

Idiots Raze Villages to Raise Idiots Homogeny Escalates in New York City (Film at 11)

BY CHRISTINA STRONG

While back, my grandmother, mother, and I were going shopping. We got out of the car and my grandmother walked ahead of us to go into the natural foods store. A teenage boy was coming out and he let the door bang in her face. I ran up and held the door open for her, and as I did so, my grandmother said, "Things have gotten worse."

"What do you mean, Gram?" I asked, even though I knew the answer. I wanted to hear it from her mouth. My grandmother, your basic, average grandmother who rarely says anything negative about anyone, said, "Kids are horrible these days. Didn't anyone teach them to respect their elders and hold the door open for them?" My response, which was a bitter, long-winded rant, can be summed up best by using her words—things have gotten worse.

Then I qualified myself: things have changed, and some not for the better. Witness the East Village, the Lower East Side, the upcoming development project in Brooklyn (Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards plan), and the plans to "re-develop" Coney Island to turn a community of artists, immigrants, non-professional fishermen, sword-swallowing, snake dancing, tattooed, and piercing aficionados into a strip of hotels, condominiums, and high-tech arcades catering to tourists who gawk and gaze at said people. Welcome to Times Square East.

Coney Island was the spot for recent immigrants, poor, and working class people in the early 1900s to cool off and relax (though its history dates back further, go visit www.coneyislandhistory.com). My grandmother has a picture of her mother and her sister (Oma and Tanta Henny, respectively) walking along the beach. The fashionable bathing suit attire at the time was an outfit that covered women from neck to ankle. I went into H&M the other night and saw bathing suits that barely covered anything. In the 1950s beaches were packed and the bathing suits were more risqué, but culling through internet search archives some things haven't changed—gambling, petty crime, drug dealing, dive bars, and sideshow attractions.

This redevelopment of seedy or edgy areas is nothing new. It's one thing to take a crime-ridden, burnt out neighborhood and "improve" it, and another to take culturally significant areas such as the East Village, the Lower East Side, and Coney Island and

people who succumb. I am not a sports fan. I feign ignorance regarding sports; but more importantly, I see no reason why the stadium and skyscrapers have to be built here at all. Nor, for that matter, the multi-storied buildings going up in the East Village and the Lower East Side.

I visited the new Whole Foods on Houston and Bowery just because I knew I would hate it, but I had to investigate anyway. It's amazing. It's like the suburbs where there are signs everywhere but you can still get lost. There are many things wrong with Whole Foods. The food is overpriced. The people



behind the cheese counter are haughty. The clientele is a sort brought up to use only good ingredients for a salad dressing, but they are baffled when it comes to queuing up in a line.

I used to live on Allen and Delancey years ago, and I enjoyed going to Chinatown for fresh vegetables, spices, and oils I didn't know how to use, but I learned. Was it easy? No. Is anything in this city ever easy? No. I liked getting my bok choy in Chinatown and my cream cheese at Russ and Daughters on Houston Street. Sure, one stop shopping is great. Sure, the city is big and thus ideas and stores are big. But my proposition would be that land developers and architects actually think of neighborhoods and communities within a historical construct and land usage; meaning, in plain terms, because I am not an architect, don't just build a high-rise because you can build a high-rise.

Nostalgia and community. Nostalgia for community. Nowadays, nostalgia, (a quirky psychological loss) manifests itself in a myriad of different and sometimes strange ways. One can, for example, look back on their college years where one formed tight-knit communities of like-minded people. Or one can remember the local branch's bank teller greeting small children with lollipops. Now, the guy at the corner store remembers I smoke light filter American Spirits and the local bartender remembers I drink Blue Point Ale.

A stranger pattern has emerged on TV. On cable television there's a channel, TV Land, that plays only "old" shows, old ranging from *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis* to *Happy Days*, *What's Happening*, and *Good Times*. The oldies radio station WDRC in Connecticut plays disco. If nostalgia is sadness, it's sadder still that disco is considered "old." I remember disco quite well, though I was not quite old enough to partake in the coke-fueled frenzy of Studio 54. I can't regret my age bracket and it's just as well that I wasn't old enough at the time. Rollerskating to Donna Summer is what I had. But there was also crack, AIDS, and bad metal hair bands, none of which I'm nostalgic for.

Nostalgia is a dangerous concept to cling to. It is a limiting view of the world. And yet it's hip to take on the rockabilly style of the 1950s and the symbols and gestures of the 1950s and '60s peace and social justice movements. But nowadays these are only gestures and marketing ploys. A Converse or Gap ad employing a model making a peace sign with her hands is not the same as a collective living arrangement that buys and eats food together, or, for that matter, protest marches. Successful as they were at one point, now we have a society that doesn't care if you want to create a community via a poetry scene, a MoveOn campaign, or a MySpace page.

A community, by some standards, is cohesive and is usually

structured around either a set of values, interests, or both. There are sometimes leaders and membership and connection. The community I am thinking about, the poetic community around New York City and specifically the East Village where this paper is predominately distributed, is not cohesive, has no leaders and no membership, and the connection is that we have a shared interest in poetry. Poetry, and also the social relationships people have formed because of the shared interest with a focus around venues ranging from churches and non-profit organizations to art galleries and bars. This gathering ranges from years of history to absolute spontaneity.

When I think of the East Village I read about for years from many poets' and politicians' biographies, as well as historical

The Ratner project is a full-scale abuse of eminent domain and will transform not just one neighborhood, but at least seven in its immediate area.

Freddy's Bar 485 Dean St. (L.), slated for demolition if the Ratner Plan goes through. Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn (www.dddb.net) photo

accounts, to witnessing it in its current stage, I think there is little to no community. Or rather, the poetic community is nomadic (a la Pierre Joris' essay) and not so much stasis (living in a rent controlled apartment on East XYZ Street for XYZ amount of years and knowing the neighborhood and watching it change). The East Village may have been a village last century but it isn't any longer. The East Village, on the surface, is a place to consume food, beverages, and products. It is a place for students to get shit-faced drunk and puke on the sidewalk.

Our daily life is a distraction and a polarization. A conflict arises with our ideal way of life and the "way things are going" despite us. And I say "us" because I am not the only one on the planet who sees high-rise condos going up and just blithely ignores them. Change is systemic and our capitalist society further separates us from what we want. And is what we want a more localized community? Or is what we, or what I want anyway, for the idiots to not go loco.

Christina Strong misses lollipops handed out from friendly bank tellers but does not miss rainbow suspenders. She can be reached at www.xtina.org and www.openmouth.org



Christina Strong photo

turn them into nouveau riche enclaves filled with a population that looks the same, dresses the same, talks the same, and is the same. Boring. The Ratner project is a full-scale abuse of eminent domain and will transform not just one neighborhood, but at least seven in its immediate area. A sub-headline from a New York magazine article reads, "A talented, championship-caliber sports team in the heart of Brooklyn? No, it's not nostalgia. Developer Bruce Ratner is angling to bring a basketball team to a Frank Gehry-designed arena on Atlantic Avenue. Good-bye, Dodgers. Hello, Nets."

How less than nostalgia is this? Frank Gehry designing an arena? An expressionist, postmodern architect designing an arena for a basketball team, in part, as the sub-headline suggests, because the Dodgers left Brooklyn.

Why does this matter at all, to anyone? Because the New Jersey Nets were once the New York Nets, and I suppose to some people, there just isn't enough pride and ego in this city; we need just a little more. (And anyway, they started off as the New Jersey Americans.)

Sports teams, I suppose, instill that pride and nostalgia in

Buck Downs
Washington, D.C.
on tet

best when wrecked
in the shelter
of this non-life
tread-of-dawn marks
up my back

almost a week's buzz
for almost a week's pay
it makes me say, "dumb-ass"
but it doesn't make me
keep saying it
the way I do

when you want to get a thing
and you don't get it
sometimes desire sweetens
but not like this it doesn't

look down the shoulder
see a long walk coming on

PRINTED MATTER



Language Trans-figured

Since I Moved In

Tim Peterson
Chax Press

By Angela Veronica Wong

To read Tim Peterson's first book of poems, *Since I Moved In*, is to experience identity as the body, and the body as language. Our visual bodies, our identities through our experiences of visibility and invisibility, can be translated into our worded language. Peterson's poems are a flood of experience, of setting, character, language, and feeling. His narratives compel an unexpected headiness rooted in the physical. It makes reading *Since I Moved In* an intoxicating experience. He negotiates identity through the divide of internal and external, personal and social, intellect and feeling, self and body, through language and narrative that is beautiful in its pain and painful in its beauty:

A patch of skin is a color against a background rising. Dark, slut, camphor, duct tape summer. Animated sloth of carpal system, dole. Apart from that, lurking in the waste that feels earthen, pretends to be that thing as mall lights simulate fire, to fireflies, to fading stars.

...

These parts of me I cannot deny: the space I sit in, the left arm muscle moving into the neck causing headache, colophon of sorrow from another time. Made manifest, a bulb opens in the street.

Peterson writes from a place of inbetweenness, of existing within a binary—in this case gender. His body is the site of his inbetween identity.

Peterson's poems in the first section of *Since I Moved In* consider an inbetween "self" that is forced to define its "identity" as male or female. Tiling the collection of untitled poems, "Trans

Peterson writes from a place of inbetweenness, of existing within a binary—in this case gender binary.

Figures," Peterson reinvents the familiar single word, "transgender." The simple act of making "trans" its own word elevates it. No longer is "trans" a prefix describing another word, another experience; it becomes an experience unto itself. Using "figures" instead of "gender" or "sexual" strips the experience from its gendered location. The word "figures" is genderless, allowing Peterson to shift us away from our association of identity with predetermined gender expectations and toward the idea of a genderless self.

Peterson shows how the "self" schisms and becomes "the voice" and "the body" becomes an "it" to avoid being a "s/he, him/her." For Peterson the self falls on the gender divide. He opens "Trans Figures" with the aching wishful "The voice wants to turn itself into a body," and later continues:

The voice is very conscious of efforts to pass this trial, tries on gestures that will get it overlooked, a gentle throwing back of the hair
it saw someone do who was a real body, a bending
forward in the seat so it will seem,
for an instant, like that someone is living in its skin

What is "real" and "not real" is determined by those who exist comfortably on the binary. Falling in between the binary, Peterson's "voice" feels too visible, searches to be invisible, to be a part of the body ("tries on gestures that will get it/ overlooked").

We use language to construct and reinforce binaries, as Peterson writes, "[t]he people looked around/ and saw the abundances that

language had given them." "Let there be breasts!" alternates between female and male. Breasts/penis. Fashion/construction. Covering the body/the body exposed. Those on the male or female sides of the binary are blessed with language; language allows them to exist. Peterson's "voice" does not have that privilege. It is trapped, simultaneously depending on language to express and create a space for itself, but knowing that language denies it by reinforcing existing binaries ("[the voice] could have none of this/ to keep").

Peterson's choice of form for many of the poems in "Trans Figures"—contained blocks with fairly even lines, a recognizable poetic form—is an example of how inbetween writers must create space from themselves within the expected. If the poetic form reads as a metaphor for the binary, what Peterson does within the form is akin to claiming space within the binary.

The tension between words and lines in Peterson's poems belies the apparent containment of the poem by its familiar stanza form. Just as he lives in the "/" of the male/female and his poems push the two apart, his words push against the physical constraints of a stanza as they push male/female apart.

Angela Veronica Wong lives in the Upper East Side. She is thinking about growing tomatoes on her fire escape. She likes PBS, colorful umbrellas, and hockey. Most recently, her work has appeared in *Barrow Street*. Visit her at www.seriouslysquared.blogspot.com

Whenever, Texas



kadar koli

David Hadbawnik, editor
Issue 1, Vol. 1, Spring 2007

By David A. Kirschenbaum

A year-and-a-half ago Habenicht Press editor David Hadbawnik moved from San Francisco to San Marcos, Texas to pursue a master of fine arts in poetry. "Needless to say I went from a bustling, hustling city of readings and events to a much smaller college town," says Hadbawnik.

Scott Pierce, editor of Austin's Effing Press, asked Farid Matuk and Hadbawnik to guest edit an issue of *Effing Magazine* a short time later. "It reminded me of the kind of energy and exchange that such projects can provide, given the lack of immediate contact with a large poetry center," says Hadbawnik. "So I decided to put together my own little mag."

During the winter he asked some poet friends to get him their work within a week, and then he finished the issue this spring, calling it *kadar koli*, a title suggested by his wife, which means whenever in Slovene.

Hadbawnik has a group of friends in *kadar koli* whose names just jumped out at me—Jen Hofer, Hoa Nguyen, Sarah Peters, Dale Smith,

Susan Briante's 'Mid-State' is a rambling travel poem, with stops in Abbott, Dallas, Odessa, San Antonio, and Waxahachie, Texas, as well as Buffalo, Chicago, Las Vegas, Mexico, New Jersey, New York City, and Tulsa, Okla.

and Roger Snell. Each of them delivers their usual solid work, but it's Nguyen's austere nine-line gem "On and Off Rain" that stands out:

"We will love with kisses"
even when writing through you

(Basketball sticker on the coffee table)

The real pleasure, though, lies in discovering the work of those whose names didn't jump out at me, including Susan Briante, Susanna Kittredge, Andrew Neuendorf, and Steve Wilson. Briante's "Mid-State" is a rambling travel poem, with stops in Abbott, Dallas, Odessa, San Antonio, and Waxahachie, Texas, as well as Buffalo, Chicago, Las Vegas, Mexico, New Jersey, New York City, and Tulsa, Okla. There are different travelers, locales, and eras, her observations combining for a real smooth trip.

After a long drive through central Texas I stopped to piss in an Austin coffee shop/bakery. Graffiti in the pink stall read: *Men fall in love with the women they are attracted to. Women become attracted to the men they love.* And under that, scrawled in black sharpie: *White People Suck.*

Austin has a large number of white people.

Visit www.habenichtpress.com/publications/index.html to order *kadar koli*.

David A. Kirschenbaum is the editor of *Boog City*.

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All in the Family

The Veltzes New Release and Jacobson's Family Records' Album

BY JONATHAN BERGER

The Veltz Family

This

However you slice it, the voyage for the Veltz family has been a long one. Sure, it's only been nine years since financial crisis forced these five intrepid artists to become a band in an attempt to pay the parents' bills. But maybe the count really begins when vocalist Allison Veltz was born, 25 years ago. Or possibly when her older sister Laura began writing songs. Or even earlier, when older brother Drew first picked up a guitar. Could the story begin when father Kenneth Veltz started scoring for TV and film?

It doesn't matter. You could go back to when Ken married



Photo Courtesy of The Veltz Family

Jeannie in April 1975, or as recently as when the family-based group changed their name from the curious Cecilia the Band to the obvious The Veltz Family in 2006. Anyway you slice it, it's been a twisty-turny trip.

The Veltzes, a moveable feast of a family, had been performing under the name of the patron saint of musicians, independently releasing several live and demo albums as Cecilia until they settled in New York in 2001 after signing to Atlantic Records. The major label deal didn't last, so Cecilia recorded *This* on their own, handing out pre-release demos to the world a couple of years back.

In 2006, with the loss of long-time bass player (and sole non-Veltz) Kevin Jacoby, Cecilia decided to return to its roots, and, on Ken and Jeannie's

31st anniversary, the Veltz family became The Veltz Family. With a renewed purpose evidenced by the new name, the band went back into the studio under Scott Hull, who encouraged live tracking to generate some of that genetically locked groove they'd present in regular touring.

The *This* they had been giving out was shelved, and a leaner, more exhaustively produced, identically named project was begun. Formerly the first track, "Hey," a song about second-story life in Astoria, now practically closes the album in a sprawling 12-minute jam that features powerful playing from the entire clan and the great vocal work that the Veltz women bring. The song traverses the lands of pop, jazz, anthem rock, and lullaby. It's sort of a shame that the epic "Hey" no longer opens up the album since it presents so much of what makes the Veltzes valuable—versatility, harmony, hooks, and energy. "All Right," which was placed in the penultimate spot on the record's earlier incarnation, now opens the album. "All Right," like most of the material, is written primarily by patriarch and drummer Ken; but some of the best cuts have guitar/vocalist Laura Veltz's fingerprints on them: "Be Mine," a sexy invite with funky undertones, "Astoria," another ode to life on the east side of the river, and the aforementioned "Hey," are all composed or co-composed by her.

Other highlights are "Falling" and "Every Day Dream," where Ken writes love songs that come out of the mouths of his

daughters, both babes. A strange experience, though probably stranger for the kids.

In the years between the first *This* and this *This*, some songs were lost and some have been added to the set list. In the missing column is the infectious "SNL," which excites and energizes at live shows, about Laura's crush on Jimmy Fallon, then of *Saturday Night Live*. Since he's been off the show for years, the track smacks of stale novelty, but it sounded great. Added to the collection is "Come on Love," sounding like a latter day Liz Phair. Remaining is the closer "Gentle Rain," featuring Ken's sole lead vocal turn, a political and psychedelic cut that proves how varied the band can be. (Of course, there's such a thing as too much variety.) Youtube has a low-fi video for "Gentle Rain," as well as many other tracks.

The Veltz Family is constantly trying different strategies to get the word out, from dinner shows to theatrical engagements, autobiographical videos, and playing residencies in the most unlikely of places. They're worth following on their voyage.

Visit www.theveltzfamily.com for more information.

Jeff Jacobson

Jeff Jacobson

Family Records

One-third of the up and coming Undisputed Heavyweights, Jeff Jacobson is in the middle of a productive period. Three months ago the Heavyweights,

featuring Jacobson's stellar guitar work and his occasional original songs, released their debut live EP to a sold out Mercury Lounge crowd. A mere 60 days later, Family Records, the Heavyweights' label, released Jacobson's self-titled solo studio set. And he just recorded the Pianos' gig that is expected to become Casey Shea's next album—also on Family.

You'd think all of these projects would risk diluting Jacobson's creative energy, but he skates easily past any such threat. Friend and sometimes collaborator Paul Alexander heard Jacobson's album, recorded and produced by Benjy King (who also produced Alexander) and wondered, "Why does his album sound so much better than mine?" before thinking, "Well, my album's made up of the best songs I've written in my whole lifetime. And Jeff's is made of the best written in all of his life..."

The baby-faced Jacobson is no spring chicken. Though he only began playing originals in 2003, he's been a part of New York music for three decades. This level of intimacy with the industry comes as no surprise after hearing the jazzy sophistication of "Falling Backwards" or the Spanish stomp of "Castles." Jacobson is clearly a mature artist, aware of his strengths and able to play to them. "Rock Through My Window" rollicks along admirably, though the lyrics ("Cause every single bubble/ Will rise and then will tumble/ Be forever gone") are perhaps more opaque than a song about crashing concrete should be.

Jacobson's album is divided: starting with "Hello," an optimistic symphony, the second side proves to be the stronger half. "Halfway to Summer," a slow, organ-driven cut, perfect for adult contemporary radio, follows in the same feel-good, everything's all right spirit. Hell, even when Jacobson is somewhat apologetic, he still sees the bright side, like in "Who We Are," the eighth track: "If I've thrown it all away/ Then I can't say sorry/ 'Cause who we are has come undone ... But who we are is okay."

"Pretty Picture," a beautifully delicate solo guitar-



Grace T. Moy photo

picked ode to a girl on the train, leads directly into the powerful closer, "Castles." This song contains the only negativity on side two, with thoughts like "If that open wound don't steal you, the

Jacobson's intimacy with the industry comes as no surprise after hearing the jazzy sophistication of 'Falling Backwards' or the multi-cultural stomp of 'Castles.'

guilt then surely will," amid a stunning acoustic guitar leading the band through a complex solo. The album ends, and it's good that most CD players have a repeat function so you can go right back to the beginning with "Let You Down."

Jeff Jacobson's debut is the third release from Family Records. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to City Harvest (www.cityharvest.org) to benefit New York City's homeless.

For more information visit www.jeffjacobson.net

Ken Veltz writes love songs that come out of the mouths of his daughters, both babes. A strange experience, but probably stranger for the kids.

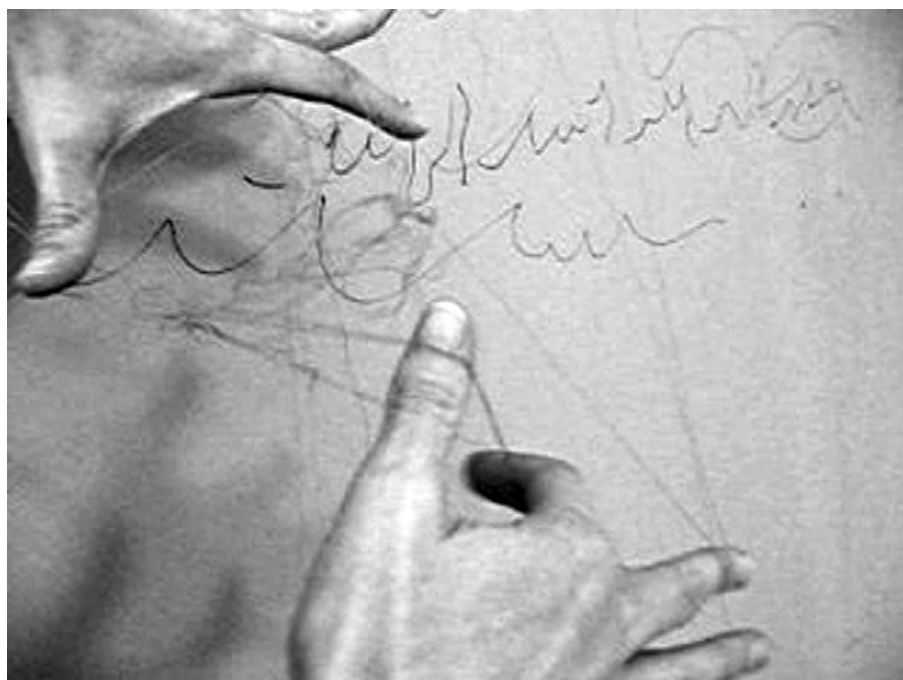
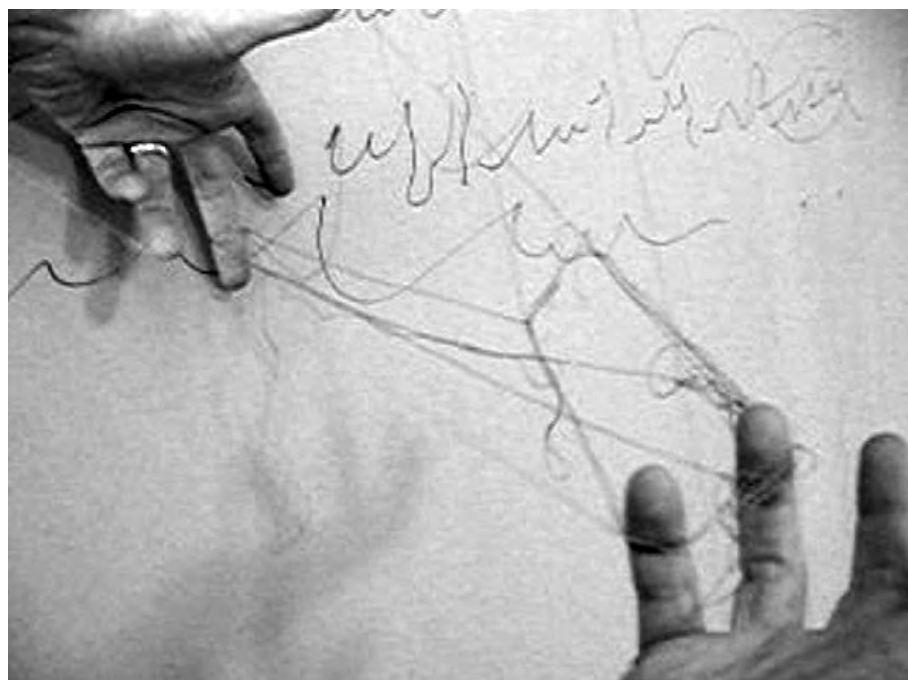
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K. Page and Sleepwalker's Parade

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"K. Page's sometimes sweet, sometimes dark but always passionate crooning... shines in its re-shaping of Fatti Smith style poetics."
LEFTHIP MAGAZINE

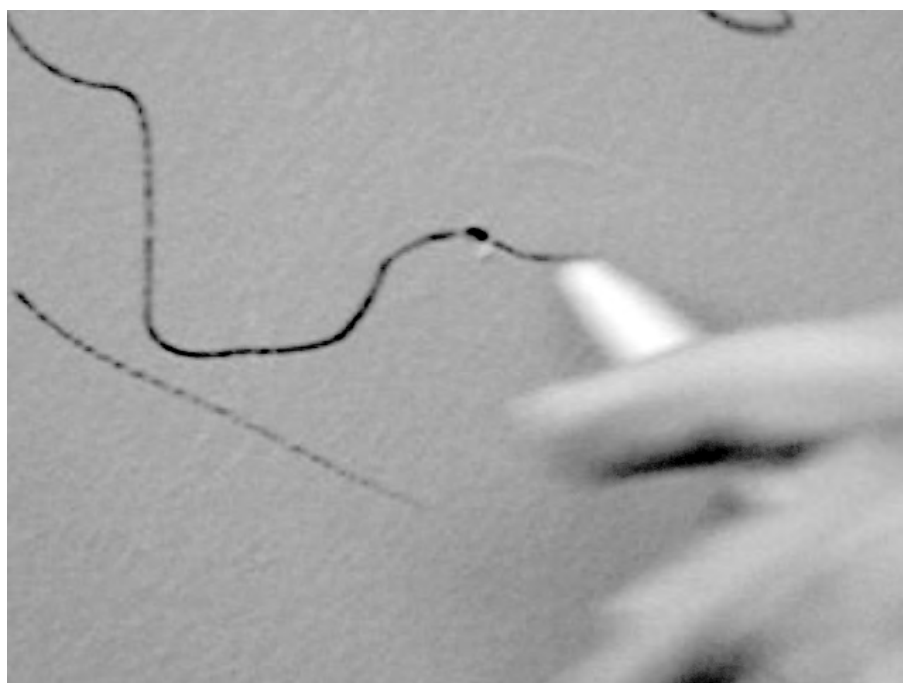
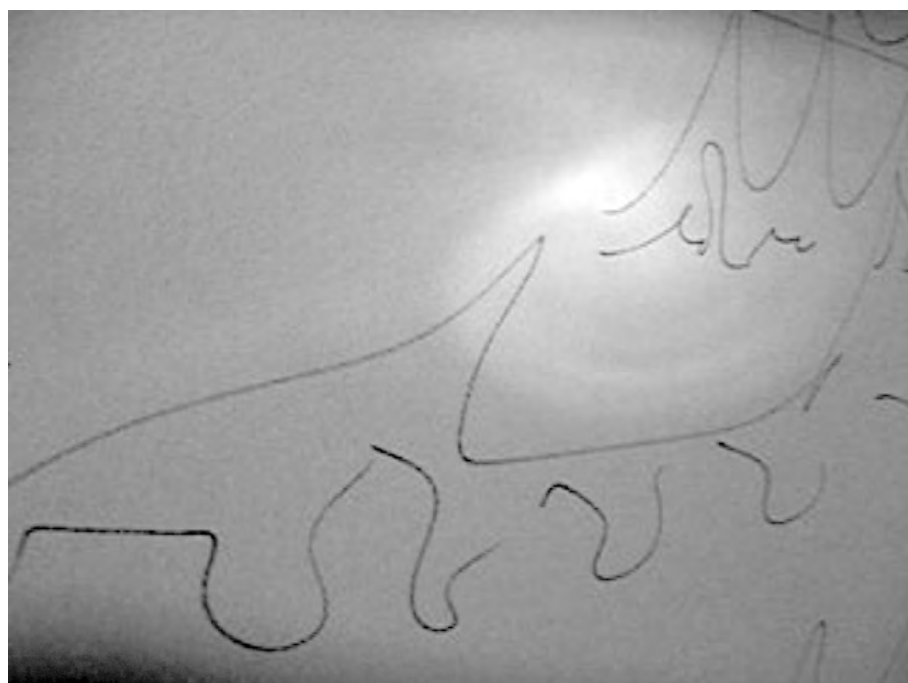
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Jill Magi

Bay Ridge



Stills from *If words are a helmet then stop crashing* (images 1-4 above, clockwise from upper left) "*If words are a helmet then stop crashing* is an installation/video project in-progress that is a performative accompaniment to my essay, "My Penelope: Unraveling as Writing ..." forthcoming in the next issue of *The Tiny*. Broadly, I am interested in private language made public, in not-saying as a choice and tool of power. This was Penelope's strategy; while *The Odyssey* revolves around telling stories in order to arrive home, to move through time and space, Penelope's domestic un-weavings, her quiet "piles of un-labor," stopped time. The wall piece features scribbling with threads sprouting out of some of the marks, falling down to create the vertical element of a web. In the video, I make marks while accompanied by Alice Coltrane's jazz harp, I "plant" the threads in tiny pin holes, and then try to unravel the tangles."

About the Artist Jill Magi is the author of *Threads* (Futurepoem Books), which is a hybrid work of visual art, poetry, and prose. Her book *Torchwood* is forthcoming next year from Shearsman. She is a Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) Workspace resident and would like to thank the LMCC for the space and support to make this installation and video project. Visit www.sonaweb.net/jillhomepage.htm for more information and you can reach her at jillmagi@earthlink.net

COMICS

Come and Take a Look at Huizenga's Sketches

Untitled

Kevin Huizenga

Sermons: Notes + Sketches

Made While at Church

Kevin Huizenga

Both self-published

www.uscatastrophe.com/kh

BY GARY SULLIVAN

In the last five years there seems to be a new and fairly serious interest in the notebooks, journals, and sketchbooks of comics' artists. Before that, of course, Fantagraphics published sketchbooks of superstars like Robert Crumb and the Hernandez brothers; but something seems to have changed in the last half-decade, and there is now a lot more to choose from than Crumb and Hernandez.

Some of these publications highlight the artist's process. Chris Ware's *The Acme Novelty Datebook 1986-1995* (Drawn & Quarterly) is a particularly good one. Some feel like a finished work of art in and of themselves, like Leah Hayes' *Holy Moly* (Fantagraphics), drawn during class time in ballpoint pen. It is so already-gorgeous and poetic that it can't possibly reveal too much of Hayes' process, though it is, frankly, one of my favorite comics of the 21st century.

Kevin Huizenga, a younger artist who is currently a darling of the alt comics set with a popular series, *Or Else*, and a critically acclaimed hard-cover collection, *Curses* (both Drawn & Quarterly), has struck a perfect balance between a presentation that highlights and illuminates artistic process, and books that

make for amusing and fully satisfying reads.

The reason these minis work so well is two-fold: Huizenga is a truly great comics artist who obsessively works out his process on paper; and, more importantly, rather than just publishing a collection of images from different sketchbooks he limits the material in each of these books to a single project or obsession.

Untitled documents his struggle to come up with a satisfying name for his series *Or Else*. It consists largely of notes, a few doodles, and an awful lot of thumbnail sketches of potential covers, each with different titles. The result is something like an illustrated list-poem:



and has the overall look and feel of something one of the more adventurous New York School-related presses of the sixties might have published—Lita Hornick's *Kulchur*, for instance. Reading it one simultaneously feels the

Rather than just publishing a collection of images from different sketchbooks, Huizenga limits the material in each of these books to a single project or obsession.

excitement of creation and the frustration of not quite "getting there." Near the end of the book we get title possibilities like "ALL DOWNHILL" and "THIS IS CALLED IMPOSSIBLE." Huizenga reveals glimpses into his thinking process:

- "STRATEGIES for coming up with one.
- Freewriting about dreaming about the awesomeness
- Try to simply describe things—cold water, mad king, blue box
- Read poetry
- Make the kind of life you want through your work. ...

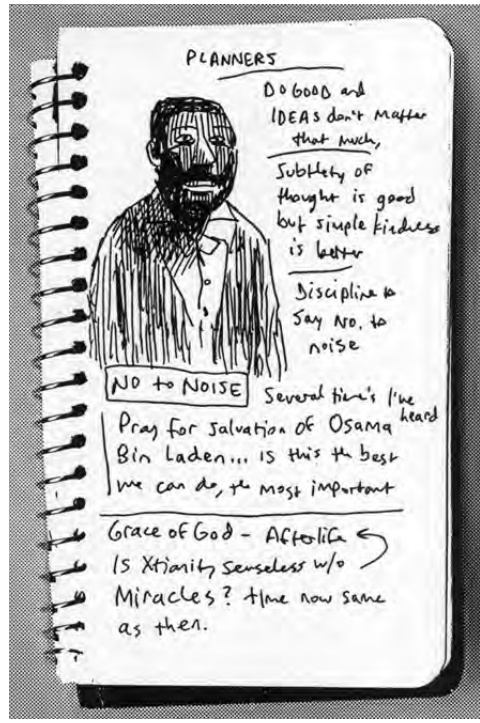
NEED a container
OH GOD. A
series starts

with the first part. ...

TERRIBLE VENGEANCE

| PONG |"

Unlike *Untitled*, *Sermons* focuses not on a single project, but rather on a single personal obsession. Huizenga is a practicing Christian—a number of his comics feature pastors and churchgoers—and *Sermons*, which according to the subtitle consists of notes made while in church, simultaneously documents his thinking about how to manifest his religious beliefs and ideas into his comics and grapples with metaphysical and religious problems.



Gary Sullivan is a poet and cartoonist who will publish the third issue of his own comic, *Elsewhere*, in mid-June. For more info visit www.garysullivan.blogspot.com

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POETRY

Linda Russo

Norman, Okla.

Daily Buzz

Good Morning

take the number of demands we have placed on the Chinese government
& multiply for each time it's recalled
we've not signed the nuclear non-proliferation agreement
subtract the Iraq thing from the other day
divide Iran by Middle East Peace Talks & multiply the sum by that percentage
then raise to the power of Canada

What did you get?

I got three new genders.

I got irredeemable self-interest as the locus of poetic inspiration

my net worth nets no words

My total deductions: 892 dollars 98 cents & my credits were 167 dollars 37 cents
my standard deduction: 5000 dollars
my total tax: 1751 dollars 63 cents & my expected refund is 128 dollars 89 cents
my routing number: 221 868 474; account number 000986943102

My intake astounds no one

I will curry favor to no one, no matter

I pose in front of my property

I will not mention the state of my hands, or your hands,
but I will suggest Bert's Lemon Cuticle Butter
for your toe nails. You should really consider
doing something about that.

We need not
exist for
the profit-
driven industry
that feeds on
normal
unpretty
everyday sort of
people
like us

The poem, however, the poem, the poem, the poem

Hello.

David Micah Greenberg

Washington Heights

from Five Downtown Plans

1916 - anxiety

Four continents at the Custom House
limestone warlike clouds.
Quetzalcoat under Columbia
a veiled Arab, weeping Africa;
a purity of risk as awe its four tusks.
Lower Broadway where the city
begins, heightened veins delirious shore waves
bloodied a refrain before it starts.
In response to the Equitable's massing
zoning's defense of air and light
ensures juridical playmates:
decoration, pugnacious, convivial
ziggurats
ornamental strikes to the canvas,
stretching the commissioner's plan.
Windy light of chance - algorithmic
losses, one gargoyled assurance
to another, chance spires, orbs
above. More violence to the ornament of risk:
spiked fruit, Cunard winds, irregular eagles
Isabella with 3-sided crest
whale suited as diligence
share necropolis, a pacific sorting of claims.
Though earlier, the custom house's
beard barrels, beard sloughs, bearded
Federalism, scrolls there marble
hemorrhaging terror of opacity, and spirograph necessity, to what should be
Weeden Island - Verrazano, Columbus, Gomez.
Anxiety ornaments shame.
Shame replaces time.

Serendipity awaits higher - a matter of priority
inventing where luck has settled, unattainably
on dark cherry rafters - Park Row.
Where the city begins layered acts
relieve in understanding.

2004 - indeterminacy

Fascist and critical culture share it.
"Reality-based" commitments, serial complacencies,
relive as gate-kept anxieties, a paternal gray.
Like unofficial NYSE merchandise - in whose auspices ants grow -
a charismatic, flunked itinerary.
Its expressive good remolded (says the plan)
culminating hieratically ("is x not the validation of not x?")
figures in moment of inception, as fever -
iron reticence without hurt.
Instead action constitutes
irreversible, irretrievable commitments
rendering use for other purposes infeasible.
100,000 visited the Winter Garden.
Lives gained from sympathy do not leave imagination - they
give it sapphire, whose reflection fails only as sight fails.

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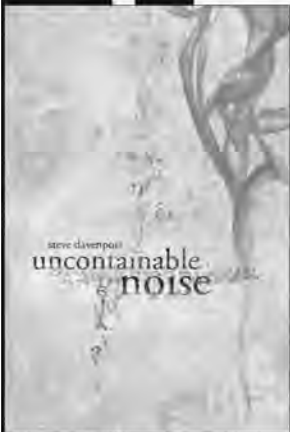
About the Poets

Buck Downs is author of *Marijuana Softdrink* (Edge Books) and the largest poetry postcard project ever! He also edits the poetry journal *Open 24 Hours*. *Pontiac Fever*, a chapdisc from Narrow House Recordings, has just come out. He lives and works in Washington, D.C. **David Micah Greenberg** evaluates community initiatives at MDRC, a social policy research organization. His first book was *Planned Solstice* (University of Iowa). He lives in Washington Heights with his wife and son. Chax Press recently published **Linda Russo's** *MIRTH*. She teaches "The Conversation," poetry, and sound art in her writing classes at the University of Oklahoma.



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Theory of Orange
Hip, funny, moving and at times bizarre, the first outing from this Yonkers based poet



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