BEST WISHES...
NANCY ARLÉN, DIKE BLAIR, DIANE BURKO,
JIMMY DE SANA, A.M. FISCHER, HERMINE FREED,
DUNCAN HANNAH, ROBERT KITCHEN, F.L. SCHröDER,
HUNT SLONEM, TARO SUZUKI, NINA YANKOWITZ

STEPA\NOTTI
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I RECALL MY CHILDHOOD

My father's name being Pip, and my Christian names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both with the Tarot cards. This was not so much a for-

On Christmas Eve 1978 my mother committed suicide and in September of 1979 my grandmother (on my mother's side) died. Ten days ago, it is now almost Christmas 1979. Terence told me, I cut the cards into four piles: earth water fire air. We found my signifier, April 18th, in the water or emotion fantasy pile. The cards were pointing to my question. We opened up this pile. The first image was a fat purring human cat sur-

Terence told me that despite my present good chance and my basic stability and contentedness with myself (the fat purring human cat), or alongside these images, I have the image or obsession of the PIG me neither death nor social comment kills. This TERROR is divine because it is real and may I

I recall my childhood traumas totally terrifying because now these traumas are totally real: there is no buffer of memory.

Pure time is not time but a hole. Inside this hole everything that happens not comes back again because it never went away. There is no time; there is. Beyond the buffers of forgetting (memory is a tool of forgetting) which are our buffer to reality; there is. As the dream: there is and there is not. Call this TERROR call this TOTAL HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY. The PIG I see on the edge of the grave is the PIG me neither death nor social comment kills. This TERROR is divine because it is real and may I sink into it like I sink into the arms of any man who shows me affection.

How can I start talking to you about my mother? I'm a mass of memories feelings anxieties. Fuck psychology. My mother was a drunk. Oh I'm so em-

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

by Kathy Acker

Being the First Chapter of

I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pip as my father's family name on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip. I give Pip as my father's family name on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith.

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I want: every part changes the meaning every other part lives on its own so there’s no absolute/heroicidal/satirical & meaning part the soldier’s ox.Y:

dusted fingers touch her face organs make him stop putting on his soldier’s ox.Y: new softening sex rest on the shaft of the t-shirt and the shallow skirt color he swallows up the RIMA soldiers, rainy winds shuffle the tarpaulins against their necks, they adjust their collective smoke of the eyes and more fingers brush their belt buckles, the calf feathered from sweating—during-capture—and-the-edge of the bunt where the meat flings out of the cunt, a tongueless canvas-covered tent. My mother positions herself, holding off in his half-mutilated hand, the truck driver returns kisses the blue cross tattooed on his forehead, the fingers brush his palm wrist where alcohol-fried veins are sticking out. These caterpillars of trucks grind down the stones the white ash smokes on their tracks, they sleep their sex rolling over their hips drips they are cattle, their truck-driver casts black a wisp astant swamp up the skin under his left eye black grapes load down his pocket, an old man’s white hair under-the-white-hair red burned face jumps above the sheet metal, the driver’s black saliva dries on his chin the driver’s studied heel crushes a large white panty girdle she says she doesn’t like up a little and rolls on see-through stockings. Some soldiers leave the fire wander around the tents until the tent tongs they crack on the hard, the linen tent flaps brush the snowwhite thighs of the males all phosphorescent nerves huddle around the canopies, no longer warm but the smirking teenagers chew wheat they found in the bags, the kids pick threads out of their mouths on legs again. She touch the sackcloth back over their mother’s tits lick the half-chewed flour left on their lips.

My mother’s eating a strawberry soda with straw-

berry icecream. I see her smiling. A fat middle-

sized girl closes her eyes her fingers touch the son-
grapple—smeared, from the shirt heaps and the sex pag the soldiers tore up while they were shifting clenched the shit the muscles twisted by rape. Some soldiers leaving the fire wander around the tents until the tent tongs they crack on the hard, the linen tent flaps brush the snowwhite thighs of the males all phosphorescent nerves huddle around the canopies, no longer warm but the smirking teenagers chew wheat they found in the bags, the kids pick threads out of their mouths on legs again.

My father grabs a candle, the curly brown-haired soldier licks the half-chewed flour left on their lips.
Working rough for LULLABYE, a serigraph of Harry Crosby by Duncan Hannah represented by Stefanelli Inc.
Michael McClard

Interviewed by
Kathy Acker

A. Ahh, Michael, what was your motive in making MOTIVE?
M. That’s really a terrible question Kathy.
A. (laughter) That’s my one planned question.
M. Ummm, that’s pretty hard to answer. I’m still having this problem because I don’t think MOTIVE was ever really finished.
A. Well, when I saw the film I noticed that on the one hand the main character who Jimmy DeSana plays, a business man, umm...the point where he was a mass murderer and there was no reason given in the film why he committed these murders, he just did...There was this whole quandary about that, and because the question was never even asked...why he did it, on the other hand the film sometimes was very straight narrative and sometimes was...not artful but decorative in a way especially the focusing of the camera and everything was very pretty. So there seemed to be a repetition of his lack of motive in the way the camera wobbled between genres.

M. I wanted to make something that was nice to look at, or maybe I wasn’t even thinking about that at the moment of looking through the camera and trying to shoot a scene, I wanted to make...I wanted to see something that looked beautiful through the camera, but in terms of having a purpose to this beauty or having a strong statement to make about cinema or life...I mean...I did have an idea about...a general idea about what this character was up to. I had an idea about why he would be committing these crimes, right, but I didn’t want to make it really obvious in terms of the film because I thought the film should be about the obscurity of that motive, you know, that the film shouldn’t supply the answer, that if there is a solution the viewer should be able to extract it from the film with whatever degree of acumen the viewer extracts any other conclusion from the rest of existence, without being told that he’s going through this therefore he’s doing that. Or that this is what’s happening now and that’s why this is...You know, all those kings of narrative conventions. Like the way language is used to close the plot, in order to make it hang together...

A. Right, so in a way it was seeing that...there was almost no psychology in the film. That’s what was one of the most striking things and the absence of psychology was a freeing sort of movement, or felt as such...

M. Well, I felt like dealing with the activity of murder, but I knew it would invite this heavy psychological analysis, and that would be the most obvious approach to analyzing the film, and so I tried as much as possible to strip the film of anything that would lend itself to that kind of analysis, which meant in certain ways keeping the character very flat and...well, in some ways I think that that flatness also reveals other aspects...the matic aspects of the film.
MOTIVE
A. Could you say what those other aspects are?
M. Well, now it seems a little naive maybe. Just that by taking away all of the psychological handles, the moral handles or whatever, you end up with a character who's compelled rather than motivated and that's part of what I was trying to get at. The character really didn't believe in anything or wasn't really driven by anything, so this was the extreme that he was resorting to in order to have a sense of identity or have a sense of being.

A. Well, there's this French novelist, Pierre Guitat, who says the main thing he wants to get beyond in his books, in his novels, is to get beyond human psychology or what he calls neurosis so that he can get at, again, what he calls biological reality or reality, and that the one thing that inhibits it is this neurosis or idealism.

M. Yeah...
A. Which he attacks very much from a leftist point of view.
M. I haven't read...
A. Yeah, right, I'm just saying that it seems similar.
M. It sounds similar except it sounds more high-minded.
A. Yeah, he is a little high-minded and very theoretical (laughter).
M. But it was weird because... I mean it made for a very unglamorous film in a certain way and... I'm not sure whether it was memorable or not. I tend to think it was kind of unmemorable.
A. I remember it.
M. It just seems like it was so flat and...
A. That's why I find it memorable, because I found it absolutely unremitting, it never gave you a second-to... the most memorable thing is how you were really hard-edged about what you were doing, you never lapsed for a minute.
M. Which, in its own way, is a very formal thing.
A. It's a very formal film.
M. Yeah, it was, it's true, and it was hard to do because the tendency is to want to do all of the other things that make it bearable.
A. Yeah.
M. I mean the things that you know will make people want to pay attention.
A. Like the scene where Betsy's (Sussler) in the phone booth and she dies. That could have been a very funny scene... It was pretty funny.
M. It was funny yeah, but it wasn't comic.
A. The tendency could have been to make it extremely comic.
M. Or melodramatic or tragic...
A. Yeah.
M. I think we're going to continue working on the film though. We've talked about it. We haven't really done it, but Jimmy is interested.
A. What do you think the film needs? To be longer or...
M. Yeah, maybe to make it just a little bit more extreme, like add another... it's absurd, maybe it's black humor, it's a humor that you can't...
A. Blackest black, because black humor always went back to this idea of normal. It is just what it is.
M. In retrospect I also feel like there are kind of political connotations that I would like to make more emphatic or somehow a little bit clearer.

(continued on p.42)
I was an Extra in a Woody Allen Film

by Tina L'Hotsky

I was an extra in a Woody Allen film. I played a Marilyn Monroe look-alike in a cabaret scene. I was situated behind the principal table where Mr. Allen carried on his drama. It was the 180th of a second in the 18th degree of the camera's angle as the scene passed. It will probably be a blur in an out-of-focus background. All this may decay forever on the cutting room floor.

All this for $27.50 a day at three days in a cold, gloomy, deserted high school close to the waterfront.

For 11 hours a day we were relentlessly ordered around by a John Gage, bearded brigade member of the Screen Actors Guild who talked to each other via walky-talky—"Let's move 'em over. Pile 'em on the truck's coming over to pick 'em up." When the truck came we were herded over to the main studio where we filed in and huddled in the anti-chamber to the set. Tensely awaiting our places, we were given precise military commands by their Neanderthal men. We were told to laugh, look up, or turn away, act natural or report back to the high school when we were to be dismissed. They stuffed us with jelly donuts in the morning. The crowd must have consumed 3 billion carbohydrates in those long dark hours before we went on the set.

We were informed of SAG penalties and NO LUNCH. We sat around in eternity endless moments, trance and tense, ready to perform anything in the century. I am there, for what seemed like an infinity in my Pith helmets, lacquered hair, swelling make-up. At times a strange hunger would come over me in those hours of waiting. It was no ordinary hunger. It was molecular. It was restrained hunger.

I objected to the dust particles in my hair. Why was I not permitted to show this to the camera? I longed to return to the banalities of everyday life.

Various rumors circulated as to what the plot was about. Was Woody Allen caught in a time warp in the 1940's? Did the UFO land on a lawn in New Jersey in the middle of a garden party while Klaus Nomi did a show of 3rd degree burns to his white vampire wife Cat—was Charlotte Rampling going to the Berlin Film Festival?

On the third day of shooting I had lost my will to live and I slumbered upon the set an hour and a half into the scene. The casting director stropped into Make-Up, red-faced and waving my pay sheet. He believed demanding to know what had happened to me. He gave me Leave.

All in all, I admittance him "Marilyn Monroe was ALWAYS late."
Written, Produced and Directed by Betsy Sussler
Starring Lindzee Smith and Caz Porter.
Also starring Robert Cooney, Michael McClard, James Nares, Lisa Rosen and Leslie Schiff.
With Babes Egan, Suzanne Fletcher, Lance Loud, Glenn O'Brien, Teranse Sellers and Duncan Smith
and, in order of appearance, James Shuvus, Richard Bach, Amy McMahon, Betsy Sussler, Luther
Thomas, George Mendes, Becky Johnston, Steve Mass, Craig Gholson, Georgia Marsh, Anna
Schroeder, James Crosby, Kenny Angelica, Cody Murphett, Simeon Gallu, Carol Skelsky, Jacqueline
Schnabel, Amos Poe, Vicky Galves, Duncan Hannah, Anita Sarko, Millie David, Haoui Montaug
and Eric Mitchell.
Camera: Betsy Sussler, Robert Cooney and Coleen Fitzgibbon.
MENAGE is a S8 feature film in two parts, "The Story of Myra and Ian" and "Scenes from Everyday Life." At the time of this interview, March 1981, it had just been completed.

CG: When did you conceive of the idea for filming MENAGE?
BS: I never conceived of a single idea that could embody the film—the first thing I shot as MENAGE was the play called "Precious and Full Sorry Now" which is the story of the Moors Murderers. The play was devised as part of the murders. There were no explicit murders portrayed, but recorded material from the murders, including screams, yells, gags, orders, choking, exclamations and more gags that had all been recorded on audio tape during the murders. This was coupled with discussions between Myra and Ian (the murderers) about what they had done that had been witnessed during the last murder and how they would conduct themselves for the next one. Essentially how they would correct their aesthetics and ethics towards a method of murder.

CG: That was a play by....
BS: That was part of an obscure play by Fassbinder that I shot as a film. But I didn't like the rest of the play because it was too moralistic. Lindzee Smith and Caz Porter did a spectacular job with the staging and direction of the play. We worked the whole play around the notion of film so that everything was very flat and done against a screen. The characters in the play were supposed to be the most evil manifestation of people's indifference to each other. And to a lesser degree, every other character's in the play fell in line with this acceptence of a very clear cut definition of what is right and what is wrong. It was a foregone conclusion that anybody with power, anyone who was a murderer, was in fact immoral. Not ever amoral.

And somehow, I hated that.

CG: (laughter) So, tell the story of the Moors Murderers. These were English Moors Murderers?
BS: Yes, it happened in the late sixties in the north of England in Manchester, a factory town. Two very young lovers, Myra Hindley, aged 23 and Ian Brady, 28, had several children and buried them on the moors. He was a clerk and she was a shorthand typist and they met in the office and fell in love. It was a long courtship. He would turn her on and be real chummy and then wouldn't talk to her for three weeks. She fell madly in love with him and when he finally asked her out she was completely hypnotized by him.

Right away he started telling her about his hopes and dreams of wanting to start building an army to become a self-styled Fascist and rule a small contingent of followers and make her his Lieutenant. The final outcome of all this was because that's what all the other young children were samples of what they called The Unworthy, although they never developed an explicit definition of The Worthy vs. The Unworthy outside of the fact that their victims were Unworthy and they as the self-appointed Worthy. The beginning of the story was this that he started her reading material on Nazi war criminals and then turned her on to pornography or books that dealt with sex and power, kinky sex, etc. He didn't make any distinction between pornography, or any material for that matter, murder, atomic bombs, totalitarian governments. He was only interested in these things in so much as they all equated power—power over other humans. And he thought that by mimicking these elements of these activities, he too would become powerful. And of course, murder is a powerful medium, but I think the irony of it all is that it doesn't take a very great talent to do it. Anyone can and Ian wanted to be an elitist, I think that's why he was trying to perfect his style. Anyhow, he started Myra out on all this literature and the he got her into posing. He recorded everything they did: Myra in little black panties with her dog...

CG: So did they actually commit murder?
BS: They only prosecuted them for three, but I think they committed more. They had one little girl who was a next door neighbor and was very friendly with them. She would come over to their house and sit around and chat about all these murders in the newspaper and drink wine with them. Wine is an important part of their rituals. Myra was very Catholic and some of the Catholic rituals seemed to be repeated in the murders.

CG: What form did the murders take?
BS: Well, there were two that were interesting besides being sensational. One was a little girl who was forced to pose nude, in pornographic poses and subsequently bound, gagged and murdered. She tricked Myra's brother-in-law into becoming an unwitting accomplice by staging it for him. It was a very private piece of theater. They asked this 17-year-old boy to death. Her brother-in-law was in shock most of the time. He had to help them clean up and then ran home to his wife on the pretext of getting some sleep and the two of them called the police. The thing is that this is all downplayed in the film, I mean the actual murders. I didn't want to exploit a 7-year-old girl's death by making it a visual staple in the film. It's only mentioned in passing in a voice over. But the activities surrounding it are part of the film.

CG: So they ultimately got captured and prosecuted?
BS: Yes, What happened in that part of the film actually happened. A policeman posed as a baker's delivery boy and knocked on the door. Myra didn't have the key so in he forced his way in. Her husband, Ian was lying nude on the couch writing a letter to his boss telling him why he couldn't come into work that day. The reason he couldn't be is because when he was axing this boy to death he hit himself on the ankle and couldn't walk, so there was this cute little note he was writing saying he was run over by a motorbike. Anyway, the cop walks in and says he heard there was some trouble there last night and Ian tried to say it was a homosexual who had come on to him and they had a row, when really that's how he lured the boy to his house in the first place—by posing as a potential lover. And the policeman kept insisting and finally Ian turned to Myra and said "It's all up." And that was it.

CG: So how did you do research for this?
BS: I didn't start doing research on Myra and Ian right away. After I shot the film I went and (and you couldn't get all the information from that dialogue) I wrote short vignettes about power struggles among groups of three people. I was quite comfortable just letting the murders were, and shot some of these. It wasn't until then that I started reading reports, journalists' reports and books about the murders. You see, everything was done in pieces. I didn't treat the film as a whole—actually complete a finished script that is until it was almost all shot. Most of the research went into the soundtrack. Some of the books were ridiculous. One journalist tried to use the events of the murders as a justification for getting pornography off the newstands. The reasoning being that these poor innocent people who would ordinarily just be clerks and shorthand typists went around reading this material which induced them to commit murder. At the end of the book she said (this is a bit of a paraphrase, "At the end of the trial we all felt let down because it was so unesthetic. What we all really wanted was some kind of shootout, some blood, and what happened was simply an example of English justice—they went to jail." Became invisible so to speak. And then she said, "Do not think that this is a call for capital punishment, I would never ask anyone to do something I would not do myself (kill someone). I just mean (and these are very asute statements) that the Judge, Jury and Press were all left hanging." And it was the hanging from not having any visual impact to the end of a trial that they thought should accompany the denouement of these two people, characters' actions.

CG: There was no catharsis.
BS: Yeah. And then somebody else said the person...
The Third Person is about a modern couple, trapped by their social and economic circumstance in an increasingly more violent and psychologically turbulent relationship with each other. The film stresses their utter alienation from, and incapacity to relate to, the world at large. This separation from the mainstream of everyday life forces a depressingly disturbed dependance on each other, the consequences of which are neither foreseen nor understood by either of them. Their relationship becomes a metaphor for a sado-masochistic behaviour pattern that underlies many modern hetero-sexual relationships. Their life, without a sense of history or culture through which to articulate and interpret their behaviour, is not an uncommon modern existential situation. Their attempts at expressing their frustration take on progressively more and more pathogenic forms moving towards an inevitable finale...

Michael Oblowitz. 10/17/81.
2:45 a.m./NYC

Written, produced and directed by Michael Oblowitz
Camera: Michael Oblowitz
Assistant Director: Michael Shamberg
Assistant Camera: Christof Lanzenberger
Editors: Skip Lievsay, Lizzie Borden
Music: Anton Fig
Make-up, Dunja Sagov
With: Rosemarie Hochschild
Ron Vawter
Will Patton
Fiona Templeton
Nancy Riley Peyton
Stuart Sherman
Sigmund Freud's Dora

In 1899, Sigmund Freud began treatment with an 18-year-old girl who was brought to him for analysis by her father after she had written a suicide note. Freud was eager to use this case to demonstrate the hypotheses laid out in his "Interpretation of Dreams" but after only three months of treatment the young woman walked out, without being cured.

Five years later Freud published an account of this failed treatment, calling it a "Fragment of an Analysis" and giving his patient the name Dora—that of a servant in his household.

Recently, Dora has been a focus for the appropriation of psychoanalysis by feminist theory. Questions about the exchange of women, the representation of female sexuality, and the marginal or contradictory position of women in language, have been discovered in her story.

But the descriptions Freud gave of Dora are not innocent documentary facts. Freud constructs her as a character in the structure of his "novelette", as a recollection of the words he remembers her having spoken, as an object for his scientific detective-work. Thus the presentation of her sexuality is also a function of these analytic and narrative processes.

The psychoanalytic method itself is a process of reading the language and symptoms of the patient; Freud's written case history is a reading of that reading, which we in turn read.

The film, Sigmund Freud's Dora starts from the position that these processes of representation are not only a factor in psychoanalytic texts. Freud constructs her as a character in the structure of his "novelette", as a recollection of the words he remembers her having spoken, as an object for his scientific detective-work. Thus the presentation of her sexuality is also a function of these analytic and narrative processes.

14 minute film (16mm color sound) by Anthony Mccall, Claire Pajakowska, Andrew Tyndall and Jane Weinstock.

Quotes from television advertising and film pornography divide up the narrative sections of "Sigmund Freud's Dora": The most pervasive, and the most extreme forms of sexual representation.
Why Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend

Diamonds bear generically also the symbol for steadfast love. A girl's best friend finds symbolic expression in the idea of the diamond. However, a diamond is not a friend, nor a lover, and then it is in very odd ways.

"A diamond is forever," so say those advertisements for diamonds, the female being quietly embraced by the male who engages married her by saying to the ring indicates lifelong friendship with the companion. The ring is worn until she dies and thus may pass on as heirloom, a testament to her brief stay in the world of the living, a monument of her former life. One may discard it as soon as that love has corrupted into divorce, a broken engagement, her partner's death, and so forth. Even off one's fingers, in its own ground, they still "ring" and are not necessarily on one's finger.

When we hear a record being played, we know that a record's groove is a dimantine surface. The jewel that is seen is also the wave reverberating by means of the faculty of a diamond stylus' perfect contact with two sides of a diamond in contact with one's eye, the diamond ring, is also the diamond heard in the ear over a record player, the "ringing" diamond stylus memorializing their love.

A hard diamond is placed in conjunction with the heart, the place where love builds its figurative four-chambered object, just as our heart is. (There are heart-shaped diamonds.)

The strength of the diamond, its uniform, crystalline structure, has no air within it, no air for sound to reverberate within it. The heart, however, is quite loud, for even in the greatest of silences, we can always hear our hearts. Remember when Rachel Weiss was overcome in the movie, "The Way We Were" by her love? The microscopically shrunk vehicle ventured into its brain daily, the voice of the music barely loud enough for the voyagers. There is no sound within a diamond, no pockets of air, at least in flawless diamonds. When the diamond performs its function as stylus, the sound has the diamond as its point of origin, albeit the perfectly faceted and angled sides of the diamond can register all the variations felt along the record's groove. Never, never, never though can the diamond have sound pass through it for the diamond absorbs and the ensuing vibrations can only issue upon contact with the diamond's outside, while this jewel's inside, its heart, its air-tight interior, is soundproof within it.

Furthermore, this diamond-idea is related to the idea of the Holy Trinity, particularly in relation to the Holy Spirit of the Holy Trinity. The correspondence of the Mystical Kaballa has the diamond represent the idea of one in three, God is the three persons, Father, Son, Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost/Spirit represents the love between the father and son, and between the unbegotten Father and the begotten Son, Christ. Once again we find the symbol of the Holy Spirit at Anunciation. At Christ's Baptism and the Pentecost are also where the Holy Ghost made its diamond shape.

The angel Gabriel at Mary's Annunciation was never really seen, for according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, careful investigation reveals that the angel imparted some kind of inner voice within the "silence of Mary's soul." God spoke to Mary via the angel at the moment where the Holy Ghost, represented by the form of a dove, was present as well. A dove, with its wings outspread, forms a diamond shape, four diagonals join its tail, two wings and beak. The spirit or breath of God, his "sound," his voice, is effused by the dove, the Holy Spirit in its diamond shape.

Furthermore, at Pentecost, when Christ promised the Holy Spirit, it was in the form of a dove. Old Testament meanings concerning spirit are often concerned with breathing. A "breath of God's mouth that gave life to Christ, that breath being the Holy Spirit with its "mighty winds" and "linguages of fire." A diamond stylus is also a diamond ring, a diamond symbol of love and fidelity.

Back to diamonds. If diamonds facilitate the transmission of sound to our ears, conceivably we are in the position of duplicating the Trinity. Singer-musicians breathe into our ears when we hear the record. Singer-God has a diamond-Holy Ghost for us. God's in our hearts, us Christs who are Gods in the flesh. This voice from afar, God, enters our ears, as the Virgin was inseminated with Christ's embryo through her ears. (St. Augustine thought that Mary was felled with a voice from the burning bush as she listened to music, to the diamond ring, receive the spirit, the voice, the breath.

The eternal love of the Holy Spirit for the Father and the Son corresponds with the diamond, this symbol of steadfast love. The Holy Ghost, as a four-cornered, four-diagonal, four-chambered object, is a perfect representation of the relative duration of a diamond stylus being only 100-500 hours of playing time. The record's grooves wear down the stylus into unplayability, an argument against its steadfastness in playing or ringing out those songs of love.

Synthetic diamonds are made from graphite when extremely high temperatures and pressures are exerted on the substance that allows us to write, the pencil with its graphite芯. We can pick-up a diamond stylus for writing out the record grooves into the air, and it is a diamond, derived from carbon, just as another diamond is derived from the super-atmosphere carbon within it. Imagine writing with a diamond tipped pencil. Also, in order for oil to be mineralized, synthetic diamonds brought "diamond dust" by a diamond corruptions into dust which returns to the earth, a diamond-like particle.

The diamond dust is equally. Similarly, too much dust inhales the diamond dust to the lungs. The diamond dust also lose their diamond, their nose, since the diamond dust was derived from playing the diamond too frequently, the ambiguous residue residing in either snorting too much dust or, because they are saturated with music, diamond-written sound.

Why are diamonds a girl's best friend? Diamonds bearing generically also the symbol for steadfast love. A girl's best friend finds symbolic expression in the idea of the diamond. However, a diamond is not a friend, nor a lover, and then it is in very odd ways.

“A diamond is forever,” so say those advertisements for diamonds, the female being quietly embraced by the male who engages married her by saying to the ring indicates lifelong friendship with the companion. The ring is worn until she dies and thus may pass on as heirloom, a testament to her brief stay in the world of the living, a monument of her former life. One may discard it as soon as that love has corrupted into divorce, a broken engagement, her partner's death, and so forth. Even off one's fingers, in its own ground, they still "ring" and are not necessarily on one's finger.

When we hear a record being played, we know that a record's groove is a dimantine surface. The jewel that is seen is also the wave reverberating by means of the faculty of a diamond stylus' perfect contact with two sides of a diamond in contact with one's eye, the diamond ring, is also the diamond heard in the ear over a record player, the "ringing" diamond stylus memorializing their love.

A hard diamond is placed in conjunction with the heart, the place where love builds its figurative four-chambered object, just as our heart is. (There are heart-shaped diamonds.)

The strength of the diamond, its uniform, crystalline structure, has no air within it, no air for sound to reverberate within it. The heart, however, is quite loud, for even in the greatest of silences, we can always hear our hearts. Remember when Rachel Weiss was overcome in the movie, "The Way We Were" by her love? The microscopically shrunk vehicle ventured into its brain daily, the voice of the music barely loud enough for the voyagers. There is no sound within a diamond, no pockets of air, at least in flawless diamonds. When the diamond performs its function as stylus, the sound has the diamond as its point of origin, albeit the perfectly faceted and angled sides of the diamond can register all the variations felt along the record's groove. Never, never, never though can the diamond have sound pass through it for the diamond absorbs and the ensuing vibrations can only issue upon contact with the diamond's outside, while this jewel's inside, its heart, its air-tight interior, is soundproof within it.

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comfort, the pearl diver may remove the former chip. The beam in question will never warp the record, all- most too precious, rare and expensive to be used, besides we would be straining ourselves terribly to see such an exquisite though tiny stone, once made into a nearly invisible writing point. Sapphires were originally used as styluses, and like the emerald we would be despondent not to be able to see the pale, cross-shaped star draped over these magnificent gems. I will discuss pearl styluses further on.

Certainly the listener is not at a loss when the music compensates for the absence of the visual brilliance of the diamond or any of its equivalents. Listening to the compositions of musical geniuses must face the inevitable loss of those prismatic gleams when light strikes these jewels under question. The tinniness of the diamond stylus cannot shield the treasured refraction; placing one's finger under the pick-up needle asserts the diamond's presence, albeit by mere touch- ing—and if the stereo's "power" button has been pressed—a finger's pores and rippling array of lines, swirls, "grooves" again, facilitates the diamond to register the sound of such a fingertip's landscape. We can then "hear" the finger that only feels hot or cold, rough or soft—and another argument for the diamond's perfection—sound for the touch, sound for the short interval of pain at the stylus' sharpness, and while under such a delicious sensation, we beg our ears to receive the equivalent; oddly, it all started since the prism was never seen.

Pearls, however, would not hurt whatsoever if they were made into styluses. Their roundness and smoothness would be a welcome sensation to the finger dis- mayed by the surgical potential of the other gem. Oddly enough, inside the pearl is a sharp object, a chip off of the oyster's exterior. The oyster's outside, composed of calcium, grows layers and layers of shell; these encrustations are what pearl divers chip off and insert into the oyster's lip. Once inside the oyster, this formerly "outside" chip irritates the soft, fleshy interior, thus propelling the oyster to cover the hard edge of the chip with what will eventually become the ideally smooth surface of the pearl. From the outside of the oyster to its inside, and once inside, the chip is then a "foreign" body (although it is part of the oyster, hence not so foreign) about to become reconciled with the interior; whenever the oyster is happy, there is the chip that caused so much dis- comfort, the pearl diver may remove the former chip. The pearl is thus a prophylactic to the pain of the oyster's relative ugliness, the oyster's exterior layers of unsusightly calcium growth, when that ugly exterior was the very origin of the pearl, before it evolved into its hemispheric perfection. A pearl, like a diamond, is really a chip, a hard, knife-like surface. (If you have ever dived for oysters for perhaps eating them against the half-shell, your fingers get sliced up terribly.) But only in the heart of the pearl does the chip exist. To touch a pearl stylus is a comfort in comparison to a diamond stylus. Indeed, if such a stylus existed, the pearl just might (a hypothesis) wear down and become the chip it began building itself upon. Then that chip would be dimantine. The heart of the pearl is a diamond, however odd that may strike your ears.

All record grooves are now suited for the purposes of a diamond's point to travel along. What would a record's grooves evolve into if a pearl, a round pearl, were to be used. Instead of V-shaped valleys we would have U-shaped ones; the pearl would have to touch on grooves that were essentially curved, not angled as with a diamond. And what would that sound like? What would a pearl stylus do to a record's sound, what would the sound sound like? Would the music become softer, fuzzier, slower, what? To hear a gem "clearly" has always had the diamond as its standard. Could there be a pearl sound standard where the category of "clarity" and "sharpest" no longer applied, but the predicates of "subtlety" or "soft- ness" did? Conjecturing a pearl stylus, even in the shape of a record's grooves, seems at best fantastism; its only truth is that diamonds and pearls are gems, and hence interchangeable; if not, the prismatic quality and clarity once the strange stylus is fully a diamond. This hypothetical situation with a pearl-diamond stylus, this pulverization of the pearl as it transforms itself into a diamond in the process, could happen with a diamond as well. The 500th playing time of the diamond stylus signals the diamond stylus' vulnera- bility, its breakage. Could the diamond stylus be shedding itself along the way. Let us suppose that a diamond does just that, that, by wearing down, it chips off, it crumbles through strain towards its 500th playing time. And where do these diamond morsels go, where do these even tinier frag- ments of the diamond transform? The transformation of the diamond stylus takes place, and, conceivably, diamonds may be made that are capable with the fabrication of a diamond record and its diamond sty- lus, since the cutting of a diamond has to take place with a diamond, the diamond record's grooves doing the pulverizing, the cutting. Powder then fills the air and enters into ourselves in the strangest of ways. Since my entire argument is replete with hypotheses, I shall make another. After the diamond's fictive wear- down into diamond dust since it played so many times on the record, the dust became transformed, altered, blended into a mixture of记录 grooves and its being pulverized by such grooves, the dust enters our bodies. If the similarity between co- caine or heroin or any other dust-like drug is justi- fied, then this dust enters, as is a common practice, through the nose. Of course, rock musicians will snort "rocks," the rocks in question being more pre- cious than gold, a rock not as expensive as the rocks that are diamonds. A bird of paradise flew up my nose could mean the four-cornered dove of the Holy Ghost is flying up my nose and into my lungs, the very site of breath or spirit again. "Angel dust" resonates with the idea of the angel Gabriel accompanied by the Holy Ghost at Mary's Annunciation when she is about to hear God.

"Angel dust" resonates with the idea of the angel Gabriel accompanied by the Holy Ghost at Mary's Annunciation when she is about to hear God. Calcium by-products will make the nacreous shell of the pearl. A diamond is now in the heart of a pearl. That double gem will elicit delicious sound, eventual- ly after the pearl dust has scattered itself over the record's"clearly" has always had the diamond as its standard. Could there be a pearl sound standard where the category of "clarity" and "sharpest" no longer applied, but the predicates of "subtlety" or "soft- ness" did? Conjecturing a pearl stylus, even in the shape of a record's grooves, seems at best fantastism; its only truth is that diamonds and pearls are gems, and hence interchangeable; if not, the prismatic quality and clarity once the strange stylus is fully a diamond.

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(continued on p. 41)
She is the most disgusting creature known to fags. She hangs around the waterfront all night trying to make a queer guy. They could care less. Sometimes she dresses up like a guy but they all know who it is. She is the fag rag whose only ambition is to suck cock. It's so lowlifely it's appalling, and we all wish someone would teach her a lesson but that's just what she wants, besides she's a dumb type who probably wouldn't learn. So she stays stupid and full of yearning.

Sometimes on a slow night the bartenders on West will tolerate her nasty twat on a barstool. But as soon as some trade comes in she has to get out. She is just a bum looking for a handout. One place has a lot of trouble with her since their john is right next to the back entrance, so she can sneak in and hide out in the bathroom. It's dark in there and sometimes she gets away with her tricks. More often she pretends to feel sorry and tsk over her presumption. But in general no one gives two shits.

She will undoubtedly tell you, if you bother to listen, that no one can tell the difference between a male mouth and a female mouth. She can't get it through her head no one can tell the difference between a male mouth and a female mouth. She is really a fool. She can't believe it. They walk around to a quiet little spot. No one's around yet so he excises himself and makes a few calls. When he comes back they chitchat about this bar and that bar and then she makes her bid. "Hey...uh, fella," she says in a low sultry voice, glancing nervously at the bar tender at the other end of the bar, "I think I could be of service." She nudges him coyly near his crotch with her hipbone. He takes a pull at his drink and waits on his disguise to have its full flower. "I'll pay," she whispers, pursing her waxy red lips like an asshole. "Nah, not tonight," he puts her down and she besieges him with requests as to when. "Later, later," she's tantalized, "I got a thing for this guy." She squeezes all over herself just thinking about an available one. "You probably think I'm pretty strange hanging around this scene, don't you?" she challenges him. "You might not believe it but I do get what I want. Like for instance, yourself, why did you pick up on me?" She's so fucking stupid. "Uh, I don't know, who cares?" "I've got no choice," now she's whining. "It's the only way I can get off." He gets really revolted hearing her talk about her gruesome female sexuality. "Oh yeh," says he, "sadomasochist's liberation." She's all agog. "I knew you had some brains behind that pose." She yammers on, pleased to have looked up with such a goodlooker and his buddies. More guys are coming in the place, waiting. The decy comes over and has a drink with them. She smiles and shakes hands and immediately makes her offer. He accepts, and asks her if she wants to come into the backroom. She quivers all over with the thrill of it. The infamous backroom. She knocks over the barstool in her eagerness to follow him. "Very unladylike behavior," sneers a queen. After about one minute a few more guys wander on back. You hear a few high-pitched yells and one long strangled kind of sob and then nothing and the guys come out. Two are lugging a big green plastic trashcan. It only took about ten minutes.

When I came into the backroom she was on her knees in front of him and he was playing around, rubbing his crotch but holding her away. Her eyes were popping out of her head and glued to his bulge. It was real nasty. When she saw me and the other guys she got a little nervous. "Don'tcha want to do my friends too?" and with craven delight all over her face she breathed oh yes. "Beg them, ask them if you may have the honour of being their Victim." She was begging just like he told her to as they hoisted her up on the pooltable and tied her up tidily. When she was good and ready we let her have it with mophandles and chair legs till she was grog and broke down. Then we got the pipes out, the one's we'd filled with concrete for a job not too different from this one. Special attention was given to her pretty pretty face. It was real awful the way she liked it. Even though she fought like mad towards the end you could see she was hot. I wasn't the only one who got really pissed off over that. One of the guys who has a taste for such things shoved his pipe all the way up her snatch as hard as he could. We put it in the can and went out on the wharf where we just left it. Then we went out to the Pier and finished ourselves off. Someone remembered to go back to the bar and clean up.

After a couple of days they wrote up in the paper a little piece about the body being found. They couldn't figure out who'd done it. We found out who she was and all. We passed the clipping around, then Frankie burned it and we had one on the house. Word got around about it for those who were really interested and that was the end of that. Miss T., the famous girl, delivered a sermon on the subject: "Let that be a lesson to all you trash, to stay out of dens of evil where you are not lusted after."
Eric Mitchell's
UNDERGROUND USA

Above:
Eric Mitchell, Patti Astor and Becky Johnston;
Photo: David Armstrong
Left: Eric Mitchell and Cookie Mueller, Still.
Above Right:
Rene Ricard, Tom DiCillo, Patti Astor and Eric Mitchell, Still.

Kenneth Rene Ricard
both a personal triumph for its creator, actor-

By David Ehrenstein
Underground USA is a satire of contemporary New York “scenemaking” in the form of an update of “Sunset Boulevard,” Underground USA is

emerged to challenge both commercial moviemaking and the avant-garde. Shown in rock clubs and lofts,

ment. New-wave filmmakers like Mitchell have

director Eric Mitchell, and a further indication of the

importance of New York’s new-wave film move-

these loose, free-form super-8mm narratives quickly

how and a sharp sense of social and political observa-

staid formalism of the “experimental” establish-

ment, these films are the diametric opposite of the

His first feature, kidnapped (1978), took on

ment to the attention of a larger public than it has

managed to remain true to his “outlaw” origins while at the same time bringing the new wave move-

“Forget the ‘50s and (remembered) ‘20s of the Billy Wilder melodrama. As these spent sophisticates move through Mitchell’s carefully designed decor trapped in their narcissistic fantasies, going through the mo-

tions of rituals that have lost all meaning for them, we may giggle but at the same time be touched by their lives of noisy desperation.

This chic wistfulness comes to a climax in the film’s final party scene. Told by Kenneth that “Andy” has called and she’ll be shooting a film next

week, Vicky—wearing an incredible neo-cubist black

and white dress—emerges from her bedroom to face

what she thinks will be a roomful of well wishers. But

proaches her chauffeur, who’s slowly opening a bot-


We eavesdrop on chic gossip about a fashion world so stagnant and corrupt that no one of taste dares be caught dead in the clothes of a successful designer. People only come to life when prodded by drugs. Money has replaced sex as the object of everyone’s desire.

Mitchell’s social prognosis is grim, but on the visual level the effect of “Underground USA” is oddly cheering. Frame after frame shows the inspiration of the best of European and American filmmaking. Mitchell’s eye is as keen as Godard’s in ferreting out color and detail in the most banal of circumstances. Strategically placing his camera to take in as much space as possible, Mitchell uses mirrors and

Sternberg-style heavily shadowed lighting to give the

cramped spaces his characters move in an enormous

sense of depth.

The deadpan acting style he and most of his other players indulge in owes much to the work of Rainer Werner Fassbinder. But while this flat-affect ap-

proach is Mitchell’s main dramatic technique, it

doesn’t stop him from utilizing work done in a con-

trasting style as is the case with Rene Ricard’s remarkable emotional tour-de-force as Kenneth the

butter.

There’s a rich, multi-layered texture at work here. Characters exist less for themselves than as iconographical anchoring devices—points of reference in a hall of mirrors crossing space and time. The time is now, but it also the then of the ‘60s and the ’50s and (remembered) ’20s of the Billy Wilder melodrama. As these spent sophisticates move through Mitchell’s carefully designed decor trapped in their narcissistic fantasies, going through the mo-

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GLENN O'BRIEN'S

TV PARTY is the TELEVISION SHOW that's a COCKTAIL PARTY but which is also a POLITICAL PARTY.

TV PARTY is cablecast LIVE every Tuesday night from 12:30 to 1:30 on Manhattan and Teleprompter Cable Television in NEW YORK CITY.

GLENN O'BRIEN'S TV PARTY premiered in December, 1978. It is a variety show—incorporating elements of formats pioneered by Jack Paar, Steve Allen, Johnny Carson, Woody Woodbury, Fulton J. Sheen, Ed Sullivan, Hugh Hefner, Dick Clark, Dinah Shore and Don Cornelius. Like Hugh Hefner's Playboy After Dark, TV Party combines the talk and entertainment format with an actual PARTY. Distinctions between entertainers and "the studio audience" disappeared. Party guests might suddenly favor the group with a song. "How about a number, Sammy?" At TV PARTY, even the home viewers can entertain the PARTY over the telephone. On one show cartiers sang and played with WALTER STEEDING, CHRIS STEIN, BOB FRIPP and THE TV PARTY ORCHESTRA featuring LENNY FERRARI. There is a party in every home where the TV PARTY is TURNED ON.
TV PARTY

TV PARTY is a medium for establishing a PARTY NETWORK. THE PARTY is the highest expression of social activity—the co-operative production of FUN. THE PARTY is the first step in organizing society for mutual interests.

TV PARTY believes that SOCIAL affinity groups will provide the foundation for any effective political action. SOCIAL DREAD is what keeps citizens out of existing political organizations. Existing political organizations such as the political parties do not have the inclination or ability to truly PARTY, indicating the negative character of their functions.

TV PARTY will run a full CAST of candidates in the 1981 NEW YORK CITY ELECTIONS, led by Producer and Host of TV PARTY Glenn O'Brien, who is running for mayor. A distinguished slate of artists and musicians will be announced in the near future, running for City Council, and other important posts.

The principal plank in the TV PARTY PLATFORM is INDEPENDENCE from the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and NATION STATUS for the FREE PORT OF NEW YORK.

Using the models of HONG KONG and other free ports, TV PARTY will establish a government which eliminates the need for most TAXES, and paying citizens a NATIONAL DIVIDEND. A profitable government will not be hard to achieve once the draining taxes of New York State and the Federal Government are eliminated. Profits will come from various government monopolies, such as a monopoly on GAMBLING. New York might become a banking center like SWITZERLAND or THE BAHAMAS, a shipping registry haven like LIBERIA or PANAMA, a major philatelic producer like THE VATICAN.

TV PARTY will make New York a truly FUN CITY by eliminating harmful laws, deregulating personal relationships, achieving full employment and reinstituting Rent Control. But the first task will be for the FREE PORT OF NEW YORK to repossess the local electromagnetic spectrum from foreign interests such as THE CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS MONOPOLIES. CALIFORNIA based ENTERTAINMENT CARTELS, and ANTI-NEW YORK "cultural" propagandists.

In America TV is the form of government. Nothing can be governed but people and TV has proved the greatest modern instrument of their control. TV PARTY presents and reveals ENTERTAINMENT as the ACTUAL form of GOVERNMENT. The institutions commonly called the government are merely the dramatic program, formalizing the results of TV's direction of masses of minds.

The TV MASS MIND is a sophisticated archetype of informed idiocy, created after years of research in claw. The networks are geared to the LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR IQ because it is accepted by the vast masses with intelligence superior to the TV COMMON DENOMINATOR IQ. TV PARTY runs and RE-RUNS on a platform that consists of GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES being scrutinized by the entire populace and if they do not INFORM, DEBATE, CONSIDER, DECIDE and ACT EFFECTIVELY (not to mention incomprehensibly) they will be dropped.

GOVERNMENT consists of GOING THROUGH CHANNELS. We can change the government simply by CHANGING THE CHANNEL.

CONTINENTAL PROGRAMMING is the enemy of culture, which is always local. A national American culture is as impossible as it is undesirable. The attempt to create such a culture by the CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS MONOPOLIES is the last and most reprehensible phase of imperialism, a technique termed "Global Absorption" by National Security Guru Zbigniew Brzezinski. It is responsible for destroying whatever fledgling cultures existed on this continent at the turn of the century. It is responsible for SELLING CENTER ARCHITECTURE and TRAFFIC COP as CULTURE HERO.

The only cure is MASS LOCALIZATION. Independence for NEW YORK is just the first step in creating a DIVIDED STATES OF AMERICA and a DIVIDED NATIONS (D.N.) Culture begins with LOCAL PROGRAMMING. The failure of the National Networks is the same as the failure of the National Government. Local programming and fully empowered local government can make this city as good as it is in REALITY. But as it is our

REALITY is constantly assaulted by dreams and visions of an inferior quality. NEW YORK is America's greatest center of culture, but this culture is nearly totally blacked out of radio and television communication. NEW YORK has dozens of the greatest bands in modern music but their music is not played on the radio. New York performers are not seen on television. Why should we import all of this "talent" so inferior to our own? We are not doing it. It's being beamed in. The Networks are polluting our environment. TV PARTY demands local control of the Electromagnetic Spectrum. No image irradiation without representation.

TV PARTY is produced and Hosted by Glenn O'Brien/Directed by Betsy Sussler/Managed by Babs Egan/Cameras, Edo, Fred Brathwaite, Coleen Fitzgibbon, James Nares and Lisa Rosen; Sound Kris Randall

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Using the models of HONG KONG and other free ports, TV PARTY will establish a government which eliminates the need for most TAXES, and paying citizens a NATIONAL DIVIDEND. A profitable government will not be hard to achieve once the draining taxes of New York State and the Federal Government are eliminated. Profits will come from various government monopolies, such as a monopoly on GAMBLING. New York might become a banking center like SWITZERLAND or THE BAHAMAS, a shipping registry haven like LIBERIA or PANAMA, a major philatelic producer like THE VATICAN.

TV PARTY will make New York a truly FUN CITY by eliminating harmful laws, deregulating personal relationships, achieving full employment and reinstituting Rent Control. But the first task will be for the FREE PORT OF NEW YORK to repossess the local electromagnetic spectrum from foreign interests such as THE CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS MONOPOLIES. CALIFORNIA based ENTERTAINMENT CARTELS, and ANTI-NEW YORK "cultural" propagandists.

In America TV is the form of government. Nothing can be governed but people and TV has proved the greatest modern instrument of their control. TV PARTY presents and reveals ENTERTAINMENT as the ACTUAL form of GOVERNMENT. The institutions commonly called the government are merely the dramatic program, formalizing the results of TV's direction of masses of minds.

The TV MASS MIND is a sophisticated archetype of informed idiocy, created after years of research in claw. The networks are geared to the LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR IQ because it is accepted by the vast masses with intelligence superior to the TV COMMON DENOMINATOR IQ. TV PARTY runs and RE-RUNS on a platform that consists of GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES being scrutinized by the entire populace and if they do not INFORM, DEBATE, CONSIDER, DECIDE and ACT EFFECTIVELY (not to mention incomprehensibly) they will be dropped.

GOVERNMENT consists of GOING THROUGH CHANNELS. We can change the government simply by CHANGING THE CHANNEL.

CONTINENTAL PROGRAMMING is the enemy of culture, which is always local. A national American culture is as impossible as it is undesirable. The attempt to create such a culture by the CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS MONOPOLIES is the last and most reprehensible phase of imperialism, a technique termed "Global Absorption" by National Security Guru Zbigniew Brzezinski. It is responsible for destroying whatever fledgling cultures existed on this continent at the turn of the century. It is responsible for SELLING CENTER ARCHITECTURE and TRAFFIC COP as CULTURE HERO.

The only cure is MASS LOCALIZATION. Independence for NEW YORK is just the first step in creating a DIVIDED STATES OF AMERICA and a DIVIDED NATIONS (D.N.) Culture begins with LOCAL PROGRAMMING. The failure of the National Networks is the same as the failure of the National Government. Local programming and fully empowered local government can make this city as good as it is in REALITY. But as it is our
"The Russians will swallow Europe," a visiting Californian ascertained at dinner, vigorously masticating a morsel of calamari. "First they'll seize the Persian Gulf. Then push into Pakistan. Then India, see? The Domino Theory was an underestimation, if anything."

It was the year of a black moon, a year when Mercury went retrograde on an average of once a week. The new one beginning had every appearance of kicking off with World War III. Have you ever tried debating with anyone whether or not the human race will be eradicated in the immediate future?

"I don't think they'll do it," one says. "I mean I just don't think it would happen."

"Yes," insists the other, sounding even more stupid, "But what if it DOES!"

The Californian reminded me of my father, whose impromptu glosses on History had suffused the late hours of my childhood when, after drinking most of a fifth of Chivas, he perceived the diabolical nature of World Communism with preternatural clarity.

"This is the greatest country in the world," he would say, his eyes burning as if they suddenly beheld the Antichrist. "Just go over to Kussia and see what the Red Communists call freedom—"

Freedom, nuclear destruction and the moral iconography of the Catholic Church were the principal ideological features of my childhood. The horrors of godless Communism were lavishly illustrated in the cautionary lectures of Sisters Mary Bonaventure and Timothea, the Kafkaesque brides of Christ who taught my second and third grade classes. In China, the yellow Reds drove spikes through the skulls of our missionaries, nailed slivers of bamboo under their fingernails, tied them to bonsai crosses and left them to rot in the rice paddies ("long fallow under Communist rule"). These, truly, were the martyrs of the modern world, "who will one day be recognized by the Holy Father." That meant Canonization, which at that time I imagined involved firing first and second class relics of the departed Saint from a cannon a la Ringling Brothers. (First Class Relics are actual bits of the body, Second Class Relics a shred of the saint's apparel. A Third Class Relic is merely some object touched by him or her in the course of Good Works, hardly worth bothering with.)

For fifty cents—piously reserved from our allowances—we could redeem a pagan baby through the
sacrament of Baptism. Each time you redeemed a sacrament of the Eucharist, you received a brightly colored picture of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin, Pius XII or some other favorite religious personality. Especially devout children in my school collected them and traded them like baseball cards.

My father began building a cement bomb shelter in our basement in 1958. Your home shelter was supposed to be hermetically sealed off from the outside world, which would soon be completely destroyed by ballistic missiles. One day, three outsized manila envelopes arrived from Civil Defense. These contained phials of water purifying tablets, khaki-green tins of dehydrated, radiation-proof food, insulators on dwelling the concrete in your Defending Your Bomb Shelter—one indispensable ingredient was a shotgun. In a real nuclear "conflict," it was thought, imprudent neighbors who had frivolously failed to build their own shelters were likely to drop by on the pretext of borrowing a cup of sugar. If they did, you were supposed to blow their heads off.

America, Love It Or Leave It. Finish your plate, there are kids starving in India. It's the Russians that want a war, not us. I'm not saying Hitler was right but I'm not saying he was wrong either. They smell funny. Stevenson will hand the country over to the Reds. If Kennedy's elected he's going to build a secret tunnel to the Vatican. Next thing the Pope will be running the country. When the Pope opens the cathedral in Lourdes, you gave Bernadette a barely he'll know the date of the end of the world. Death means nothing to them. That's why they want a war.

And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. Everyone's mind. Diego Cortez describes how he

"The new Mass in English is something I can really relate to," he told me. "They have a Sunday folk mass we take the kids to. And the priest gives you know something unpleasant is happening in the world. Happening splat in the face of a hapless Space Explorer. The egg foo yung turns into this disgusting slime resembling a large dead cockroach. Inside the cockroach they find an egg. The egg spurts open and something like egg foo yung shoots out, landing in front of the face in a faceless of the faceless creature. The egg foo yung turns into this disgusting slime all over the guy's face, something like a soft-shell crab with the tail of a garter snake that wraps itself around his neck. Doctors on the space ship try to slice its legs off, but its blood is this gooey yellow acid that eats through five thousand tons of metal. Then the Alien disappears and this horrible thing with three rows of teeth pops out of the guy's stomach at space dinner time, ruining everyone's appetite.

The Alien grows inexorably and hides in dusky corners of the ship. Is this how the world ends? Not with a bang, but with Mae West? TV. Y.C. January 1980
A NEW WORLD

Introduction
For over a decade, on the international circuit in Nairobi, Havana, Paris and Belgrade, at first in UNESCO corridors, later on the agenda of working subcommittees, a new concept has been gaining ground. Concerned about the strident inequities of the status quo, not only in basic necessities but also in communication resources—the information gap between the haves and the have-nots—the Non-Aligned Movement, a kind of giant collaborative of about two-thirds of the world’s nations, is working to establish a New World Information Order, with increasing momentum in the last two years. This is partly a result of the explosion of new sophisticated electronic technologies, and also a keen realization by Third World leaders that their own economic growth requires access to improved communication systems for both domestic and international traffic. They see the current domination of information gathering and dissemination by the Western news media and computer conglomerates as a hang-over from colonialism and the sacrosanct Western concept of “free flow of information” as essentially a one-way street, in which the rest of the world is viewed through predominantly Western eyes, from a Western cultural perspective and according to the dictates of multinational corporations.

Liliana Garcia, Costa Rica: Free flow? What free flow? It means you are free to send and we are free to receive.

Chen Chimutengwende, Zimbabwe: Most of the people in Western societies don’t understand much about the Third World problems of communication. For instance, they have a hang-up, I would say, on the question of government involvement in mass communication. And myself as a journalist, as a professional mass media person, I am not very happy with government intervention in mass media in theory, but I find at this stage of our development we haven’t got a choice. The governments have to be involved at some stage or other because we are living in a period where our development is a planned development, and in that case the role of the media has to be properly defined to see where it can promote that national development.

George Wedell, England: Do you think that over time government will begin as it were, to take a rather more detached view of the media and will say, well, look, in order to get the full value of the freedom that we’ve fought for, we really must allow this freedom, not only to ourselves but also to our fellow citizens, even if they don’t always agree with us. Do you think there’s a chance of that?

CC: I think there is a chance as we...our states become consolidated, because at the moment they are young, vulnerable and sometimes not sure which way they are going, and they become sensitive to anything that might easily...that might be considered something which can erode their power. And I think eventually I would like to see more control of the African mass media by African professional media people and with maximum participation by ordinary people. But initially that will be very difficult. And so I think it is the task of Third World communications to educate their government on the best ways of making mass media effective—and they can be effective if the professional people were given enough freedom to operate them as they understand them.

The text reprinted below is the first chapter of a 45-page manifesto* drafted by a committee of African, European, Asian and Latin American experts led by the now-legendary Tunisian Information Minister, Mustapha Masmoudi, who, at a Havana Cuba non-aligned conference in 1978, was assigned the task of collecting “comments, suggestions, proposals and recommendations” for making the new order a reality. Since the publication of the manifesto, the debate between adherents of the status quo and proponents of the new order has reached new dimensions—to the extent that it is finally receiving acknowledgement in certain sectors of the US press—the New York Times (both viewpoints) and Broadcasting Magazine, which staunchly defends the interests of commercial enterprises—not surprisingly, given the latest resolutions adopted at UNESCO gatherings in October and February. These empower a special subcommittee to convene in Guyana in May to discuss some proposals which the Western news agencies see as a potential threat to the profitability of their operations and their monopoly over world news. The agenda includes such topics as the licensing of journalists and the setting up of an internationally recognized professional code of ethics that would make “responsible” towards the host country a key factor in reporting.

—Lisa Bear, April 1981

* A copy of the New World Information Order manifesto was xeroxed (with some resistance from the personnel) at the AID, Agency for International Development, office in Washington.
The New World Information Order requires a limited, because of the reticences caused by certain fears. Such fears are aroused by the prospect of change that will adversely affect direct interests. The information media have as their role the awakening of public opinion to the need for changes that profit the whole of humanity. The idea should be accepted everywhere that the present order is nothing but an amalgam of disorders and that, therefore, change is imperative.

The present document aims to set out the principal points of the general imbalance that affects international society.

A. POLITICAL ASPECTS

In the political field, i.e. from the conception of information to the editorial, production and operating levels, there are many imbalances. Among these are:

- A flagrant numerical imbalance between North and South.

This is shown by the divergence between the volume of information originating in the developed world and aimed at developing countries, and the volume of news that travels in the opposite direction. Almost 80 per cent of news that circulates through the world comes from the big transnational agencies; but these allocate only about 20 or 30 per cent of their news to the developing countries although the latter represent nearly 90 per cent of the source of the spectrum, while the developing countries have no means of protecting themselves against foreign broadcasts. It is also difficult for them to compete against such broadcasts, all the more so as some of them are sent out from broadcasting stations located inside the developing countries. Concerning television, 45 per cent of developing countries have no television stations of their own; this disproportion is made even worse by the broadcasting within such countries of a great many programmes made inside developed countries.

- Supremacy in fact, and a will to dominate.

The above are illustrated by the marked indifference of the media of the developed countries, particularly those of the West, towards the problems, preoccupations and aspirations of the developing countries. They are based on financial, industrial, cultural and technological power and relegate most of the developing countries to simply being consumers of the information sold to them as merchandise. The transnational agencies control the circulation of information as if it were their right, and operate without any hindrance in the majority of developing countries; they also entirely dominate the technological field as illustrated by the systems of communication by satellite, which are entirely run by the great international complexes.

- A lack of information on developing countries.

Daily events in the developing countries are reported to the world through the channels of the transnational media; these media also "tell" the developing countries what is happening in foreign countries, through the same channels. By only informing the developing countries about news items which they have filtered, cut down and distorted, the transnational information systems impose their own way of seeing the world on to the developing countries. As a result, communities that are sometimes geographically close to each other only know each other through these transnational information systems. Moreover, the latter often show these communities (when they take notice at all) in the most unfavourable light, stressing crises, strikes, street demonstrations, putsches etc... or even holding them up to ridicule. When the newspapers of the industrialized countries present the problems of the Third World in an objective manner, they do so only by printing supplements of special editions, for which they charge higher prices.

- Survival of the colonial era.

The information system as it is at present operated sanctions a form of political, economic and cultural colonialism. This shows in the often tendentious style of reporting of news concerning the developing countries. The style consists in highlighting events whose importance, in certain cases, is limited or even non-existent; in collecting unrelated facts and presenting them as a "whole"; in setting out facts in such a way that the conclusion to be drawn from them is favourable in the interests of the transnational system; in amplifying facts of small dimension so as to arouse unjustified fears; in keeping silent on situations unfavourable to the interests of the mediators' native countries. In this way, world events are covered only according to the interests of certain societies.

In the same way, the news is distorted and misrepresented according to the moral, cultural or political values of certain States, disregarding the values and preoccupations of the other nations. The criteria of selection are consciously or unconsciously based on the political and economic interests of the transnational system and of the countries in which this system is implanted. One must also note the use of labels, adjectives, and persuasive definitions, chosen with the intention of denigrating.

- An alienating influence in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

Apart from the domination and manipulation of the international traffic in news, the developed countries practice other forms of hegemony on the mass communications institutions of the Third World. First, they possess the media through direct investment. Then there is another method of control which is even more decisive at present, namely the near-monopoly of world publicity. This is wielded by the great publicity agencies which operate like communications transnationals, and which earn their incomes by serving the interests of the transnational industrial and commercial corporations which dominate the world of business. Another form of domination is the influence used to oppose the social...
evolution of Third World countries. This is practiced openly by the propaganda institutions. In addition, television programmes are themselves instruments of other items of news that only interest the public in the country where the news system originates. Such news in the client countries have no interest in it. The great communications is founded on individualistic dignity. All these deficiencies of a political and communications is therefore needs to be stated that the present order of information, as based on a quasi-monopolistic and inevitable, and even insistent in certain fields. Also, the application of present legislation is arbitrary. It does not respect the majority, because of a view of freedom limited to those who own or control the communications media—who own the means of production machinery whereas people who own the means of production. In this field, many questions need to be raised.

—Rights of the individual and rights of the community.

The philosophy which predominates to the present day has favored the rights of professionals in the information field; that is, the rights of a small number of persons or entities who are specialists in their activity. In consequence, the rights and preoccupations of the collectivities have been more or less neglected. Yet, if it is true that the right of information is inherent in human nature, it is none the less—perhaps even to a greater degree—the natural right of every human community, in the sense that each person feels a pressing need to communicate with others. Freedom of expression is a sine qua non to realize and preserve his own personality but also to know and understand other peoples better; and through communications establish links and create conditions that will favor a climate of mutual comprehension and respect, and cooperative links that will be profitable.

—Freedom of information or the informing agent.

Freedom of information, presented as the corollary of freedom of opinion and freedom of speech, was actually considered as “freedom of the informing agent.” Thereby it has become an instrument of domination in the hands of the owners of the international mass media. Usually it upholds the right of the “informer” and is silent on his duties and responsibilities toward the “informed.”

—Satellite communications.

This is seen unilaterally, and essentially to the profit of those who have the financial resources to obtain and spread information. This fact has allowed certain international institutions to exalt this right, to paint their own privilege, and has permitted wealthy powers to establish their domination over the information circuits.

—The ineffectiveness of rectification rights.

Contrary to the domestic laws of certain countries, the right to rectification is regulated in a very incomplete and insufficient manner by the international law. Although the 1952 Convention, no valid ways exist to assert States the possibility of getting false statements rectified. Moreover, the 1952 Convention itself is not very efficient (articles 3 and 4), in fact restrictive and unfavorable to developing countries.

—The absence of an international code of ethics and the defective character of the regulations governing the profession.

Inequalities concerning the above are favored by the absence of an international code of ethics. Attempts to create such a code have been made up to the present. The United Nations to institute an international code of ethics suitable to the needs of the individual and the collective have not succeeded.

—Imbalance in copyright.

The above has been regulated for a long time by the Berne Convention of 1886, which is protectorist in its present form. The applicant is the country of appearance of a work that rights are valid, and by the rarity of the waivers that can be applied to the existing regulations. The Universal Copyright Convention and the Geneva Convention of 1952, which were signed by UNESCO, apply a limited protection. The Florence Convention has not profited developing countries because of the protectorist effects that their legislation has had. They have developed a system that favours the circulation of intellectual products of industrialized countries toward developing countries. Altogether, the international publishing and distributing system, now operating, though it pretends to safeguard the cultural and political domination of the industrialized countries over the whole of international society.

—Imbalance in the allocation of the source of the spectrum.

The unsatisfactory character of the provisions of article 9 of the radio communications settlement must be exposed. These confirm the rights already established by the proprietors of the source of the spectrum, and so deprive recently independent countries of any means of making their voices heard in a satisfactory manner.

—Disorder and lack of coordination in telecommunications and in utilization of satellites, together with the misalignment between States regarding possession of these means.

In the absence of effective regulation, the present inequities in this field are likely to increase, at the risk of consolidating irrevocably the rights of the stronger. It will hardly be emphasized that such a progressive situation will at the basis, without appropriate regulation, a veritable invasion of radio broadcasts and television programmes can be expected, particularly in the poorer countries, private homes and private consciences. This threat cannot be too strongly denounced.

III. POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL ASPECTS

Because of the structures inherited from colonialism, the limited extent of trade and the slackness of economic relations, telecommunications between the developing countries have by no means met the countries’ hopes of closer links and of greater circulation of information. The developed countries benefit from possessing the most efficient and the least expensive communications circuits and resources. They experience the inconveniences of a faulty and costly organisation in the communications system now in force. The developing countries have none of these. The tariff system they have imposed have enabled them to benefit from monopolies and privileges. This includes the preferential treatment of publications, private communications, and also the use of technical methods of communication and information.

The most serious in this situation, such as the Geneva administrative regional conference for the planning of long wave and medium wave broadcasting, organized by the I.T.U. in 1975, have not succeeded in reforming the system in a satisfactory way. In fact, the above-mentioned conference only served to confirm the existence of a situation unfavourable to the interests of small countries.

A. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Satellites will risk intensifying this imbalance if vigorous initiatives are not undertaken, and if technical aid is not brought to developing countries. This imbalance manifests itself particularly in the following fields:

Telecommunications

The present structures and configurations of the telecommunications networks between developing countries are based only on rates of profitability and of volume of traffics and, thus, put them at a disadvantage. The handicap is felt both at the levels of the medium and of the long wave.

Concerning the medium—besides the absence of direct links—a concentration of communication networks of industrialized countries. The equipment imposed by the former colonial powers excludes, for certain developing countries, the possibility of benefiting from beyond their frontiers (ground base stations allowing only the reception of television programmes produced in the industrialized countries, without any possibility of broadcasting towards them).

Concerning tariffs the situation is even more striking, because the developed countries make up the system in such a way that the pricing system was set up in a way that disadvantages developing countries, and so it perpetuates the disadvantage of the rich countries over the circulation of information. To say the least, it is strange that for the same distance, communications are more expensive between two points inside developing countries than between two others situated in developed countries.

Similarly, nothing can justify the fact that the same communication can cost less when it travels from a developed to a developing country than in the opposite way. The survival of anachronistic methods is the reason why, for example, a telegraphic press circuit is more expensive as a telephone circuit. How can the big press agencies justify the privilege that gives them, because of the magnitude of their traffic, the possibility of making a cost that in certain cases does not amount to any more than the cost of a daily average of one hour? The situation is made even worse in certain countries, where the telecommunications network has been contracted out to foreign companies whose aim is to make a profit, and to canals international traffic towards their home country.

Satellites

Although the 1977 Geneva conference tried to set the main heads of procedure to prevent abuses in the use of satellites, the developing countries are more and more dependent on the big transnational firms to exalt this right into a monopoly, thus wishing to exchange information, which worsens the imbalance of the present telecommunications system.

Allocation of radio frequencies

The problem of the dividing up of the spectrum of frequencies, a limited and precious natural resource, now presents itself with particular urgency. The developing countries are more and more determined than ever to contest vigorously the right that the developed countries have arrogated to themselves in the use of this spectrum. They are determined to secure for themselves a fair share of this spectrum.

It is a secret for nobody that almost 90 per cent of the source of the spectrum is held by a few countries and the majority of them are developed countries. The power density to the square kilometre is four times less in the developing countries than in the developed.

Transport of publications

The imbalance already noted in the telecommunications field can also be seen in the field of the circulation of newspapers and publications.

—Tariff rates and the exchange of newspapers are fixed, like the rates for all other correspondence, by the Universal Postal Convention. Any reduction in the Universal Postal Union are obliged to respect these rates.

—With regard to newspapers, and bearing in mind their role as purifiers of information, culture and education, the Universal Postal Convention leaves it to the member countries free to concede a 50 per cent reduction in transport of publications.

As well as the optional nature of this reduction, air transport imposes a bottom rate which does not favour publications with a small circulation, that is those from the developing countries.

The developing countries are aware of these dangers and these various imbalances. Meetings between the Heads of State of the Non-Aligned Countries, the frequent meetings of international organisations and the contacts between organisations directly or indirectly related to the media. They are determined to clarify what actions need to be taken to establish a new world information order. With this aim in view, certain structures have been set up at the regional level (African, Asian, Latino-American and Arab radio and agency unions) and also at the level of the non-aligned nations (such as the intergovernmental council for the coordination of information, the coordination committee for the news agencies’ pool, the communications experts committee...). But these are limited achievements. Their merit is that they have expressed the easy with which the world is understanding the essential remains to be done and there is still a long road to travel. Success depends above all on the developing countries themselves and their cooperation from their partners, i.e. the developed countries and the international organisations. How then should one envisage a new world information order, and what would it consist of?
David McDermott

A combination of the positive past and present

“The internationally syndicated article by Dr. David Walter McDermott III that puts across the point that America and the World are on the edge of Paradise.”

1928

“Society learns to conduct itself properly”

The gentleman or lady. The individual who dares to take the responsibility of dreaming the most positive dream for Manhattan, America, and the world will, with the help of his likewise thinking friends, surely control the universe shortly. All negatives must be refined out of society by law of nature because negatives only frustrate what modern man wishes to accomplish and that be a veritable paradise on Earth.

It all begins with the calling card. One may be hungry or cold, but one must have one's proper name and title ready to present to society. It is with the calling or visiting card that one first becomes committed to society. The high Art of calling and receiving one's friends is an education for all. A society of friends regularly exchange each others' ideals of Godliness. Alas the planet Earth is inhabited by wood sprites, nymphs, gods, goddesses, spirits, queens, kings, fairies, leprechauns, and good witches. Indubitably we be the Gods of the universe and it be our dream that rules. It is only for us to begin thinking, acting and dreaming like Gods and the extraordinary inheritance of powers will be ours. It is our destiny to rule. There is no one more fit than us. Heaven, Heaven, all aboard for Heaven.

from a radio broadcast

1928

“Society learns to share”

Please share with your friends. Take them out to dinner. Gladly pay for the cab. Give your clothes for the safety of an egg because of its fragility, its vitreousness. He wore his black hair all greased up spiraling into his languid eyes. His skin was so taut over protruding bones that I feared for his head, the same sympathetic fear one has for the safety of an egg because of its fragility. He was a real born head case. He owned only black clothes and he wore his cigarettes in the rolled up sleeves of his black tee-shirts, showing off his arms which were big for a skinny person.

Once I visited him in the hospital; he had infectious hepatitis and cirrhosis of the liver, resulting from his four year bout with alcoholism. He didn’t look too good either, all yellow and bad in the private room. His visitors had to wear hospital gowns and surgical gloves, also masks and the nose and mouth which really frustrated him because he looked so morose without smiling mouths. My nose and lips were the first nose and lips he had seen in two weeks: after his mother left I whipped off not only my mask and gown but my pants and hopped into the hospital bed with him.

He was very sick and quite contagious and looked ill but sexy like pictures of Proust on his death bed and I was in love and we were teenagers going steady. I was expelled from high school for bringing in real moonshine, corn liquor, from his uncle in West Virginia and he had gotten all his best friends drunk on the lunch break and tried to beat up his American History teacher when Jack cornered him later in the bathroom.

Jack had a black Impala with red rolled and pleated bucket seats, tire slacks, a roll top, rack, Laker pipes, big foam dice hanging from the rear view mirror and four on the floor of course. We drank Sloe Gin or Laird's Apple Jack or sometimes Thunderbird and ate beignets like little candies.

And then there was Gloria. She sat three rows in front of me in Algebra class. I watched her hair-do from the back, everyday they were different: Beehive, Barrel-curls, Art-lifts, Artificial, Pixies, Flips, French Twists, Bubbles, Double-Bubbles.

The things I liked best were the way her scalp shone through all that teasing as if her head was a mango and the spit curls pasted down beside her ears with clear nail polish and bitten to the quick fingernails. I even liked the warts and nicotine stains on her index and second fingers.

I began spending Saturday nights with Gloria when Jack got too drunk and had bloody cut eyes from fights. I slept in her single bed with her and she first used to feel me up and kept telling me, "Just pretend I'm Jack, just pretend I'm Jack."

In the beginning the cajoling was necessary but in the weeks that followed I didn’t have to pretend she was Jack anymore. Jack and Gloria liked each other and no one ever suspected anything about Gloria and myself. For appearances we were best girlfriends, both of us with our combustible hairdos, teased high as to induce acrophobia and our black tight skirts holbling and our spike heels clicking down the high school hallways. We picked up guys together, smoked a lot of cigarettes, sniffed glue, drank trerkpenydr and codiene.

I stopped seeing Jack and took his initial ring off when he went to jail for a B and E charge. I stopped bed with him when he got bugged and decided to get married to Ed, her long time boyfriend, who she kept telling me she didn’t love nearly as much as she loved me.

Years later I found out that Jack, who was always pretty literate, was writing a novel and shooting speed, never being able to drink again because of his liver. As for Gloria, that girl, born of a light bulb it seemed, had died when she had gotten silicone injections for her little breasts. I was Her altered self that scared me so much. I was afraid for her liver because of her body, making tiny lumps rise on every inch of her skin, until finally the plastic entered her pulmonary arteries and the aorta and she died of a silicone heart.

Betsy was older and probably wiser, seemed to take this in her stride and Charles moved out, in front of his own room nodding his head. Jack still slept in my bed and every night I would leave my house and go to Charles' bed. He wanted to be a writer, but seemed ok and in fact they were extremely bizarre.

The first week in Xania I was cast, in my naiveté, as the young thing who arrives in town and enters a world she doesn’t understand. This was my screen role in Charles Henri Ford's film Johnny Minozzar. I had been given Ford's address by a Greek called Stephanos. He approached me on the Spanish steps, urging me to go to Crete and look up Charles. Luckily for Charles Henri who left Xania shortly after filming Jack and me in a classic beach scene—I wore a skirt and held a black doll in one, a pinwheel in another—he never saw his second heroine devolve into her role.

Xania is made for secretive strolls, its lanes curve from house to house. I took these turns recklessly, leaving my house every night, strolling a curved lane to Charles' bare room where we would lie together on a skinny cot. Morning would come and I would walk back to the Cavouria restaurant and a swim before lunch. I took to going fishing and the fishermen would smile as I walked down the pier to the tower and cast my line into the sea. I never caught one.

Betsy continued to be civil to me. We went dancing at the Cavouria restaurant. We did the famous hot potato dance. Charles hadn’t come and I cried. Betsy was understanding and her graciousness made me uncomfortable. We watched a sailor place a carrot at his crotch and another sailor hack it away at it with a knife. I went to sleep outside the tavern under Betsy's car and woke to find Greek sailors peering through car windows. I was driven home.

(continued on p. 50)
J. Well, I'd been reading a lot of Bataille and so
Nights? by providing pornographic imagery. I set up
language put never fulfilling the usual expectation
called pornographic literature. I wanted to do
S. What got you off on the idea of Sleepless
subject of a rape but it was a linguistic rape.
something with the idea of using pornographic
characters?
J. I wanted to use sets and costumes that pointed
to a completely artificial space in order to make
conscious of his character around Truman
given certain outfits that either fit with the nature
them very extreme caricatures. They were all
of the character or in John's case, the costumes fit
into the adolescent boy landscape.
J. No, I've heard of it.
the Afternoon?
S. Have you seen Maya Deren's film Meshes of
portentious, magical...
J. Like a fetish object?
S. Could be. . . actually, in your case it only applies
to the woman, Marie-Paule. What was she?
J. An obsession.
S. Is that why you shot her in slow motion, so she
could be examined?
J. I hadn't intended to shoot it in slow motion but
the footage looked so inappropriate when it came
back from the lab. It didn't have the quality of
something that was very mysterious and it didn't
place her at all. She seemed as real as they did
and I wanted her to become completely imaginary.
J. Yes, and this is where she was a great actress.
S. Something ethereal and erotic?
J. She was able to evoke a different relationship with
each of the men without saying a word. I gave her
such a limited number of things to do. There is a
constant—a repertoire of actions—coming
towards, moving away, embrace. With Eric it
becomes very violent, he grabs her and forces her
to embrace, with John it's very childish, an inno-
cent embrace and with Rene, the kind of embrace
you would do with a father.
S. Did you talk with her about the script? Had she
just read it?
J. She didn't read the whole thing—no. I didn't
want her to read it. I only wanted her to know
what her relationship with the three men was and
let her go from there.
J. It was a seduction and not just a tease?
J. No, I hadn't intended to shoot it in slow motion but
S. Did you plan on working with her from the
beginning?
J. No, I had actually written it with someone else
in mind but then as I got to know Marie-Paule, it
seemed impossible to do it without her. She knew
all of the men in the film and they were comfort-
table with her. I wanted her to be able to embrace
all the men.
S. It seemed much more of a mystery than a
detective film even though you used the TV detec-
tive show voice-over for the narration. A mystery
surrounding Marie-Paule's character, built
through mood and atmosphere—her image, music
and the camera movement (which is constantly
moving with and around her).
J. Yes, and the mystery really is "Who is this
woman?" What I wanted to do was set up a schism
between the information you were being given
about her by the men, which was very literal, very
descriptive, she was such and such... and then the
way the audience would respond to her and create
their own image of her by exploiting their emotions
and using really seductive music, making her im-
age as seductive as possible through all the slow
motion...
S. It was a seduction and not just a tease?
J. Yeah, definitely. Not so much to involve the au-
dience in the story but rather to set up a ploy—to
create an interface between what you know about
her from what the man says and how you FEEL
about her from what you see. As you gradually get
more seduced by her image, the man's description
of her become more violent, more pornographic.
S. So you never let her speak?
J. She couldn't talk because she was the subject
of the sentence. It was impossible.
S. When did you decide to use the voice-overs?
J. The film changed several times. As we were
shooting it I began to realize that it was much more
a parody of itself than I thought it would be—large-
ly because of the sets. I got so into this fantasy of
being an interior decorator that the sets took on a
character of their own. You couldn't play anything
out realistically in those sets. For instance, when
John Lurie is singing: "Your cunt is a trap with
teeth. You want to amputate me." That was in-
tended to be a very violent scene, a head-on shot
with a frazzled monologue. It ended up being his
playing guitar with the cowboy hat on; completely
ludicrous. He consistently did that with his
character—brought it to the edge of total ridicu-
ousness—and it worked. Anyway, I knew I wanted
the voice-overs to be out of Dragnet but I didn't
know how they would work. In its first edited ver-
sion, I was afraid the film had no story. So I recut
it to lead to one. I knew it would end up with Marie
Paula and John having the same mother, that was
it. Then I went to Gary Indiana and I looked at
the film and we talked about how they should be
written and then worked on them together.
S. Do you think the film is violent?
J. No, I think I could be accused of mystifying
violence but I don't think I could be accused of it
being violent.
S. Well, I didn't intend it as an accusation.
J. But I'm saying I think one could, and for me
that's problematical about the film. I mean there is
that whole last sequence, where you aren't sure,
but you assume she's being killed because she is
SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

struggling. But it’s shot in such a way that it’s about movement and gestures of fear and struggle. That death scene uses the same choreography as was used in the dancing scenes between her and the three men throughout the entire film.

S. But that’s what I mean, it’s violent in its persistence...

J. Yeah, I know what you mean, in that respect it’s a very violent film. It’s violent in terms of setting up a subject, a woman, and consistently abusing the subject linguistically.

S. I don’t think it was simply a linguistic violence. The most haunting thing about the film is that you become possessed by her image. The themes of movement and gestures of fear and struggle. That death scene uses the same choreography as the three men throughout the entire film.

J. I have a real double bind, schizophrenic attitude about that, because on the one hand I like it when people completely take control, so much so that there’s nothing you can do about it...you just have to innovate, you trust them to take over, but you don’t want to hear it unless they are concerned about how it will effect the outcome of the film as a whole. So I’m not really open to suggestion as I am open to being completely taken over by someone who will just say—It has to be done this way—For instance Rene just knew his character like that, or someone like Michael Oblowitz—he knew the way his body worked. The image should be just by standing and looking at the set. He would tell me what he thought, and we would try it out and if we didn’t like it we would try something else out. Same with Gary Indiana, in fact, the only real collaborative work I’ve done has been working with him.

S. Why incest?

J. Do you want to know the story of the film?

S. Yeah, sure.

J. Well, nobody really knows the story of this film. It starts in 1935. Rene is wealthy, young. He has an on-again, off-again relationship with a woman he really loves, but she isn’t so crazy about him. They stop seeing each other and much later, run into each other at a party. He has a voice-over that describes the meeting. “I was at a party—I remember—I looked across the room and saw her again. It had been so long...the gin and tonics...noise everywhere...the next thing I knew I was waking up in bed next to her. Her hair was wet against her forehead, I kissed her eyes...”

The woman gets pregnant and doesn’t want Rene to have anything to do with the child. She blackmails him for money, saying she’ll spread it all over the papers that he got her pregnant and left her stranded unless he gives her some dough. He gives her the money and she leaves. He never sees her again. And she has other plans up her sleeve, spends all the money he gave her and puts the kid in a foster home. The kid is Marie-Paule. Then the mother marries some creep and they move to the suburbs. They have a son—John Lurie—who’s a bit psychotic. He describes living with them in one of his voice-overs:

“Life in a pigsty, plastic over the furniture, germs in my brain, in my throat, in my microbes. The microbes are destroying me piece by piece. Brown liquid shoved under my nose till I vomit. Trapped. She beats me and runs off with another man every night. I saw him dancing with her. He kissed her hard on the mouth. I think I grabbed her that time...”

He’s your typical Oedipal nut...mother’s a slut, etc. Eventually he freaks out completely and kills her, remember, he says in one scene, “He killed his mother. He killed his mother. He took her by surprise one night as she was coming down the stair.”

...He’s so schizophrenic he refers to himself in the third person. So, after he kills her, he gets put away—locked up. In another scene he talks about what happened immediately after the murder.

“A Afterwards, all I remember was the ride. It was a long ride. My clothes were too tight, but I got to live in a new house with clean walls, and there was no plastic over the furniture, and we had lots of servants.” The ride is a ride to the country and the tight clothes are a straight jacket, the new house and servants are the sanitarium and attendants. But he quickly gets bored with life in the sanitarium and escapes, steals a car and just starts driving, remember the first voice-over in the film, he says, “Escape from a bad dream. I don’t care where I end up. The lights on the road dripping in the rain. They are after me with their guns. Their dogs are dripping blood on their teeth. Her face keeps coming back to me through the windshield.”

Jump back to Marie-Paule. She’s been living with a horrible foster family and decides to run away and look for her real father. All she knows is his name and that he lives in New York. She gets on the highway to hitchhike and is picked up by John Lurie. He doesn’t really have anywhere to go, and drives her all the way to N.Y. On the way, they have an affair, going from one motel to another. He’s completely nuts about her, loves her madly, more obsession...Marie-Paule calls Rene (who is her father, remember?) while on the road and tells him she wants to meet him. He’s understandably a little paranoid, and thinks her mother put her up to it to shake some more bucks out of him. So he hires a detective, Eric Mitchell, to check her out and find out what her game is. Eric is to pretend that he is an old friend of Rene’s. When Marie-Paule arrives, she turns out to be the complete opposite of what Rene expected. He says in a voice-over, “Blood is thicker than water. I met her. She’s ethereal. She can’t be real, she just came up to me and kissed me. That was all I needed...” He invites her to move in to the house with him, as a result, John Lurie, who sticks around because he’s still crazy about her, has to stay in a crummy hotel. “Exiled to a fleabag hotel. The wallpaper is the color of a urine sample. Every once in a while I try to see her, but he keeps her trapped in his castle.” Rene can’t stand John and does everything he can to get him out of the picture. He asks Eric to check up on John, find out what his story is. Meanwhile, Marie-Paule and Eric are having a secret affair. He says, “Hotesls in back alleys, love on the run. Just to be alone with her I have to find some smelly hotel where the pillows cases look like they were used to wrap trout in...”

He keeps the job as detective, checking up on John just to be able to be near Marie-Paule. He finds out
a few things, like the car John came up in was stolen, he has a phoney name, but doesn’t connect anything up. Marie-Paule eventually falls in love with Eric but he turns out to be an egotistical sadist who can’t love anyone but himself. He constantly abuses her, treats her terribly. At the same time, John is behaving like a complete lunatic, harassing her, calling up at all hours of the night, spying on her and Eric, and Rene becomes bitter and possessive and denounces both Marie-Paule and Eric as having betrayed him and only wanting him for his money. She decides it’s all a bit too much to handle and leaves without telling anyone. The only thing she leaves behind is an old photograph of her mother for Rene. John stays around in the city for a while, and at one point comes over to Rene’s house. He sees the photograph of his mother and freaks out. Rene tells him that the photo is of Marie-Paule’s mother, a woman he loved once. John goes berserk, says he has to find Marie-Paule, he knows where she would be, etc. He scares Rene shitless, and Rene and Eric both work in earnest to find out what the story on John is, the stolen car, phoney name, etc. They find out that he and Marie-Paule had the same mother, and that John killed her... but it’s too late. John has disappeared. They can’t find him and have called the police. The last time we see Marie-Paule in the film is her waking up in bed in the hotel she’s staying at. She hears a noise, sounds like someone’s breaking into her room, and runs to the door to try to close it. Then you see her struggling with someone, but you don’t know who. And then you see her lying in bed, with a voice-over of Rene’s: “I’m so alone I could die. I don’t know myself anymore. Maybe I’ll go away, meet new people. There are no new people. If I could escape from my memories, escape from a bad dream...” So maybe she dies and maybe she doesn’t. Never wanted that to be completely clear.

S. You fragmented the narrative, with the intention of making the mother and the daughter interchangeable?

J. Yes, absolutely. When they refer to SHE, it’s very ambiguous. You always assume they are referring to Marie-Paule, but in many cases John and Rene are talking about the mother.

S. I think the film was instilled with a psychic narrative (and by psychic I mean a form of concentration that exists in the film outside of the text) which could be continuous. This and the fact that the image didn’t necessarily support the soundtrack, obfuscated what was past, present and future. A linear narrative would have been too explicit. Instead, you caught clues.

J. But the clues are ultimately misleading. What interests me about detective stories is the structure—everything ambiguous is given meaning in a second reading. There are always two stories—the one you experience while actually reading the book, and assume things because of the placement of clues... and the story you retain after finishing, and know exactly how the clues led you to make false assumptions. The reader is either in the position of being duped or knowing too much. But in either case, he/she has to work while reading and afterward. When the final denouement occurs, arbitrary plot twists become comprehensible. You go back, retrack and re-examine what you had thought while reading. And, if the difference between the two is very great, then you know it’s a pretty good book. That was why the whole mother thing came up, because I wanted people to think that when the men spoke of she, it was always Marie-Paule, but in fact, in many cases, it was the mother they were talking about. You obviously would never know that until you had seen the film through to the end.

S. Did you use a secret subtext to inform the narrative?

J. Yes. In many respects the she is also myself. It’s not being autobiographical, but there’s a lot of me in the woman being described. And a lot of fantasies about what I would like to be or am afraid of. Then the dates that come before each voice over: April 18, 1955 (the day John and Marie-Paule met) is my birthday, April 24 (the day John and Marie-Paule fall in love) is Eric’s birthday and so on.

S. Do you think there’s any connection between the words promiscuity and freedom?

J. Yes, if you happen to be a man.
Joan Jonas

Location: the spiral museum as space ship, audience below in the past looking up at a scroll unwinding on the different tracks, the ramps, the corridors, where illusion occurs...

Part One

Scene I: Darkness in the corridors above, the sound of a struggle, metal on metal, a flash of bright light, male and female voices speaking through megaphones:

"Is it gone?" "Yes, I caught a glimpse, a female, I think with four legs."

"We'll never catch it now."

"Who wants to?"

Descending silently they run, their increased weight slowing them until they land at home.

Scene II: The Village (the lowest section of the ship—air grows moist and warm, giant green plants obscure the metallic view).

Light: green/yellow.

The woman, in pink, arrives at the compartment of the scientist, in green.

Curious, she asks him, "What is the reason for the upper corridors, and who are the mutants?"

He sings the song of creation (a myth of the ship's origin to comfort the farmers), she dances to radio observatory sounds.

"Your head was too big, but I saved you. You were to be a scientist. You must be instructed in right-thinking or you will deviate. You must never explore the corridors above this level. The mutants are a gang of renegade wizards. They call themselves 'The Double Lunar Dogs'—they will capture you and put a spell on you."

She answers: "But these visions of strange vistas and great distances where I am on the outside and not the inside."

He: "Look out! Those destructive fantasies must be eradicated."

Scene III: The Right Thinking Research Library

Shining in red/yellow light, layers of transparent glass tablets line the walls. She devours the ancient texts on the track of an undefined secret—Basic Modern Physics.

The scientist: "This is one of the most valuable of the sacred writings. Our forerunners were romantic. Their truths were handed down in allegorical language. Gravitation, for instance, equals love." (A couple embracing, a love story told backwards.)

"Two bodies attract each other directly as a product of their mass. Out of sight, out of mind," he drones.

She asks, "What about this trip mentioned in the books, and what is this planet earth?"

He: How can that move against which all else moves?

The ancient holy men (the first wizards) invented fantastic creatures. There is no trip, no earth, only the here and now. Floating was the only meaning is spiritual.

Scene IV: The Central Control Room

A sacred and taboo place whose location had always been a mystery. It takes a long time to open the big round door.

They lead her into an enormous silver sphere with the machinery of the controls floating in the middle—time slows and turns around—she is frightened, this is not her territory. She has never experienced such height. They sit in front of the central panel.

"We're going to show you the stars."

The sphere is a dark star as they pass their hands over the lights of the panel which change... The mirrored stars look down.

Light after jeweled light on dangling mirrors, she plunges into the here and now. So many vaguely familiar images on the walls.

Scene V: New Insights

She stays with the Double Lunar Dogs rereading all the old books in the silver blue light, stories of the earth that trigger elaborate landscape fantasies, dry and wet and cold walking on the outside.

"Why don't they fall off?"

"There can't be a place bigger than the ship. There wouldn't be a place for that to be."

"No, there would be emptiness all around."

Scene II: The Village

Suddenly she wanders through the green plants looking for old friends—they are grey, having aged more rapidly than her.

She tells the ancient scientist what she has seen in the old books in the silver blue light, stories of the surface of the moon. The full moon. Tides. A sacred and taboo place.

"But it moves, it moves."

Scene V: New Insights

She reads the art of astrogation...They read to her of light years and space, of light and dark and sun, of snow and ice and wind and rain...

Scene VI: The 'Captain's Veranda'

Where it is either very bright or very black. The Double Lunars finally take her to the highest point, the most direct view of the stars which appear to move in circles due to the motion of the ship. "Let's get the ship moving again—finish the trip, find the planet!"...thinking the people in the village will help. They give her a knife and escort her down, down.

Part Three

Scene I: The Corridors

She floats down, landing hard, feeling the strange uncomfortable weight pulling, pulling.

Scene II: The Village

She asks, "But can the ship be moved again?"

"But can you see the stars by looking through the ship?"

"You can't accept things as they are," they say.

"What does the trip mean to you?"

They ask, "And dreaming is wrong thinking."

"Did it ever occur to you that the ship is going somewhere, that it's actually moving?"

Scene III: The Trial

"There can't be a place bigger than the ship. There wouldn't be a place for that to be."

"No, there would be emptiness all around."

So many vaguely familiar images on the walls.

Scene IV: Jail—Murky

An old friend is allowed to visit and she persuades him to seek help from the Lunars.

Part Four

Scene I

She is allowed on the deck of the ship and is captivated by the Double Lunars in dim light.

Scene II

In the red compartment of the double dogs they agree to help in the rescue.

Scene III

"Your head was always too big for your body." And she is condemned as a heretic to die.

"But it moves, it moves."

Scene IV: Jail—Murky

"You can't accept things as they are," they say.

"What does the trip mean to you?"

"And dreaming is wrong thinking."

"Did it ever occur to you that the ship is going somewhere, that it's actually moving?"

"That's impossible, the ship is already everywhere.

Scene V: New Insights

"Did it ever occur to you that the ship is going somewhere, that it's actually moving?"

"That's impossible, the ship is already everywhere.

The only meaning is spiritual.

"Your head was always too big for your body." And she is condemned as a heretic to die.

"But it moves, it moves."

Scene V: New Insights

They lead her into an enormous silver sphere with the machinery of the controls floating in the middle—time slows and turns around—she is frightened, this is not her territory. She has never experienced such height. They sit in front of the central panel.

"We're going to show you the stars."

The sphere is a dark star as they pass their hands over the lights of the panel which change... The mirrored stars look down.

Light after jeweled light on dangling mirrors, she plunges into the here and now. So many vaguely familiar images on the walls.

Scene V: New Insights

She stays with the Double Lunar Dogs rereading all the old books in the silver blue light, stories of the earth that trigger elaborate landscape fantasies, dry and wet and cold walking on the outside.

"Why don't they fall off?"

"There can't be a place bigger than the ship. There wouldn't be a place for that to be."

"No, there would be emptiness all around."

Scene II: The Village

Suddenly she wanders through the green plants looking for old friends—they are grey, having aged more rapidly than her.

She tells the ancient scientist what she has seen in the upper levels—he does not react.

She falls asleep and awakes to find herself a prisoner, her knife gone.

Scene III: The Trial

The way things look according to where you stand. "You can't accept things as they are," they say.

"What does the trip mean to you?"

They ask, "And dreaming is wrong thinking."

"Did it ever occur to you that the ship is going somewhere, that it's actually moving?"

"That's impossible, the ship is already everywhere.

The only meaning is spiritual.

"Your head was always too big for your body." And she is condemned as a heretic to die.

"But it moves, it moves."

Scene IV: Jail—Murky

An old friend is allowed to visit and she persuades him to seek help from the Lunars.
head so many times to lighten up their moods, he was considering installing a rheostat.

This was no doubt cracked in the face of sheer idiocy. In their stubbornness each turned to their particular vice for comfort; Kim to drinking beer, Brian to guitar, Lowell to simply pretending he had Cornishness having failed, Jeff was forced to resort to that other emotional warhorse, changing the subject.

Lowell knew Kim was drunk when she got loose headed for his downtown office. Except, she had a thud-kerplunk of a boiler-room beat. Lowell sang in his unswathed lips barely moved. Over it all, with full parts of snare and whine, he chanted:

"Look you guys, we've almost got the chorus down. Tired of holding both their physical and emotional agreed by making tentative movements toward their that other emotional warhorse, changing the subject. 

Jeff the Long Island contractor's son on bass and

Kim tapped on her snare. Brian put out his joint and carefully placed it next to his cigarettes and lighter on top of the page and started sitting there with his left hand sticking a silver tube on one of his fingers and sliding it down the neck of his guitar. Brian produced the teeth-grating, jaw-grinding wall of metal on Kim and Jeff pouted out the thud-kerplunk of a boiler-room beat. Lowell sang in his unswathed lips barely moved. Over it all, with full parts of snare and whine, he chanted:

School's just a way of killing time and picking up a few facts.

Here Iam at 23, waiting and wondering how to do I'm just one of thousands of white boys with the amotivational blues.

With Kim gone, Lowell was alone in the practice room. The volume of Kim's presence was countered by the emptiness of the room. There was nothing in the room alone not only reminded Lowell of his need to blow off steam because the air had formed a kind of atmosphere that yearned. He walked around the room floating off. Cut off, the luminous red lights of the amps reflected the red color of Lowell's hair. When doused out by water reveal, when cold and harmless, how small they actually are. Switched off, the amplifiers no longer emitted the hollow hum they produced when turned on but idle. So not easily terminated, a version of the same buzz reverberated in Lowell's mind. Scanning the room one final time, he decided there was no sound or light and discovering none, Lowell turned over the overhead and quickly shut the door. He walked across the room and sat down behind a heavy mahogany desk which, positioned at one end of the long rectangular room, occupied one wall. He pulled the steady string hanging from the metal treads of the Tiffany desk lamp. Incandescent light froze his hands to the green desk blotter. Through the lamp's translucent colored panels of glass and carefully, he crossed the room and sat down. It was not a light that illuminates or clarifies but one that coats the surfaces of things and smudges the sight. The light, such as it is, was so bored I combined all these dance steps. One

"It's just 10. Are you working tonight? What time

"Gee, you should become a rock critic," Jeff said.

"Naw," Kim said. "I've got to *')e at...dig something however, which has the place in a bit of a mess." Brad found himself pattering his response over a few verses of Lowell's Brown, he made a very overt effort to stop it. "In fact, it looks real bad down there.

"Oh it looks fine. It looks...exciting," Lowell said pushing aside a stack of magazine clippings to sit down. "What are you doing?"

"Oh, just working on a little book I got here," Lowell said gesturing out with his hand. "Does your girlfriend live here as well?"

"You can tell by the little details."

"Right, like the long hairs caught in the drain and the toothpaste tube squeezed in the middle."

"Please."

"Either is fine."

"Quite a cozy little apartment you've got here," Brad remembers the simple features to which Lowell

"You've gotta go," Kim said, snapping up the telephone number printed beneath the name "Brad." Brad was flustered by such forwardness presented so

"Hello, Brad." Standing stiffly, he stuck out his hand. "I hope I haven't inconvenienced you by coming at this time."

"Please."

"Either is fine."

Brad was flustered by making decisions for others almost as much as he hated making them for himself. He decided to make tea and coffee because it would take longer. He got the water on to boil and prepared the pots and cups before reentering the room to talk. He cleared his throat and said:

"Quite a cozy little apartment you've got here," Brad was flustered by such forwardness presented so

"Which?"

"Either is fine."

Brad hated making decisions for others almost as much as he hated making them for himself. He decided to make tea and coffee because it would take longer. He got the water on to boil and prepared the pots and cups before reentering the room to talk. He cleared his throat and said:

"Quite a cozy little apartment you've got here," Brad was flustered by such forwardness presented so

"Which?"

"Either is fine."

Brad was flustered by such forwardness presented so
Brad looked over towards his desk. "It's hard to work alone, too.

"What do you have to lose?" Lowell said. Both Lowell and Brad raised their teacups, clinked them together and said, "It's hard to work. Period."

After Lowell expressed his frustrations with practice, he was able to turn his interest to Brad. Taking another sip of his beer, Lowell said, "Where's... now, what's your girlfriend's name?"

"Shannon," he replied. "It's her teacup which covered his mouth. He was uncomfortable under Lowell's scrutiny.

"Is she...away," Lowell guessed.

"She had a dance class after work and then she went to have studied acting. Not only for the skill but for them together and said, "It's hard to work. Period." Brad felt silly in the face of Lowell's enthusiasm. He knew how, sarcastically. There was relish in his voice when controlled by beginners. The faux pas which in- another band's benefit. "Like Johnny Germaine. Terminal Bar who are good enough that they really haven't opened their eyes to the possibility of... to ridicule me... ME... for something I do. When

"Well then, do it for some band you do like and have done it with a big enough exclamation point that other people believed me.

"Well, so are other people. Even ones that don't know it. Rather than buggy for the companies to wake up and come in from the outside to discover what's going on and misrepresent it, do it from the inside and recognize it as it is."

"But it sounds like 'Pollyanna Goes Into Publishing!' You know, like, 'Hey, I've got an idea! Let's start a newspaper!' Lowell said with an exclamation point at the end of a statement.

"So?"

"Is that the way those things happen?"

"Yes. How do you think I formed my band. I said, "Hey, I'm forming a band!" And I said it with a big charged compliment. "I'm embarassed you saw it."

"It sounds too simple. And, simple minded."

"Well saying it's the easiest part, obviously. Doing it's another matter altogether. But saying it is a start."

Brad felt silly in the face of Lowell's enthusiasm. He said giddily, "Well, I was the editor of my high school newspaper.

"See, you're ready done already," Lowell said, his arms were flailing in the air with jerks like marionettes being moved when controlled by beginners. The faux pas which in- another matter altogether. But saying it is a start."

Brad had forgotten his beer during their interchange, but instinctively reached for it and stuck it in his mouth in order to give himself time to think. Finally, after holding the beer in his mouth as long as he could, he said, "I know what that idea was that?"

"Rather than a fan club for one group, start a newspaper paper covering all of them. That's exactly what we need. And once you've discovered what's needed, you have to do something more than just get started."

"Who me?" Brad said in a high-pitched voice, the mock innocence of the phrase and intonation disguis- ing the seriousness of the challenge. The question mark resounded like an exclamation point.

Brad had forgotten his beer during their interchange, but instinctively reached for it and stuck it in his mouth in order to give himself time to think. Finally, after holding the beer in his mouth as long as he could, he said, "I know what that idea was that?"

Outside the door Susanah fumbled with her keys, twice missing the lock before aiming successfully. Sit-
AP: Is this for the record?
SC: For now. Later on you can rewrite the record if you want. Two years into the work—how do you feel about SUBWAY RIDERS as you’ve completed it?
AP: I feel good about it.
SC: Of all your films, SUBWAY RIDERS seems to have gone through the most transformations in its production period. How has it changed since you first conceived it?
AP: Yeah, I don’t know... the more it’s changed the more it’s stayed the same. It’s different from my script but still recognizable. It’s taken more time so the bottom line is that it has to pay off.
SC: It has to pay off? In what sense?
AP: Well, in order to make it all worthwhile, it has to be so much stronger—or make a lot of money or whatever. Something BIG has to come out of this picture.
SC: In SUBWAY RIDERS the main character was originally played by John Lurie but was switched to be played by John in part and you in part. Could you clarify?
AP: When I first conceived of SUBWAY RIDERS, at a party I had in December of 1977, it was a thing about a saxophone player. In fact, I meant to title it THE SAXOPHONIST.
SC: Is that the one with James Chance?
AP: Yes, James Chance. I was filming James playing under a street lamp on Lafayette Street. I liked that image, and the film just grew out of that image—a sax player in an urban landscape. Then I met John, I thought I could work more easily with him and I started to write it specifically for him by observing his nature.
SC: It’s about a psychopathic killer isn’t it?
AP: No, it’s much more than that. It’s based on the concept of the modern hero—a tragic hero and a musician, and John was supposed to play Ant Zindo, though all the characters in the film were conceived as tragically heroic. But John was the musician. SC: Tell me how you see a musician, a sax player, as modern hero?
AP: Well, he’s the focal point of modern mythology. SC: What do you mean?
AP: Most people base their lives on musical figures. SC: Most people base their lives on musical figures?
AP: Uh huh. Like that guy, what’s-his-name...Mark Chapman.
SC: O.K....ummmm...how did the role switch to you?
AP: There was a break in the shooting, and when we resumed production, like the day before, John came up to me and said, ‘he couldn’t afford to play the role of a psycho-killer.’ He was going into the studio to do a demo with THE LOUNGE LIZARDS and Chris Stein. He felt his responsibility was there and I understood his predicament—financially, psychologically, professionally; so I figured it was either ending or postponing the film, or going ahead without John. Then I thought, “We have to go on, well how?” It was too late to bring in a new actor, so I said “Fuck it, I’ll just do it and see what happens!” I talked it over with my co-producer Johanna Heer, and the rest of the cast, re-wrote a scene and went on. SC: So it was an improvisation?
AP: Yeah, you could say that. The original script was always a very straight narrative, a kind of demonic action urban picture. It continually changed into a more psychological warp; neurotic, psychotic, schizoid, paranoid, obsessed...though at first I hoped to make it like Dante’s INFERNO and PARADISO and like that, in terms of literature, it was well...poetically mythologically bent.
SC: You’re back to the modern hero?
AP: Yeah. Five and now six modern heros. It’s a drama.
SC: About...
AP: People’s obsessions and frustrations—careers, drugs, artistic expressions, etc. It’s about people’s lives. It’s a drama or a series of dramas. For instance, when Johanna and I were talking about shooting it in color, I was saying how it should be a drama of colors of pictures. Johanna was very much for it, we worked out an equation. From there I became interested in the levels of drama.
SC: Could you elaborate on what you mean by levels of drama?
AP: Well, drama exists between the contrasts of certain identities or images, and I tried to deal with this in THE FOREIGNER, but with that it was in black and white, and the contrasts were like...drawings or photographs, but with color...I had to redefine my standards. I wanted to use wide and macro lenses...Sergio Leone-esque, it works in Westerns—the wide screen landscape and then a tight closeup of a fly in a bottle, captured or something—but in my case the landscape was like the fly in the bottle, and
my closeup was under its skin. So the drama works as a contrast of the two lenses.
SC: You mean there's no in-between?
AP: No medium shots.
SC: What is the relationship of color and character?
AP: Each character has an identifiable color as part of their territory or frame, so that the film itself is like a color co-ordinated legend. Instead of a drawing more like a sculpture. A self-reference point.
SC: Your intention initially was, then, to use color to enhance the sensory impact or emotive impact of the images?
AP: Yeah, exactly, a manipulation.

SC: Let's talk about the concept of narrative. You had to alter the script during the shooting. Would you say that your conception of narrative has to do with telling a story in the classic sense? Going from beginning to end?
AP: Yeah. Yeah.
SC: And a moral?
AP: Yeah, I think that's the most important part in film making. Telling a story and having a moral. You need to tell a story to have a good film.
SC: Why?
AP: Because there's nothing else. Every person's life is a story. But not all have to be told.
SC: You could turn on a camera in a room of people and leave it on for two hours and in the end there would be something resembling a story which is recorded in "real time."
AP: Yeah, but that's a documentary.
SC: I'm not talking about documentary. I'm talking about what the parameters of a story could be.
AP: I'm talking about narrative, a movie that tells a story. There are films that don't tell a story, but a movie has to tell a story, whether it's BIRTH OF A NATION or MEAN STREETS or PERMANENT VACATION.
SC: Well, I don't know whether I agree with you that films have to tell a story in that sense.
AP: There's nothing else.
SC: Do you feel that SUBWAY RIDERS is in any way a copy or an imitation of any type or genre or is it...
AP: A genre unto itself would be apropos.
SC: Well, say in the sense, and I'd like to know if you agree with me, that to a certain extent, your previous film, THE FOREIGNER, is a pseudo spy movie—it's like a spy movie only it doesn't ever work out quite right...
AP: Well, yeah, a bad spy movie.
SC: Or, UNMADE BEDS, which is reminiscent of the style of a French New Wave film, referring to Godard's BREATHELESS?
AP: Yeah...UNMADE BEDS was a homage and THE FOREIGNER was an anti-homage. Each film has to be the complete opposite of the one preceding it...
SC: Oh yeah?
AP: Yeah. (continued on p. 40)
THE FOREIGNER is very stylized. He didn't resemble a spy, as much as he did an actor in a spy movie. An actor acting. I had the impression was acting the part of an actor not a spy.

AP: Well, that's Eric's approach to acting. He's extremely specific and that's where it comes from.

SC: Do you use actors and actresses of different types and different looks?

AP: In SUBWAY RIDERS, they're all extremely different. Susan Tyrrell is very dramatic. Cookie is both camp-comical and very deadpan. My way of working, Robbie Coltrane is like British or Scottish Shakespearean, I think the most dimensional actor I've worked with. John is a natural type like John Lorrer. But most of the actors I've worked with I never saw.

SC: Do you see the context of your work changing as time goes on?

AP: I hope so. Yes, but I can't explain.

SC: So who do you feel your audience is and has been?

AP: I think my audience has been the modern alienated young urban person. So they have to be alienated?

SC: Or at least have experienced it at some point in their lives and aware that they experienced it. But the work changes and I think the audience is not that limited, as far as the audience my work's importance is to see how it moves the culture to where I'd like to see it. Pop art.

SC: But wouldn't you make a distinction between Pop Art including film of course, and popular art?

AP: You can have a Pop film that's not popular, but I don't think you can have a popular film that's not Pop. SC: You don't? Would you say APOCALYPSE NOW is Pop?

AP: Extremely. It's experimental American Pop. The two most important American films of the seventies—APOCALYPSE NOW and THE GODFATHER—moved American culture or reflected it in some way. Whereas, STAR WARS, for instance, became a culture of something like that. An expanding neighborhood. So I feel a little less isolated maybe, more friends more enemies. SUBWAY RIDERS is an attempt to see more than my block, it's much broader.

SC: Why?

AP: That's what keeps it interesting.

SC: Do you feel that you self-consciously make references to other films or to other genres?

AP: No.

SC: I do.

AP: Yeah but I don't even see those things anymore.

Only in UNMADE BEDS, I retain that feeling, but not really in THE FOREIGNER or in SUBWAY RIDERS.

SC: How do you conceive THE FOREIGNER?

AP: THE FOREIGNER remains a mystery to me now, a very cloudy space where questions are allowed to go. Say you call it a genre, where the typical film tells a story by giving certain facts. THE FOREIGNER tells a story by leaving out the facts, a fiction of their expectation... except to be entertained.

SC: What about acting? Do you conceive of personalities to fill out the characters; almost as extensively to the fiction of the director's ideas of their expectation... except to be entertained.

AP: Both, I try for a balance of both. I just look and

SC: In terms of acting style, do you subscribe to some notion of naturalism or realism or do you feel that your casting as well as your directing is... well in most of your work the acting is very deadpan, low key... underacted for the most part. The impression is not that you're attempting to make a realistic character but that you are allowing the realism of the actor and the filmmaking moment to emerge. It's not dramatic acting.

AP: Well... it's below dramatic acting.

SC: Would you say it's stylized?

AP: Sometimes when the actor understands the emotion of stylizing a character, it's stylized.

SC: Well, for instance the character Eric plays in...

SC: To what extent do you feel the film is a product of the director and to what extent do you feel it's collaborative?

AP: Most films are a direct responsibility or expression of the director. There is a collaboration that occurs between the director, the writer, the actor, the cameraperson and the rest of the crew. The better that collaboration, the better the film ultimately becomes.

SC: What about the relationship between a director and a producer? I feel most about this in terms of the outcome of films in general. Have you worked with producers or have you produced your own films?

AP: No I never have. Except for SUBWAY RIDERS—I've produced all my films. SUBWAY RIDERS was produced by Erica Nanes, her company called The Horse, under the corporate title of Hep Pictures.

SC: In terms of future films that you're planning, what kind of producers are you ideally working towards?

AP: I wouldn't mind producing my own films or the films of other directors. But the thought of having a competent person to take on that responsibility and not interfering with the work I do, is certainly appealing. Ideal.

SC: Do you want financing from "Hollywood", big production companies?

AP: Yeah. That would be ideal.

SC: In your writing as well as your editing, how do you conceive of or use the experience of lived time in relation to the experience of "fictive time"? Is temporality in general a critical dimension of your work?

AP: I'm not sure if I understand the word "temporality in general a critical dimension of your work?"

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AP: Yeah. That would be ideal.
The first impression that I feel your work gives is one of being abstract. Its immediate impact depends on its presence and its physicality as an abstract object. There is no specific use of figuration or imagery per se and yet the work does clearly have a sense of connoting a specific experience or a topology of an event and I wondered how you feel about abstraction v.s. referentiality— if the two can be compared that way.

Do you want me to define the terms?

Can you talk about content in relation to your work that way? Or imagery?

Whew... In the sense of symbolism? In the sense of a symbol coming through the paint, of the cracks being some sort of a symbol?

No, there are several artists around whose work has a degree of abstraction and yet they still make use of images that are very clearly recognizable as images. Whereas, in your work, there really isn’t something that functions as an image—there is not a picture of something and yet they’re associative.

They’re references to the Universe—and in that sense there is an image. I have a difficulty with images of this plane. I’m not painting thingness.

Your working process requires a lot of labor, there is obviously a building up of surfaces with materials which creates a very specific look to the finished work. Is this look something you’ve pre-imagined or that you’re in a process of evolving as you are working on the painting?

It evolves through paint.

Is there content?—Do you have the idea that you want to make it look like something?

No, I’m totally unaware of that. When I’m painting I feel part of the paint. I’m not aware of anything but the paint or the chemicals I’m using.

And yet it’s not simply about the gesture in the sense of a Pollack or about formal abstraction in the sense of a Minimalist painting. Do you understand your work as pure physicality, pure materiality, or is there an allusion being made to something other than itself?

There are no allusions being made. The painting is just that. What they might do is spark a reference, whether it be some distant memory or... People say it looks like flying over the deserts of Africa or they see the ruins of civilizations—but the paint is just the paint. I’m aware of what I’m doing with it in so far as the movement of the paint...

There’s no reference.

You’re talking about distant visions...

No. It’s really more symbolic forms than symbols. I respond to the energies, the whirling energies. I see those symbols running through history, from ancient art to Malevich. They’re references in space and time and an important part of 20th Century Art.

Kandinsky wrote a pamphlet called The Spiritual in Art in 1917 and there’s Malevich’s The Artist, Infinity and Suprematism. Then there was this thing that began in Milan, The Pictorio Metaphysico. It’s quite fascinating. Groups of artists—it was pretty world wide, from Mondrian to Kandinsky, from Russia to de Chirico, became obsessed with alternative realities. And then the Abstract Expressionists here in New York...and that whole Jungian...when Jung talked about the visionary mode...Pollack.

Do you feel your work is expressionistic?

Yes. (continued on p. 49)
There's not a one-to-one ratio anymore. Things shift, especially power plays, in a matter of seconds. Which is what happens in the film.

CG: How did you direct the acting?
BS: Well, I would choose three gestures and one attitude for each character knowing that when the script was actually acted out these attitudes would come into conflict with each other and have to change.

CG: So do you think the actor has to know the motivation?
BS: No, I hate that. And it wasn't that sort of script. Well, it's not entirely acting, there was a subject in some instances, but we never dwelled upon it.

CG: That film collective—what was it called—a long time ago...where the films were shown on St. Marks Place?
BS: You mean The New Cinema?
CG: Yes.
BS: It wasn't all that long ago. Two years maybe not even that. It wasn't a collective, by the way, even thought it may have seemed that way. It was run by Becky Johnson, James Nares and Eric Mitchell.

Period.

CG: Well anyway, all of those people surrounding that, I was wondering how or what about that scene had changed.
BS: Well, great because they had all these people with all this talent—acting, directing, making music, etc., and no one is making it yet but everyone thinks that they will and they have some time to give to other people and so what becomes possible is almost...I mean I gave the economic conditions which of course dampen it a bit but also make it exciting. For awhile. And then you make a film that takes as much time as everyone is involved and you're still broke and there's no way to distribute it in a large way. And you can't make a film without thinking of how to distribute it which was why New Cinema was begun in the first place.

BS: Menage was great because they had all these people with all this talent—acting, directing, making music, etc., and no one is making it yet but everyone thinks that they will and they have some time to give to other people and so what becomes possible is almost...I mean I gave the economic conditions which of course dampen it a bit but also make it exciting. For awhile. And then you make a film that takes as much time as everyone is involved and you're still broke and there's no way to distribute it in a large way. And you can't make a film without thinking of how to distribute it which was why New Cinema was begun in the first place. Also, making films under those economic conditions, that's not entirely acting, you have to spend three years trying to get the money, but you don't necessarily want to get tied to the aesthetics that a low budget film force upon you—one-to-one shooting ratio, no rehearsals, long shots, etc.

CG: But you know those ideas back then and you knew them now. What changed? The approach?
BS: But back to the point. One would like to spend more time on a film. I mean, Film, like Literature, like Art, is a very serious medium and anyone would like to spend a few months developing a script. Which means they have to have money to eat while they are doing that. They would like to work with people over a solid period of time which means that you have to pay them...things like that. So making a film in a big way means channelling all your energies into that and that does not include working on someone else's film.

BS: Menage was shot on a very low budget and yet the acting and the camera work are very sophisticated but not precious or arty.

BS: Halfway through the film I developed this thing against beauty and shot a few scenes and then decided that beauty had its place along with pleasure, etc., and got back into it. Did you think that the film was about a particular milieu? Because it wasn't.

CG: No.
BS: I mean I do write from my life but then again I don't write just from my life. There was one instance that I knew there would be a lot of unexpected things and such, a lot of the film was set up so that there was no possible rehearsal, there was no way to decide in advance what or how...Lisa (Bear) and I would meet Jimmy at the place where we were going to shoot, and it was just pure projection, separate, independent projection. We'd talk the day before and if Jimmy had an idea that he felt was business somewhere and it was convenient...

A. Really?

M. I didn't want to get into writing dialogue.

A. So it was mainly improvised?

M. It was almost totally improvised by everybody who was in the film.

A. Oh really?

M. Yeah, I provided the concept and almost everything else was improvised.

A. How was...who did the camera work?

M. I did most of it, but not in a vacuum. Jimmy did the point of view shots in the scene with Paula Greif at the end of the film and Lisa did some of it in the scene where the guy gets pushed off the building. But when it was time to do a shot I would consult with Lisa and Jimmy about it.

A. So it was very much in a way a product, after the initial conception, it was very much a product of everyone who worked on it.

M. Absolutely, it was basically improvised. It was a matter of agreeing on what everyone should be, and everybody was subject to the same quandary.

A. Oh, that's interesting, yeah.
at Paula Cooper Gallery 155 Wooster St. NYC

ELIZABETH MURRAY

1 May - 30 May

scheduled shows:

April 24 - Struggle for Youth
May 1 - Scott Miller, Professional Wrestling
May 8 - Bobby G, ABC No Rio News
May 15 - Debby Davis, Social Med
May 22 - Mindy Stevenson
May 29 - Haouï Montague
June 5 - Herr Lugus

(continued from p. 18)
S.C. What's the difference between the type of Expressionism involved in this work and other forms of Expressionism?

C.A. We see things prismatic now.

S.C. What do you mean we see things prismaticly?

C.A. It has to do with the fracturing of the spectrum, the attention on color. Eighty years ago, before the Impressionists things were seen in primary ways and then with Impressionism, people went crazy. They thought Renoir was trash. There was a change in the vision around that time. And of course the advent of photography changed the way we see. Painting became more expressionistic—Art in general became more expressionistic—Art in general became more...direct, less pictorial. German Expressionism was very surrealistic, a guttural expression of the consciousness in Germany. They were responding to the imagery and what was happening in Germany at that time. Then everything got fucked up during the war...and then in New York, that show at the MacMillan Gallery in 1942—Pollack and Kline, DeKooning and Clifford Still's yellow and red painting; Jackson Pollack's last figurative painting. It just smashed painting open and there was no excuse for figurative painting at that point.

S.C. It is interesting to try and differentiate between a form of expressionism that evolved in America in the 1950’s...

C.A. In the 40’s...

S.C. Let me finish here—that kind of Expressionism which was a reaction against a very formalist, academic tradition of Modernism, specifically European; Abstract Expressionism in the U.S., a social gesture within the context of a Modern Art tradition and expressionism as it exists today.

C.A. Now it deals with a more direct knowledge, it’s no longer so academic. Ouspensky talked about the forms of knowledge—the third form is language and mortality; the fourth form, telepathic communication, symbolism and immortality—DIRECT KNOWLEDGE.

S.C. Oh boy, O.K., would you say Expressionism today seems more personal or less self-conscious?

C.A. Yes, less self-conscious. You must realize what happened—painting has gone through a tremendous transition. Robert Smithson hated painting but to me, what he was doing was painting with the planet—which is a kind of symbolism—direct contact...hmmm

S.C. Maybe the word expressionistic is misleading.

C.A. Very misleading and academic.

S.C. I've always found my own work to be involved in a social and cultural sphere larger than myself. The meaning of making art for me has very much to do with the meaning of making a statement about art or the world at that particular moment in time.

C.A. Sarah, I am trying for the paintings to illuminate. For paintings to have an illumination—to bring some kind of light, here.

S.C. Do you feel that as an artist you are working in isolation, apart from a more intellectual or literary tradition of art or do you feel that your work addresses this tradition specifically?

C.A. I think it deals with tradition. I always look at history as stepping stones. The idea of art being a re-definition of the surface of a canvas—that seems to be very important—it seems to be my obsession. That's why I stopped doing figurative work.

S.C. Why the re-definition of a canvas?

C.A. That is my obsession—my addiction to paint.

S.C. But that doesn't fully explain why you stopped doing figurative work.

C.A. I needed something with more endurance than an illustrated image of man.

S.C. So you feel figurative work is by its nature illustrative, or do you feel that the work you were doing... C.A. I feel that my personal work was illustrative.

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As well, "diamonds" are going to be Marilyn's "best friend" since the "dia" in this word can be easily transformed into "die" or its homonym, "dye" (as in hair-dye). She sung of "diamonds" and she "died," killed herself or was murdered, along with her dyed blonde hair of the hue called "platinum," echoing the platinum that diamond rings are set in. Norma Jeanmond will die young and she will dye her hair. Americans will love (amour) jeans forever or they will love Norma Jean forever. Furthermore, they will listen to diamonds forever while wearing their blue jeans, the jeans whose "blue" color is always already in conjunction with "blue" diamonds or Neil Diamond's "blues."

The awareness of another nature of existence. The unity of all that is, and we are all that is. Pop Art taught us about the material - that we are not just a single moment in culture, its more about a spark...of humanity.

(continued from p. 47)
UNMADE BEDS...I think the B's intentionally or unintentionally copied THE FOREIGNER, in some of their films...there were a whole rash of films for a while about terrorists and kidnappings when that was in the news. Michael Oblowitz uses stereotypes and camera movements that are a lot like THE FOREIGNER's, except they're cleaner. Vivienne Dick's films are quite unique. But basically, there's a big difference in everyone's approach and care. Once you take the time to look at each film—you sense more the differences than the similarities.

SC: In your life in New York, it seems you spend as much time with visual artists as you do with filmmakers. Is there a common thread?
AP: I'm drawn more to artists, than to one particular medium...

SC: Is there a commonality between the best of the filmmaking that's been done and the other current art?
AP: Yeah, hustling, exposure, immediate and long-term gratification. Some filmmakers do other things besides making films. The common bonds of people interest me, but I still see most everything in terms of cinema...I'm still a voyeur but I'm beginning to participate more...I'm learning...my attitude is becoming less passive. Or my passivity is becoming more active.

SC: It's as though you were watching your life as if it were a movie.
AP: Yeah...a tragi-comedy, a musical, a love story...whatever. I want to make movies and I want to live. I guess that's my role in the movie I'm watching. I feel like that's what I was born to do...I think this is where I came in.

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B's, Eric, Vivienne Dick, and Becky, even Betsy all work in Super 8, but their films are quite different, apart from the fact that they're both primitive and sophisticated in the same breath.

SC: You've been called both a punk and a new wave filmmaker...to what extent do you see that term as a kind of stylistic label, are there basic conceptual ideas that those terms represent?
AP: There are conceptual innovations, just like you could group Rossellini, Visconti and DeSica, and call them post war Italian neo-realists, that's more like a group similarity, and I'm not that interested in the similarities between artists but more in their uniqueness...

SC: Is there a common style? I'm trying to generalize.
AP: O.K. Ummm...there are some films that may be similar on a literary level, like Becky's and Betsy's. Maybe Edo and Eric have the same fashion fetishes...James' ROME '78 reminded me a lot of
This is what our original ad looked like in 1975. Now, highball are up a quarter, and the jukebox is 2 for a quarter. But that's all that's changed.