disease in Frankfurt, N.Y. in 1913, and was buried in an unmarked grave. In an attempt to remedy this situation, the Society for American Baseball Research provided an engraved headstone in 1987.



Melissa Zexter Gorman Thomas. Digital Print, 8" x 10"

# Amy King

Williamsburg, Brooklyn

## Born to Love the Baseball We Have Not

—After Dottie Schroeder, *All-American Shortstop*

A voiceless morning now as if to exchange the past we  
move as if to love the smell of coffee from the window  
as if no more forcing dubious ruffians without chops  
into position into play into dart and dive as if the grace  
of slow motion slides her glove that stopped the balls  
from easing by into forty three after fifty five for twelve plus  
years on an All-American Girls Professional Baseball League  
was like a vacuum cleaner with those hits as if we are as dust  
beneath the bats and shoulders less than the broadest man's  
that slung the gun on her fifteen-year-old position as if good hands  
as if smooth moves as if hard hits got the South Bend Blue Sox  
with a rocket high she popped a three o four and even more the feminine  
character wanted girls to look like women who played like men  
who tore the bullets loose for a national sky as if the stands  
could sink their teeth into her as if we wanted our women to bite  
hard and slide short-skirted as if how to feel closer not by sex alone  
the swing and smile and stretch that leads perilous from peril as if  
the damsel created distress in the cliché of a faux-bush shadow  
historical reductionist demanding put-on rhubarbs and pretty  
dimpled portraits on Parade as if they would ever let her pin the MVP  
and tan her weapon and eat at spring season forever as if  
they would never cancel all positions and mail the final checks  
to a player sent back to her stove to say, "But that's past and it'll never  
come round again," as if the future was also déjà vu all over us now

Amy King is the author of the poetry collection, *Antidotes for an Alibi* (Blazevox Books, 2005), and the chapbook, *The People Instruments* (Pavement Saw Press Chapbook Award, 2002). She teaches creative writing and English at Nassau Community College and is the managing editor for the literary arts journal, *MiPOesias* ([www.mipoesias.com](http://www.mipoesias.com)). Her second full-length collection, *I'm the Man Who Loves You*, will appear in 2007. Please visit [www.amyking.org](http://www.amyking.org) for more information.

Dottie Schroeder was born on April 11, 1928. When she was only 15, Dottie tried out for Phil Wrigley's new league, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL), and made the cut. She was assigned to the South Bend Blue Sox in 1943. She was traded to the Kenosha Comets in 1945 then Fort Wayne two years later. Before the 1953 season she was traded to the Kalamazoo Lassies. She was the only woman to play all 12 seasons in the AAGPBL.

# David Hadbawnik

San Marcos, Texas

**B=A=R=R=Y=B=O=N=D=S**

A sorry day-  
as orb soars,  
boss bans boy-boobs and  
body by NASA.  
"So sad!" say Bay dads  
and sons; soda boys do  
a day's rosary.  
"Damn!" broods bard.  
"Yabba dabba do!" brays Aryan Dan.  
"A bad brand," nods Boras.  
"Boos annoy anybody,"  
say Sosa and A-Rod.

So: Abandon Barry?  
An ass or an ord'nary snob?  
Bad odds on Bonds sans barndoor body  
as orbs soar  
so-so, or nada, soon.  
No ardor as Barry  
robs Aaron and Baby R.  
And nobody roars.

*David Hadbawnik is a poet who did in fact live in San Francisco to witness Bonds' amazing run during the late '90s and early '00s. His first Giants' game was at the old Candlestick Park in the fall of 1997, when the Giants took an extra-innings thriller from the Dodgers to move into a tie for first in the N.L. West. Bonds hit a monster home run, Rod Beck dived out of trouble, and journeyman catcher Brian Johnson ended matters with a shot into the bleachers. Originally from Detroit, Mich., he is now pursuing an MFA from Texas State, and watching the Tigers rebound in the playoffs from their late-season collapse in the AL Central.*

## Barry Bonds

*It is utterly impossible to understand the contradictions inherent in the person of Barry Bonds unless one lived in the Bay Area during the pre-Balco halcyon years, approximately 1997-2003. During that time, even as seemingly incontrovertible evidence mounted that the aging but potent slugger was on the juice, San Francisco Giants fans lived in a sort of denial that would have done the inner sanctum of the Bush regime proud. Complicating things further was Bonds' notoriously arrogant and off-putting bedside manner. One found oneself simultaneously rooting, rationalizing, and defending one's allegiance to Bonds to aghast friends from other cities. Looking back on it now, how could we ever have thought he was clean? Yet I remember pedaling to the park in boyish glee to watch at the "free wall" as he tried for number 71 in 2001. And I recall the pure, savage beauty of that swing, and how quickly the ball got out of the park and splashed into McCovey Cove.*

# Scott M.X. Turner

Green-Wood Heights

**Reality Upgrade**

Paternal, the Great White Way  
showbiz in flannel, tap dance with spikes  
Gibson's nobody's fool, I'm nobody's slave  
twelve years at the Gateway to the West  
'69, war's strong, King's gone  
the telephone rings  
Curt, you're traded to Philadelphia  
Reality downgrade  
fuck Philadelphia, Bull Connor on the Schuylkill  
Plumbers, doctors, commissioners, owners  
all can work wherever they choose  
Me? Philadelphia or else, construed to lose  
and Mr. Kuhn, I am not a piece of property  
with my bat speed and Golden Glove  
there was never love for your game in my heart  
and soul...music and sports and porters  
that's all this land glad-hands to us Negroes  
Marvin Miller, a mostly-Moses  
the Promised Land never promised us nothing  
except blackballin' a Black man  
pushing for a reality upgrade  
Not one player stood with me  
when I grabbed the reserve clause by the throat  
not Mays, Rose, Bench, Mantle  
none of the golden boys, none of the boys period  
Ain't that always the story? Thanks for volunteering, son  
I lost, but they all won  
Jackie Robinson, white hair  
Bill Veeck, peg leg  
Hank Greenberg, Jewish power  
they showed up showing soul  
advocating for a reality upgrade  
Years later a penstroke frees the slaves  
says they can play in whatever town they want  
even Philadelphia, ain't that a hoot  
But I'm long gone off the base paths  
my warning track ran through Copenhagen  
before it ran me off this earth  
Players today, even in Philadelphia  
hear about Flood and say  
"yeah, shame about Katrina"  
reality upgrade from far away

*Scott M.X. Turner is the usual dime-a-dozen amalgam of punk rock musician/political caterwauler/graphic designer. He runs Superba Graphics and lives near Green-Wood Cemetery with his wife, Diane, and two dogs, Sirius and Tikkanen. And yes, he thinks Semtex is too good for the Atlantic Yards project.*

*Curtis Charles Flood spent most of his career as a center fielder for the St. Louis Cardinals. A defensive standout, he led the National League in putouts four times and in fielding percentage twice, winning Gold Glove Awards in his last seven full seasons, from 1963-1969. He became one of the pivotal figures in the sport's labor history when he refused to accept a trade following the 1969 season, ultimately appealing his case to the U.S. Supreme Court. Although his legal challenge was unsuccessful, it paved the way for the modern era of free agency. He also was a fine-art painter and spent his post-career years the way players used to—answering questions and earning a living from jobs they were never prepared for.*



# **Study Abroad on the Bowery Invites You to Attend The Fall 2006 Visiting Writers Series Featuring Free Readings By:**

**Ammiel Alcalay (Sept 12) Anselm Berrigan (Sept 19)  
Victor Hernandez Cruz (Sept 26 at 6pm) Quincy Troupe (Oct 3) Cecilia Vicuña (Oct 17)  
Sapphire (Oct 24) Patricia Smith (Oct 31) Alice Notley (Nov 7)**

*All readings take place at The Graduate Center The City University of New York 365 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
(34<sup>th</sup> & 35<sup>th</sup> St) Room #4409 NYC NY 10016 Start time 6:30pm (except as noted above)*



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