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Vol 1 No 2

CAMILLE O'GRADY/MARK THOMPSON • INTERVIEW WITH STARHAWK, AUTHOR OF SPIRAL DANCE • SAMUEL M. STEWARD • MAINSTREAM EXILES including BLACKBERRI, JUDY GRAHN, TEDE MATTHEWS, CANYON SAM • DENNIS MILES • LESLIE AGUILAR • GINNY LLOYD

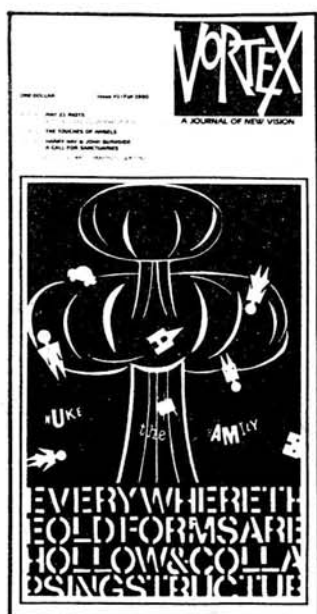
# VORTEX

A JOURNAL OF NEW VISION

SPECIAL HAND-STAMPED LIMITED EDITION!



First Issue:



SOLD OUT!

VORTEX is a spiral vision. It began with the knowledge that creative people were making lives for themselves outside the mainstream. This was, in itself perhaps, no great vision. And our eye might have passed elsewhere were our original vision not peopled with those who had been stifled, crushed, lost, uprooted, denied, or appropriated by mainstream culture.

The mainstream world would be a hopeless wasteland but for the glow beyond it. Beyond, rebels live. Such include Alan Acacia, "a total revolutionary," who founded the California Men's Gathering. Such is Camille O'Grady who pictures the world greasy black and uprooted. And certainly in the fairy movement there is energy for tracing the roots of the Old Religion, of marking where gay beings differ from other human beings, not just between the sheets, but in profound and secret contexts.

It comes as no surprise that visionary rebels--mainstream exiles--are for the most part artists, whether poets, painters, or performers. The visions of these rebels are manifested in great art. VORTEX is pleased to present this issue of great vision from great artists.

We thank all of you for your generous support. Your contributions have set us in motion and we have tried to express our thanks individually to each of you. Now we are able to offer subscriptions and we hope that all of you who have seen us this far will take advantage of this offer.

Many, many thanks!

- Subscriptions: \$10 for four consecutive issues.
- Single copy: \$2.50
- Advertising rates are low and available upon request.

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CAMILLE O'GRADY is featured in this issue of VORTEX. We offer no profile of her here, but invite you to refer to our feature.

SAMUEL M. STEWARD authored Dear Sammy: Letters from Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Grey Fox is publishing his Chapters From an Autobiography in April 1981.

MARK THOMPSON is a contributing editor of The Advocate. He has worked in filmmaking and on stage. As a journalist, he says, his beat covers that group of individuals--now characterized by the word gay--but on the path towards unraveling and discovering greater secrets about themselves.

Also, LARRY BORG, FRANK BRAYTON, PAUL E. BROWN, GAIL CHASE, ELIZABETH GROSS, WILL ROSCOE, BRADLEY ROSE, and WILLIAM STEWART.

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Cover design: Camille O'Grady  
Back Cover: Ginny Lloyd

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Mark Thompson

# Camille O'Grady



Photo: Mark Thompson

The shores of the channel are covered with a dark fungus and she nearly loses her footing entering the vessel. The journey to the other side hardly takes any time at all. "What do you want?" the three-headed dog malevolently snaps when she arrives. "They're all beggars here. There's no rest for you, sweetheart. Go back and continue your scritch and scratching."

And so Our Lady in Black returns -- with dreams of weanings in white rooms and men beating-out the devil on drums of tight flesh.

Stigmas are no longer enigmas if one relinquishes the self to contradiction. And taboos become totems if one crosses themselves and then takes that shake-down cruise.

Camille O'Grady is not selling tickets to anywhere, but like the machete-wielding adventurer who has returned to tell good Christian ladies of voyages upstream, she might -- at the very least -- titillate us enough to listen about where she's been. Oh, we may recognize these places in the dark of our hearts, but it's far more convenient not to let on; in these times, being especially cautious of madness as metaphor for knowing. We continue to substantiate our lies: the most direct route between two points is a straight line. But wonder, is it really zig-zag? We cultivate our reasonableness; yet finger the Apocalypse. The cognizant mind suffers involuntary ticks at the thought of four billion screams rising like a storm of sudden heat from the floor of the Sudan.

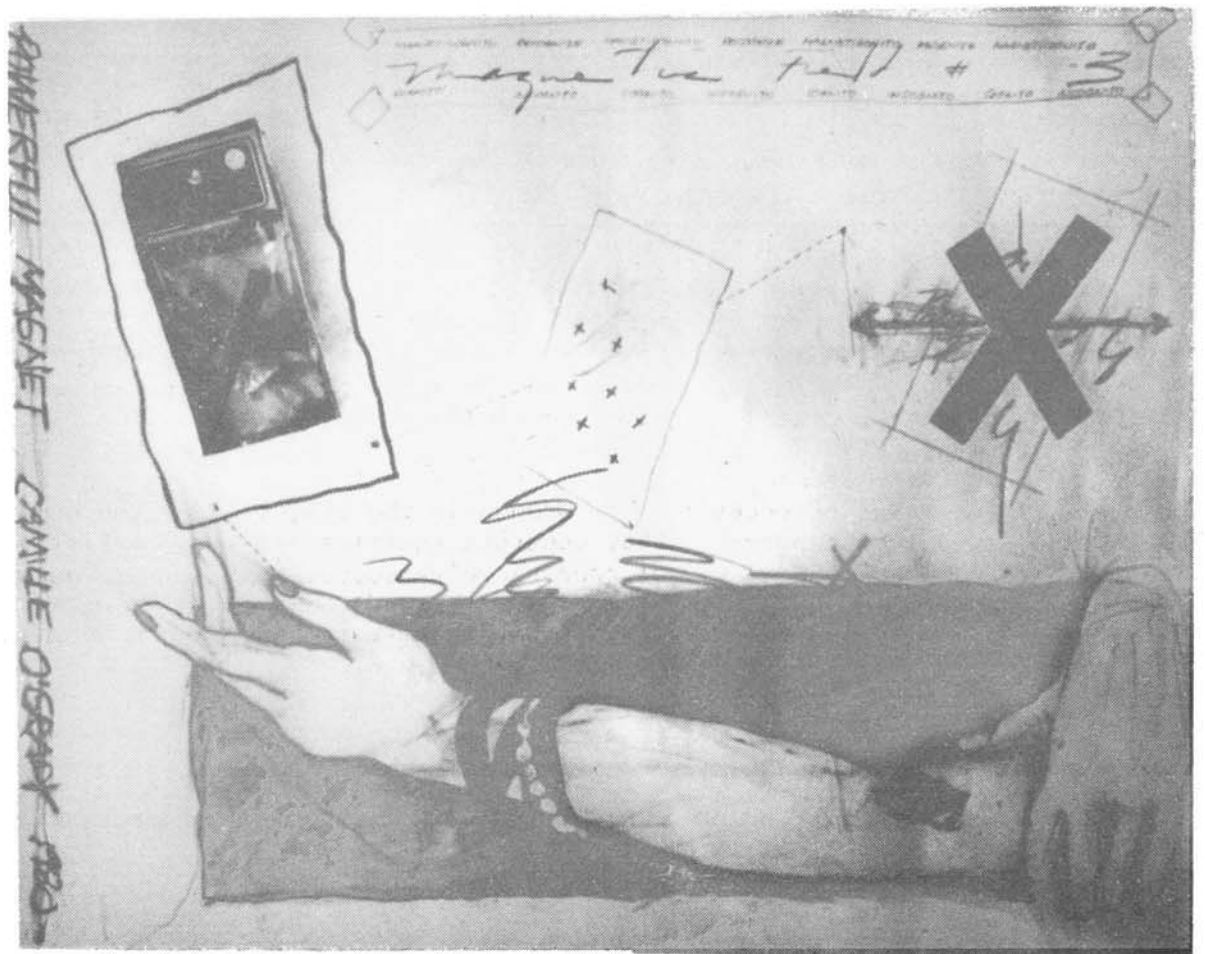
It is time to collapse upward, but not from the horrors of prearranged accident. There are no accidents, and the earth shudders and buckles and wrinkles under the weight of such cynical undoings. There are no straight lines either, and many of us see that too. Camille crosses herself for absolution, and then once again (but with a different

marker) for guilt. Thus harnessed, and with aerodynamic finesse, she dips into and plunders our past and future. Handing the shards of her explorations back to us for a useful measure of who we are -- unbeknownst to the leaden eyes of a parent culture incapable of perceiving such a simple course of movement.

Those in an empathetic trajectory have long regarded her as the eloquent -- but raw-boned -- prophet she is. It has been a mutual nurturing; a relationship echoing sacred agreements reaching far, far back in time. Ours is the lightning laughter, the silly, sometimes mocking play at the face of authorized reality. We are the subservient, yet subversive ones festooning the path to the oracle of secrets.

The floors of Europe's great cathedrals were cunningly designed. Pilgrims, following their maze-like patterns step-by-step, were seduced into a different form of consciousness. It was a somber dance (inherited from other times), but one whose movements were nevertheless meant for magic. The patterns on those granite floors are but one circuit in our now vastly encultured programs. Camille O'Grady, through music, words and graphic art, diagrams access to regions of self still kept suppressed. Her work is temple art, but now on wheels.

"I have always accepted what people called magic as an ordinary part of per-



"#3" from Magnetic Field Series, 1980

ception -- even as a kid. When I was young I was totally psychic and had no idea that other people weren't. People would try to unteach me it. By psychic, I mean I was getting a set of information on an intuitive level about real events. Magic is a word that was created to describe things that other people can't understand or explain and doesn't fit into limitations of what they were taught by religion or science. It's magic if things happen coincidentally, so to speak. I receive lots of information through dreams and random thoughts."

In the '70s, she moved through New York's avant-garde art circles and black leather underground. More than an apostle, she was a touchstone, reflecting through music and imagery the struggle of individuals awakening from their psychic bondage. "People were just beginning to experiment with sex, pushing their frames of reference out. People were exploring their Plutonian sides, the underneath, the hidden."

During this time she began to wear black. It was a color chosen for protection and, like its use in Noh drama, for implied invisibility. Also being featured in her daily dress were numerous talismanic objects worn around the neck. "They are my tattoos. I never had a tattoo because I figured if I had one I'd be covered with them. This way I get to change them."

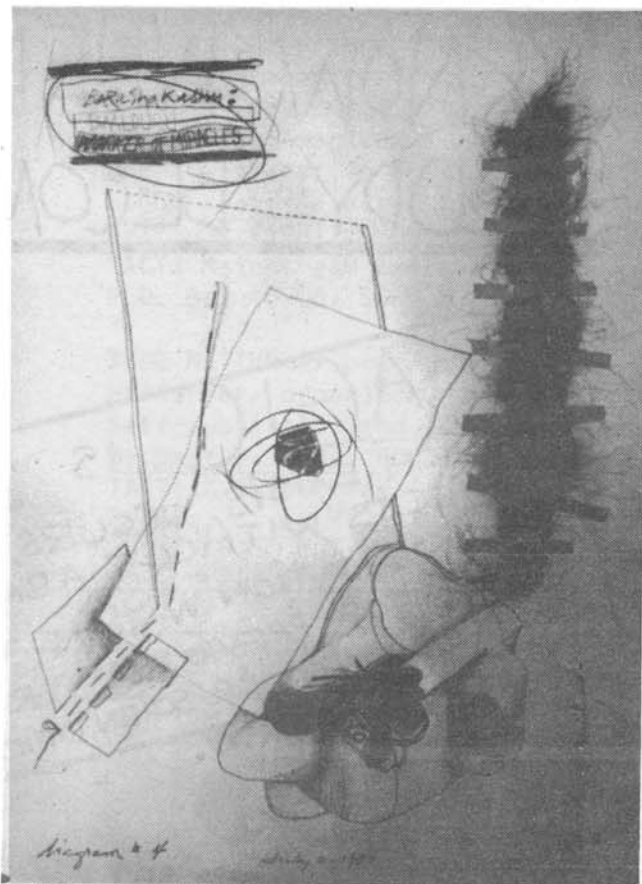
Change is an essential element in her life. "My life is change. Making the change in yourself after the change has already occurred is the way it usually seems to be because most people want to cling to some semblance of security. Part of what's going on in my generation is that everybody is realizing that things are speeding up. Everyday you have to make tremendous sensory adjustments to what's going on. The physical body, as we know it, will become increasingly obsolete. The psychic sciences will become even more important."

"I've had to refine being centrally located within myself, which is the way I think more and more people are going to have to be. I really believe that by the end of the decade people will have to relate to their bodies in completely new ways. I'm talking about a radical shift in physical being and thus consciousness. The environ-

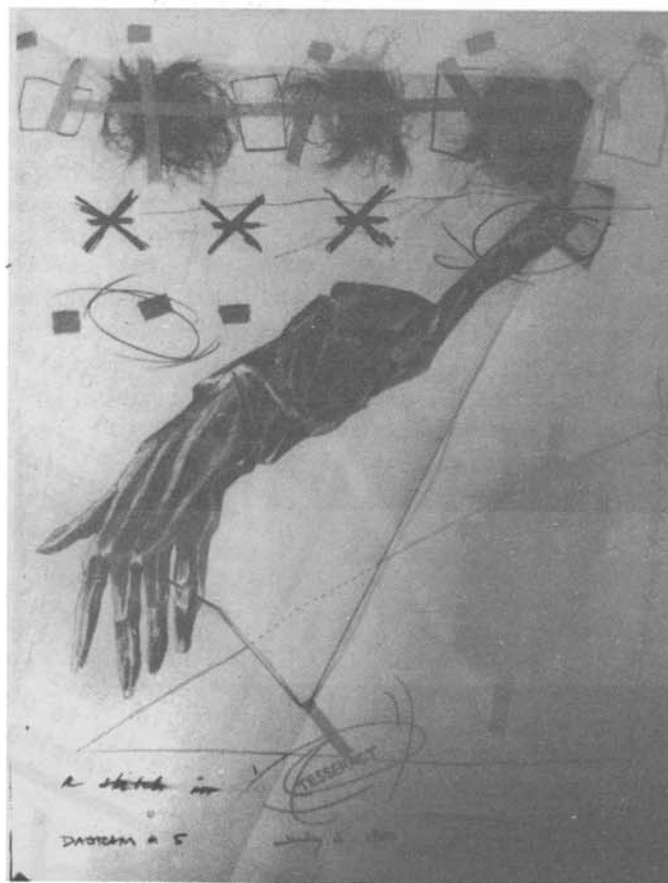
ment that we walk around in will have to be different. People are going to be faced with terrifying new experiences."

"Uranus is the planet that controls Aquarius and, of course, we're supposed to be moving into the Aquarian Age. It rules space and has a lot to do with transmitting waves of energy -- as in electronic communications. Being Uranian is dealing with sudden change -- things that come and go. And the people who have been pushing the boundaries are the ones who are going to be ready for the big time stuff ahead. This is magic."

Camille O'Grady is a source-ceress. An anomaly in a culture where human beings are fixed with a shelf-life too. She's a change agent that changes, a messenger for the double-helix, a quick draw artist cocking a trigger in our guts. She's also one tiny link in the circle of visionary healers at work among us today; bold ones shifting through private midden heaps, digging for time and continuity on a schismatic planet. In the coming epoch, our essence will be determined less by creed and affiliation -- more by the arch of our vision. (Camille O'Grady now lives in San Francisco.)



"Diagram #4" from Uranian Series, 1980



"Diagram #5" from Uranian Series, 1980





# FRIDAY 13:

## STARHAWK and ALAN ACACIA in conversation with WILL ROSCOE

*It is with real excitement that VORTEX presents the following conversation. More than an interview, it brings together three individuals with widely varying experiences and backgrounds in radical spirituality. STARHAWK actively practices witchcraft, has played a key role in fostering feminist spirituality and the Old Religion and is the author of The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess. ALAN ACACIA also practices the Craft and has been a friend of Starhawk's for several years. Alan is active in anti-sexist men's organizations and is a co-founder of the California Men's Gathering. WILL ROSCOE is a member of the VORTEX planning group, is active in organizing cultural activities in San Francisco, and in the gay men's fairy movement. The conversation that follows was recorded on Friday 13th, February, 1981, in Starhawk's meditation room in her San Francisco apartment. Special thanks to Raven's Head Communications.*

WILL

Let's start by holding hands a little bit...and spacing out.

STARHAWK

Or spacing in...

[After the meditation, Alan starts a kiss around the circle.]

ALAN

Blessed be.

STARHAWK

Blessed be.

WILL

I like to get a handle on people and thought it might be interesting if we each just said something about where we come from. I'm a gay man who identifies himself as a fairy. Alan is straight. And Starhawk, you're a straight woman. So I would be interested in hearing where we all came from and how we came onto this spiritual trip.

ALAN

I'll start. I come from a middle-class background. My father was a doctor. My mother was a nurse who stopped her practice after she married my father.

I was raised a Catholic and in the eighth grade seriously thought of entering the seminary and being a priest. When I was confirmed I picked a confirmation name. Usually the boys pick male names and the girls pick female names of saints to be their protector. But I was really into Mary so I picked my name as Miriam, which I thought was the male version of Mary. But that's not true, it's Marion. And it turns out that Miriam is Mary's Jewish name. For me that's a sign of my first sissiness or identification with things that were not sex-role oriented.

I really feel a lot of strong sense of the damage to the world and to the people

who live in the world. I feel that damage comes from the patriarchal structure of the world. And that many of the fulnesses of being human are found among women's culture. The only reason we find it there even is that women are not considered significant and so it wasn't important to wipe out the aspects of humanity or being human that remained. I feel that spirituality for me means being open, being attuned, being receptive and these are values that traditionally were only permitted for women to have.

I have a college education and degrees in philosophy. I was an atheist for a long time. And I'm still a materialist. I don't believe in pie in the sky. I just believe in the energy we discover here among ourselves on earth.

When I met Starhawk six years ago it was a very wonderful moment in my life. There were many things—poetry and politics and spirituality and art and religion—that all came together for me in the Craft.

During the war in Vietnam I remember feeling guilty and feeling very upset with the way things were going but not taking steps to obstruct or confront what I consider one of the greatest crimes of the patriarchy in the second half of the twentieth century. A million and a half people were murdered and I just felt guilty about it. That was all. I was not involved politically and I was not involved that much spiritually.

WILL

So your spiritual development paralleled a political development, too?

ALAN

Yes. In many ways it comes out of feminism. Discovering that there is a political movement that talked about things in a much broader way, and in a way that I could relate to personally. Not just in terms of sex roles but of

oppression in general and of hierarchies and of who the system served.

At about the same time I discovered magic. The feminist movement and magic for me were real involved. After that I became involved in Men Against Sexist Violence which was for me a real eye-opener.

WILL

Where do you think you're at now?

ALAN

I'm a total revolutionary. For me one of the big joys of life is to work in communities with other people to find ways to confront the patriarchy, the one that's damaging this world and wants to kill this world. I see it real clearly. I see the damage in my neighborhood to people. I see it on their faces.

A couple years ago I co-founded the California Men's Gathering which is now a yearly event and men from all over the state come, hundreds, to it. And I'm currently working with the California Anti-Sexist Men's Political Caucus.

That's political involvement. On a personal level, I'm doing a lot of Fairy Tradition magic with men especially, and also with men and women. Such as doing fairy circles at the Caucus meetings and the California Men's Gathering. I'm also involved with a group of men, both het and gay, who are doing moon rituals in both the East Bay and San Francisco.

STARHAWK

I come from a Jewish background. My grandparents were immigrants in the early part of the century. Not even working class, more just poor, sort of scraping along, semi-lumpen. My parents both moved out of that terrible poverty in the Depression and in their lifetimes sort of traversed into becoming professionals, becoming middle-class.

My father died when I was



"THE CRAFT FITS IN NICELY WITH A MARXIAN VIEW...IT SAYS THAT SPIRITUALITY IS EMBODIED IN THE MATERIAL WORLD."

five. My mother is a psycho-therapist. In my childhood she was working as a social worker and went back to school when I was sixteen, seventeen, and got her doctorate and moved up another level.

I had a very strong Jewish education. I had a lot of pulls towards that. I always wanted to learn. I wanted to go to Hebrew school and study. I was the valedictorian of my Hebrew school class.

I was also very political. The high school I went to was very political, a lot of the kids were very aware. It was in the late sixties, the whole Vietnam era and we had our own High School Students Against the War in Vietnam groups. It was in Los Angeles, University High.

When I got into college I wasn't really a political organizer but I was definitely one of the political faithful. I was an art student and I was also pretty much of a hippy at that point, too. Doing a lot of sex, drugs, and rock and roll.

And that was actually how I got involved in the Craft to begin with. I started reading Tarot cards when I was fifteen years old, because it seemed like one of the accomplishments that every young hippy chick lady should have. You should be able to read Tarot cards and cook brown rice and bake your own bread and wander around and get fantastically stoned. You didn't have to be able to roll a joint because there were always men around who would do it. But you should be able to know whether you were smoking good dope or not...

[Laughter]

The reason I drifted out of Judaism wasn't consciously its sexism at that point because I wasn't really aware of that. It was more that my own experiences seemed to happen more in terms of nature and some direct connection with something I experience through nature, through other people, through sex, through direct connections. Judaism just didn't say anything about that.

I did a lot of Eastern religion stuff, too, reading and yoga classes and stuff. But at seventeen, I had a real strong sense of my own sexuality and that that was a real important thing that was sacred for me. I just was not about to give it over to any kind of religion that said, "Well, once a month might be good, but if you want to waste your kundalini powers

blah, blah, blah...."

Finally this friend of mine and I decided we were going to teach a class in witchcraft at the experimental college at UCLA. I don't know why. We didn't know anything about witchcraft. Nobody needed to know anything to teach at that point. In fact, it was better, it was less elitist.

So we started this class and we did a lot of reading which was terribly confusing because one book said witches were satanists and one book said witches didn't exist and one book said witches were a mass hallucination and one book said they were all sixteenth and seventeenth century drug addicts. We did run across Margaret Murray who said that witches were the Old Religion and that seemed to really strike a chord.

Eventually we finally met some real witches. That was in 1968. A bunch of us were living in the top floor of this old fraternity house next to UCLA. They came in and talked to us and told us what the Craft was really about and started to read us the Charge of the Goddess. For me it just felt like somebody had finally articulated something I had always sensed but had never quite been able to put into words or put into concepts before.

It was a couple years after that that I suddenly become aware of feminism as a movement. And that was a real enlightenment in and of itself. I was living down in Venice which is a part of LA that at that point was very, very political, a very strong community. There was a women's center there that I got involved in helping to run and programs and activities and a consciousness-raising group. And that group of women was really wonderful. Just a very strong group that stayed together for a long time, pulled people through a lot of very painful things.

At that point, I was driving down Lincoln Boulevard one day and there was suddenly a shop that said, "The Feminist Wicca" on it. I went, "My god! I always thought these two things belonged together but I thought I was the only crazy person in the world who could ever have such a weird idea and here's a whole shop that says it right out there!"

I jumped out of the car and ran in. And ran into Z Budapest. It happened that the next night was the Spring Equinox and she invited me to come to a ritual which I went to.

It was just really wonderful.

It sparked a whole lot of changes. One of the changes being that I broke up with a guy I had been living with for five years and took off and went traveling by myself for a year. So I didn't really get involved with Z's group or with the Craft at that point but I got involved in what my own path was. Doing things about getting in touch with my body. I did a lot of bicycling and hiking and physical things. Just with my ability to be alone, to put myself out in situations by myself without being afraid. To go around and deal with people without necessarily having all those wonderful supports you get from your lover and your community and your consciousness-raising group.

After that year, I had several significant dreams that were very powerful. One of them was a dream about a hawk that came down and talked to me that led to my changing my name to Starhawk. One of them, while I was in New York, was this dream of going out to the West Coast and finding that there were just all these marvelous animals out there on the rocks--seals and birds and penguins and all sorts of things. And it sort of said, "Maybe it's time to go back to the West Coast."

So I did. I came to San Francisco and started teaching classes. That was, I think, in 1975. And then I met Alan right around the beginning of that whole period. In fact, Alan was one of the first people I met in San Francisco.

WILL

When did your first San Francisco coven form?

STARHAWK

Right in that summer. It formed out of the second class I taught. We just decided we wanted to stay together and become a coven and we would get together and just do rituals. We really went through a high speed coven forming process. I think within about three months we initiated ourselves and formed ourselves into a coven.

ALAN

It has a great name.

STARHAWK

Compost.

Actually it was after we had already formed ourselves and initiated ourselves that I began seriously studying with an older and wiser witch and was eventually initiated into



the Fairy Tradition.

The Fairy...well, there's fairies and fairies and fairies...but the Fairy Tradition into which I was initiated is not quite the same thing as the fairy tradition in terms of the men's fairy movement. Except that a number of the men who I think have sparked the men's fairy movement were also initiated into the Fairy Tradition. But it is an old, not exactly family tradition because Victor Anderson didn't get it from his family, he got it from a woman in his neighborhood. A woman who initiated him when he was nine. But it does come down some way or another from England and from Scotland and presumably from the knowledge of the Little People of Scotland.

WILL

So there really has been a continuous line of practicing witches?

STARHAWK

I think there has. A lot of people, even a lot of witches say, "Oh now, that's just a nice thing to tell the kids." But actually the more, even academic research, I do, the more evidence there seems to be that there really has been some sort of survival that came down. It's by no means complete, total, these are exactly the same rituals they did three thousand years ago. But there is a seed core of knowledge that has been passed down.

I think there are covens in most major cities. I think there probably always have been covens in most major cities but they've been very, very secret. For a long time there was no communication among the Craft.

Now it seems to be moving into people who've been traditionally very materialist. Real, more hard-core leftist Marxists are suddenly discovering a spiritual side to what they're doing.

And the Craft fits in nicely with a kind of Marxian view of the world because it is essentially a materialist outlook. It says that spirituality is embodied in the material world. There is no god somewhere else, out there. It's here. It's in us. It's in our relationships with each other. It is embodied as much in our relationships to the means of production as it is in anything else.

When I speak to groups I always say, "Do you want to have a vision of the Goddess?" Everyone always says, "Yes!

Yes!" "Okay, it's real easy. You just turn to the person next to you."

WILL

Where do you see yourself now?

STARHAWK

Well. Now I feel myself more and more committed to pulling together the political and the spiritual. I really never have seen them as separate, but I'd like to put that out more and more into the broader society. My coven now is a women's coven which got started a year later than Compost which is now called Raving. We also are an organization which we call Reclaiming which teaches classes and does public rituals.

We're all very committed to more and more uniting of both ends with the idea that the culture has to undergo a very deep, long term, complete transformation, and that it's not enough to change any one aspect of it. It has to change in all aspects. For us, it has to include, and maybe start, with our religious and spiritual metaphors.

My next book is really heavily directed towards those kinds of questions. It's called Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex, and Politics. It'll be out sometime in 1982.

I'm also involved more with exploring and expanding the traditional Wiccan methods of working with people psychologically and connecting that with the more broad, mainstream psychology and really doing healing therapy, counseling with people. I'm in graduate school now at Antioch West in a combination of Women's Studies and Psychology.



WILL

Well, I'll try to make mine very brief. I grew up by and large in the Pacific Northwest and in particular in Missoula, Montana. That was important because it put me very close to nature. I could literally go into the backyard and be in an empty field and walk. My childhood is filled with a lot of memories--which I have found to be the case with many other fairies--of experiences of just going off by oneself to be in nature, usually naked, doing strange things like rolling around in the mud or

masturbating or whatever. So that was really important.

My parents were divorced when I was about ten. After being in California for a couple years, I returned to Montana with my mother. She was licensed as a pharmacist there. So we went back and in a couple years she started a small business, a corner drugstore. That's important because I had an image of a strong, independent woman in my life from an early age on.

I came out of the closet at the time I was twenty, in Missoula. It was because a Gay Studies class was offered, and much like your witchcraft class, Starhawk, we just took off. It sparked enough energy for an organization to form. That was about 1975.

I decided to make it a real focus, to try to continue to be active in the gay community as an expression of my politics and of my abilities. I finished school with basically a social work type of degree from the University of Oregon, as an openly gay student, working in gay organizations for credits and all that sort of thing. I was going to get a job at a gay community center some place and that was going to be my life. That brought me to the Bay Area.

It wasn't too long, being in San Francisco, that the rush of coming out, which kept me going for a couple years, wore off. I saw this incredible flood of middle-class gay people who hadn't come out in the early seventies but as it became acceptable they started to come out and they came to San Francisco and it was just such a different experience here. It was this big thing to come to San Francisco, this big radical thing. And now it's like an "alternative lifestyle" that you read about in New York magazine.

Through my own research and study and desire to know, I had learned of the work of a man named Harry Hay who started the Mattachine Foundation in 1950. My initial searching was a desire to find some cultural roots for myself as a gay person. So I wanted to know about gay history and the history of the gay movement. That led me to be aware of Harry Hay and some of the very radical theories that he, even then, was starting to develop about gay people as a cultural entity, with an ethic of its own, which should be valued and developed and enhanced as opposed to our trying to assimilate and be just like everyone else except for what we do in bed.

This is the night of Halloween...  
 The night when the veil is thin that divides the worlds...  
 The seen from the unseen,  
 The day-to-day from the Mysteries.  
 Tonight we are about to take a journey into the darkness  
 of winter and through to the promise of spring  
 For Halloween is our New Year  
 The New Year of the Witches  
 And when we say "Witches" you should know that we mean  
 those with a certain wit--maybe even wisdom, who  
 follow the Old Religion of the Goddess.  
 And when we speak of the Goddess who is moon, stone, star,  
 And Her Consort the Horned God, the sun, the Life  
 of animals,  
 We are really saying  
 That we recognize our kinship with all of life,  
 The interwoven chain of connection that sustains all...  
 And that tapestry of Life is our prime concern,  
 We are committed to its service.  
 When we say the Goddess is Maiden, Mother and Crone,  
 We are saying that we see Her in all women,  
 All shapes and colors and ages,  
 And Honor women for strength as well as beauty  
 For knowledge and experience and the power that comes  
 from within,  
 For She is the mother of inspiration as well as children,  
 When we call on the Horned God as Her lover and consort,  
 We say that we see Him in men and honor them  
 For tenderness and kindness as well as courage  
 And He wears horns because we honor  
 The animal self in each of us  
 Forever untamed and free--our miracle bodies...  
 When we invoke the elements of air, fire, water, and earth,  
 And we pledge ourselves to care for it and preserve it.  
 Now when the fabric of life is threatened all around us.  
 When we dance the spiral,  
 The ancient symbol of rebirth and renewal,  
 We do it because our culture has gone, too far in the  
 direction of death,  
 And it is time we turn toward life.  
 And when we remember what has passed and renew ourselves  
 We do it to reclaim the future.  
 So join with us now--close your eyes, breathe deep...  
 Feel the spirits gathering...

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In 1979, I learned of an event called the Spiritual Conference for Radical Fairies which Harry was involved in. I was convinced it would either be all groovy nuts-and-vegetables, meditation types or heavy duty Marxist working class rhetoric and I was just sure it wouldn't work out.

But it turned out to be a really incredible, powerful gathering of 200 men who were each in themselves shamans. To just sit in the circle and listen to one person after another and they all had such clear visions that they'd nurtured on their own over their lives and now they were coming together as a people of power, people with a power. There wasn't the worry that someone has power over me. The result was that we just soared because we weren't being held back. We all had our own fantasies and visions and encouraged each other.

That put me, consciously I guess, on a spiritual path. Where I'm at right now is in similar places to both of you. I'm ready for the big revolution. I don't have time or energy for organizing just demonstrations and leafletting and all the political things

that have been done again and again. I want new things. I want new types of action.

I feel like we're in such a rootless time that it's ripe for spiritual things to emerge. And I also feel that we're in a desperate time because I can really feel the planet groaning and choking.



Starhawk, you mention in your book the point about underlying belief systems or concepts. That you can change from Catholic to Marxist but that there's something underlying. In fact, we see this when we see Marxists suddenly go back to being Catholics, or Catholics to Marxists. What is that? How can we change that and what are examples of that happening in the women's and left movements?

STARHAWK

I think there's hundreds of examples and I think that what's underlying them is a

two part process that I have come to call "estrangement." The idea that human beings are estranged from the world and from nature and not part of the world.

The first level of that is patriarchal religion, where god is separate from the world and from nature. As Engels says, religion becomes this process of taking the content out of the world and giving it over to god who then graciously allows a little of it to trickle back to you. In its particular incarnations as monotheistic religion, this idea that there is an absolute god who is an agent acting on the world and that there's only one, and there's only one right, true, and only way, essentially gives us a mental set that says, "There's only one truth and either you got it or you don't got it." And it's real important to find out what that one truth is because if we don't all agree on that one truth then not only are you slightly mistaken, but you're in league with the agents of evil.

It's interesting that Marx--who is someone I really have a lot of respect for and I would have to call myself in some ways very much a neo-Marxist--but he and Engels were constantly embroiled in these "points," writing nasty letters back and forth, to other people who didn't quite buy their theory exactly.

The same with Freud. Freud had his theories and had all these fights and arguments and battles with people who didn't quite agree with him. It filters through all the leftist movements just as much as it did through the Catholic church in all the schisms in Christianity. The same in the women's movement. You get the lesbian separatists and the non-lesbians, and everybody fighting with each other because they don't have the same particular dogma, the same particular belief system. When the real underlying idea that there is one absolute truth and there is only one way to approach it.

The difference, I'd say, in the broad spectrum of goddess religions, earth religions, Native American religions, traditional tribal religions, as well as witchcraft per se is that there is an attitude that there are many gods. There are many truths. There may be many ways of approaching that. And that we don't necessarily have to agree on the some one, that each individual has an inner sense of authority, has the ability to personally contact truth.

"IT'S IMPORTANT FOR MEN TO BEGIN TO SAY, 'THERE'S A WHOLE LOT MORE TO MY BEING A HUMAN BEING THAN BEING THE ADMINISTRATOR OF A VAST ESTATE....'



There are ways of working together without necessarily holding the same belief system. And I think that's real important for us now because I think that all of us in whatever end of the broad, broad spectrum of the left or the New Age, whatever, at this point in history I don't think we can afford separatism anymore. It's really come down to either we all hang together or we all will hang separately.

Now the second part of the estrangement process happened in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the changeover from the old patriarchal, strictly religious point of view. It became the scientific point of view. The mechanists' science. (This is stuff I got a lot from David Kubrin and Carolyn Merchant's book, Death of Nature.)

There was a real change in world view that--having sucked all the life out of the world itself--then killed off god and you're left with nothing but a dead machine, composed of nonalive parts that are only valued in and of how they can be manipulated and exploited. I think that's the real underlying world view that our culture works on now. It really strongly underlies the whole profit motive, the whole rise of capitalism as a system and the environmental crisis as well as the women's crisis.

This is one of the things I'm researching now for my next book. It's really quite fascinating to look deeply into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

What you have in the normal picture you get is the old order--which was the established church, Catholicism on the continent and the Church of England, by that point, after Henry VIII, in England, and the kings and essentially the ruling classes--being opposed by this new force of Protestant Individualism, which was basically connected with the middle classes, being bourgeois, rising merchants. You see those two forces battling it out with mechanistic science finally coming to be allied essentially with the bourgeois, individualistic Protestant powers.

But there was actually something else going on, too. Which was what was happening to the broad mass of the people, who were the peasants, the lower classes, the people who were being shoved off their land into wage labor. At many points in that period,

the lower classes were really banding together, organizing and rising.

It's especially clear in England, because you have the rise, during the Revolution, where the old order and the new are fighting it out, literally, with the King and Parliament. You also have the rise of all these strange Protestant cults like the Diggers and the Seekers and the Ranters and the Family of Love who said things like, "Well, let's not just get rid of the King. Let's get rid of private property!" They were very, very radical. They were eventually defeated.

I think part of their radicalism and part of their underlying world view came from the Old Religion and came from what was left of that different orientation towards life and to the world that saw all things as alive and that saw authority as embodied in the individual and in the small, local group, the face-to-face group, the clan... those kinds of ties rather than more abstract economic-social-political ties.

The witch persecutions were used consciously as a way of undermining that class because they were directed against the lower classes and they were directed against both individuals who didn't conform and whole groups that didn't conform, like homosexuals, lesbians, midwives. Midwives were very central to village life, to the passing on of the old healing arts and knowledge and they were a threat to the rise of the male medical profession. Part of the whole Protestant individualist capitalist ethic went with the professionalization of things that had always been done before by people for other people.

ALAN

As Authur Evans makes clear in his book, the word "faggot" comes from the Burning Times. Gay men would be tied in with a bundle of wood on which they'd be burned to death.

WILL

What's interesting is that we could look at that period and that struggle and see a struggle between economic classes and use that analysis. But there's also a very spiritual struggle going on because all of these people we mentioned are people that are still connecting. A part of this process was to deprive the underpinnings of their myths, the strength of their myths.

STARHAWK

Yes, exactly. And with the power of mechanistic science, in particular, undermining the power of both the Catholic world view and of the Old Religion's world view, which left the world really completely ripe for exploitation.

This is the reason why the gay movement is important--not the only reason but one important reason--and why, particularly the gay movement is so threatening to middle America (beyond the sort of personal, psychological reasons). For gay men and lesbians to come out, to say, "This is our sexuality and we affirm it," threatens the whole structure of our society, which is based on the enforced heterosexual family, on sexuality being valued only as a commodity and something that can be bought and sold or that can reinforce other things being bought and sold, that it does not have inherent value in and of itself.

ALAN

It's a continuum in the family, basically, that sexuality is owned. The man owns a woman's sexuality, that's what marriage is all about. And gay people don't own each other, especially when they don't copy heterosexual manners. And this whole thing, that we possess the world, that we can build nuclear plants and use nuclear waste because we don't care about the earth, we just want to make a profit.

Within this context, it's important to build resistance. One way of building resistance is to say, "No, we don't own the earth. We don't own each other." And to begin to look--especially for men--to begin to resist this belief that is urged on us, this attitude that we should be tough, we should control. And to begin to say, "There's a whole lot more to my being a human being than being the administrator of a vast estate."



WILL

There's one point in your book, where you're telling a myth of the Goddess and the creation of the God and the relationship between them: "She is the Great Mother who



"THE WHOLE CULTURE NEEDS AN ENORMOUS TRANSFORMATION; A DEEP LEVEL, COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION."

gives birth to Him as the Divine Child Sun at the Winter Solstice....He is the young bull; she is the nymph, seductress, etc."

There's no way I can read that as a gay person and see myself in there, in that myth. It's a--I'm not being critical or putting it down-- it is a myth which has very rich meaning for heterosexual people. But I look in there and the best I can come up with is that there's some sparkling dust inbetween these two great forces and I think I'm represented in there.

In Visionary Love, Mitch Walker, a gay male shaman, deals with the myths underpinning societies. He looks at all of them. He would look at a goddess-oriented culture as well as the patriarchal culture we live in, and say that all cultures create social myth systems and that to have society people are required to conform to these systems in some way or another. So there is always an identity, a self-identity which he calls the "falseness". What we are told we are, which denies the wholeness of what we really are.

The fundamental myth in nearly every culture is the polarity of male and female. It has all kinds of connotations. And I think that that is part of one of those underpinnings, along with the Big Truth, the Absolute Truth--is the Myth of Polarity, and of unity through two opposites coming together. And that is a very strong force, a very strong spirit force that exists.

But there is another force. It relates to those of us who have somehow slipped through the cracks of that polarizing and never divided ourselves that way and then, when we came out and were able to be in touch with the fact that we had never managed to divide ourselves up in that way. And for us the question of wholeness is different. Because we sense that it already exists within us.

The thing that keys into the sexuality is that instead of having complements coming to form a whole you have two wholes coming together as twins. Mitch uses the concept of "Magical Twinning" to characterize this process and the power that arises from it. And it is based on two equals and non-possession, etc.

That represents a force which counters the force of the social myth systems and it is looked at ambivalently in all sorts of cultures, al-

though often a role is created for the person who is the Androgyne or who reflects this kind of unity within themselves as a whole.

STARHAWK

That myth is definitely a heterosexual myth. In the Craft, in the Fairy Tradition, there were heterosexual mysteries, there were gay men's mysteries, there were women's mysteries that would each have their own myths and their own experiences, their own rituals.

Actually in the training (in the Craft) what you do is become both aspects of the myth yourself. You become both female and male elements so that within yourself you have a whole and you have that polarity and even in heterosexual relationships, it's two wholes meeting. Because if you're only half a person you're never in good shape, it doesn't matter which half you are.

WILL

For gay people, we have been so busy trying to say we're just like everyone else, we barely have the slightest conception of what our difference is. Yet, we just need to look at history and we can see so many examples when we were rubbed out because we represented something terribly different from what the dominant culture wanted to have around.

So that for het men and gay men--which is a vision that you have, Alan--to work together, we will have to stop worrying whether we're alike or not and be quite happy to accept where we're different and to understand and recognize that. To me there's a great joy in that, to me there's just great joy in knowing that you have a different psychological experience, perhaps, in your sexuality. What's that like? I wouldn't want to live if there weren't people who have different experiences to discover.

ALAN

I'm like that, too.

And when it comes to the fact that liberals are the people who are progressive, loving the earth, and get together and say, "Let's form some unity on this and let's not have this factional fighting and let's not have this separation and let's not have this, but we don't want the faggots to wear dresses," I'm going to say, "I'm sorry. I can't work with you."

STARHAWK

I think you have to be in closer agreement with people with whom you are going to take common action on some levels. It depends on what you're going to do.

Let's say, if we have a broad coalition of all the people on the left who would all take a very safe and simple action, maybe writing a letter about some of the upcoming bills, I think that would be very effective and would be really worthwhile.

If it comes to who I'm going to go out on the street with and trust doing some action where I know the police are going to come down with the tear gas and the clubs and I want my close friends and buddies beside me and I don't want to be with people who are possibly, going to run amok in the streets and do some asshole thing I don't agree with and get us all arrested at a point where I don't want to be--then that's a different question. Then you need a small group of people where you really are in close agreement with on lots and lots of different levels.

I think, in a way, the organizational model of the Craft might be a useful one for that, where you have small covens. And each of those groups have alliances with other groups who might be very, very different. Those broader alliances can work together to do other things.

I've worked with people to put on large rituals that come from real different backgrounds. And it's worked just fine because within the context of the ritual we didn't have to have that kind of close agreement.

WILL

We happened onto this example of writing a letter, which is something that in the past I could have been very involved in and would know just how to do a letter-writing campaign. And now I see it as reformist and as a reactive measure to the initiatives of the oppressors. I want to see pro-active politics and move ahead into visionary politics.

STARHAWK

That's basically what I want to see, too. My question is--and these are questions I feel like I don't have immediate answers for but that I'm thinking about hard now--is essentially seeing that the whole culture needs an enormous transformation; a deep

level, complete, total transformation.

The only reason I don't use the word "revolution" is because I like it too much, I feel it's seductive. It conjures all these great images of everyone getting out on the barricades and fighting in the streets and taking over. And I don't think we're going to have a revolution like that in this country. I don't think it will work or that it can work that way in this country.

At the same time, I also feel like it needs to happen very, very fast because we might not have a long term in which to work. So I don't know. I also feel like everything I think about is precluded with this "in parentheses" clause: "If there's no nuclear war before then." I mean, if there's no nuclear war, then the long term stuff I think we need to look at as happening over the next hundred years, the next two hundred years. It begins through making these bridges between the political and the spiritual, through building strong, small groups that can connect in larger networks and alliances. Along the way we do things that make us realize that we can be effective, whether they're small, whether they're ultimately effective or not.

WILL

Do they? I mean, I really think they're a smokescreen, they're a drain, they're TV politics, vicarious politics.

STARHAWK

I don't know. I mean, I can really understand that viewpoint. It's something I question, too. Are these things even worth doing? Are they effective? Are they just draining our energy from whatever the mysterious "real work" is that needs to be done?

But I also think there are ways of doing them in new ways. If you write the letter as a magical act. This is my spell, this is my connection with Ronald Reagan, this is my spell, this is my taking my own power to influence him in whatever way I can. I've done it in a large group of people and used it as a consciousness-raising tool.

Last year myself and a couple women in my coven and other people organized an anti-nuclear demonstration which we called the Three Mile Island Memorial Parade. And we did it as, in and of itself, a ritual, as street theater, as a celebration with the idea that whatever kind of effect

#### A BLESSING AND HEALING FOR JOHN WAYNE GACY

this is for you john gacy  
the cost is far too great.  
i'm sorry you murdered so many  
and i understand it all.  
every man you kill  
denies a faggot inside you  
--someone who loves men.  
gacy you never got to get too close.  
you show how much we pay  
to pass as normal men.  
the masquerade demands  
you even have to attend  
hetero pornographic films  
--it lets everyone know  
you aren't sensitive or sissy,  
like a woman might be, but tough  
john wayne gacy john wayne gacy.

oh johnny johnny  
your name is like a mantra.  
i wanta say Gay, SEE?  
john wayne, because you're gay! see?  
but it's not o.k. not o.k.  
don't let anybody or yourself know,  
it would cause too much trouble.  
people wouldn't like you & you wouldn't  
be popular in your neighborhood  
like you wanted so much.  
ah, jesus, everybody always thought you were so sweet  
the ladies and the local folks  
--the ward politicians figured  
you were one of themselves.  
you never got a chance got a chance  
to bring your softness  
out softness out softness  
out, john gacy, john wayne.  
in fact you had to hate it in yourself  
& twist it because it was perverse,  
hate it in the men you met too  
even to murder them.

oh john may the goddess bless you  
if only inside yourself.  
may self-hate & fear & hate of others  
drain through your feet to the earth  
as you stand accused, condemned.  
may there be friends for your comfort  
in this prison, may your bitterness end.  
if miracles be possible,  
may you die in the warm arms of the earth mother,  
peace at last, blessed be.

*Copyright 1979 by Alan Acacia  
(First appeared in M Magazine, Fall '79)*

it had on the broader political scene, it created in and of itself a tremendous feeling of community, created a lot of positive alliances among the people that took part in it.

It ended with a ritual that was very, very simple. It was just a chant, a spontaneous chant. But it gave all those five thousand people, although they may not have known exactly what was going on, it gave them a taste of what we're talking about when we're talking about something different, something that goes beyond mere politics.

WILL

Of course, it seems terribly important to let them know that we're still here and

we're resisting and that's why visibility is important. But in this political system where we're taught that the act of voting is participation --it's another case where people may change their politics but the voting consciousness is still there. They do one very simple thing. They attend a demonstration and hence they have engaged in political action.

STARHAWK

Well, I think that people whose only action is to write a letter or to attend a demonstration--if that letter wasn't there to write or that demonstration wasn't there to go to, that person would not be thinking about going underground or, "Oh, I have to take some responsibility myself."



"IN IDEOLOGICAL TERMS I WOULD CALL MYSELF AN ANARCHIST. I BELIEVE THERE'S NO GOVERNMENT LIKE NO GOVERNMENT."

They would just be doing nothing.

The person who's seriously committed on the level you are--simply you have to make your own choices, what's most effective, what's more valuable for you right now. And that person who makes that first step of going to a demonstration or writing a letter, that may be the first step that they take to getting more involved later. But they have to get involved on their own level first, they can't just jump into a complete change.

WILL

We could take any example. Take Cuba which has had a fairly successful Marxist revolution. But we still have the family. We still have oppression of various minority groups, etc. We have the same consciousness underpinning it all. The consciousness of objectification--I think that's the real key word, the objectifying process, which is behind rape, behind exploitation, behind the destruction of natural resources. We've got so many examples of partial changes, partial transformation, switching the furniture but the room is the same.

ALAN

I hear what you're saying and I agree with you. They're building a nuclear power plant in Cuba. And homosexuality is considered a bourgeois offense. Those things make me very angry. But at the same time I feel like I don't want to get into a thing of saying, "Either we make a perfect change or we make no change at all."

I really feel that in Cuba now there exists a basis for transforming the family. Women are challenging some of the sex roles. Besides working in factories they've got to bring up the children. You know, the man's only got one job, he works in a factory and he comes home and drinks beer. And the woman's got two jobs.

And maybe in thirty or forty years, because of the struggle of gay people and their allies within Cuba, in forty or fifty years from now there may be that transformation.

WILL

Can there be within the context of centralized government?

ALAN

Well, can there be within the context of a capitalist

government?

WILL

Both are cases of centralized authority with hierarchical governments. And I'm wondering if the transformation you talk about would still leave a Marxist state intact or if it would be something again entirely different.

STARHAWK

Yeah, I don't know. I think historically the patriarchal family originated as part of a whole constellation of state formation and this was very, very early, even in the Sumer, 3000 B.C. It arose with the formation of states, with centralization, with the appropriation of surpluses by whatever particular ruling classes, with the need of men to pass the private property on down to their sons.

A lot of complex theories go along with that, but I think particularly with the rise of militarism, because when you get militarism you get men and armies as the bases of power. For some reason, you rarely--even in places where women had great power--you rarely see women as the ones who get organized into armies. There's one scholar's theory that that's because men can be exploited more completely than women, because they don't have children hanging onto their skirts, more mobile that way.

If that's true, then that may mean that really what we're talking about is the decentralization of power. Which I think it is. I think it has to begin with building new models of organization.

ALAN

I would feel differently about this if we lived in an agrarian society. But I think it's important to realize that in the modern world we live in a highly industrialized, highly technological society that is not going to disappear. I believe that we shouldn't just let the coven of nuclear scientists build their nuclear power plant. I think we should control them. Or the coven of people who are doing PCBs and they want to dispose of it on their own land. I want there to be a central state that says, "No, you can't do that."

WILL

But we don't need the central state if we've reached a genuinely inner-directed and self-empowered state, in which we're conscious of the planet and of the earth and we can

foresee the consequences of this coven dumping its PCBs in another coven's backyard. Presumably it wouldn't even happen with a really conscious civilization.

STARHAWK

It's true. In a sense, that's why religion is more powerful than a state. Because if you have people who have all differing attitudes, differing theologies but the same broad overview, then certain problems just wouldn't seem to arise. There just wouldn't be any little coven that wanted to dump PCBs. That would be as deviant as, in our society, somebody who chopped up his neighbors and eats them for breakfast.

However, I think the point is that we don't have that state right now. We may be planting the seeds of that kind of vision, that kind of future. But in terms of dealing with the state, the technology, the world that we live in now, I tend to fall in with Alan that we do need that centralized government as a control over the interests of private capital and private property.

ALAN

Even though, as a matter of fact, it is employed against people like you and me.

STARHAWK

In absolute, ideological terms I would call myself an anarchist. I believe there's no government like no government.

WILL

We've talked about the power of sexuality as a source of resistance. But on the other side we can talk about the power of the dominant culture to co-opt things. We're seeing gay sexuality being co-opted already. Where people are alienated from the spiritual element of their sexuality and it's just a social thing, a badge, it's a button to wear, if you trick, how many times you did it, how much. It's pretty much typical male bragging and peer group stuff. It's really sad for people to be seeking something through this outlet and they don't know what they're seeking and they don't get it and they keep having to do it and do it.

STARHAWK

I think it also goes back to sexuality being something that's split off from the rest of life. Then it becomes the

only way of having closeness, of having connection. Men have been really conditioned to be machines, to be dead, to not feel a broader kind of eroticism in life.

It's interesting because I felt that I did pass through that stage when I was young enough that it was fun, like just fucking in and of itself was new and exciting and it was something to do. And having passed through that when I was seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, I've come around to being married now, monogamous, because that's the kind of relationship that Ed and I wanted, knowing we could have all sorts of other things and wanting it as a way of bringing that kind of intensity to our own relationship rather than scattering it around. But it's not like a feeling of, "Oh, I'm trapped. I can only do it with this person. What are all those other people out there like? What would that be like, what would this be like?" I feel like I went through it, fine, and I grew out of it. I learned to connect more emotionally with people just on all levels in my life.

WILL

I have only one last question. You mentioned in your book the idea of the "Shadow at the Gate." Mitch Walker in his book deals in the middle section extensively with that. Perhaps we could touch on it a little bit, because we're putting out an article to people who may be introduced to new ideas. It's groovy to be spiritual, to grow, to go inside yourself more. But there are other sides, too.

STARHAWK

Yeah. You go inside yourself and there's a lot of creepy, crawly shit running around inside there. That's why witchcraft generally happens in groups and in covens, because you need support for going inside and really encountering all that creepy, crawly shit and all those primal, nasty, whatever they are.

I think one of the useful descriptions of what can happen is in Doris Lessing's book, the Four-Gated City, where at the end she decides, "I'm going to just go inward." What she runs into is something she calls the Self-Hater and that is the first thing everybody runs into. The Self-Hater is all the voices in your head that jump on you, that say you're a bad person, you deserve to suffer, you don't deserve to get what you

want. It feeds off the energy of your own anger, your own aggression.

In some ways it's a nice self-enclosed system. The way it works is that all your anger and all your aggression self-creates and feeds this guardian that takes it and puts it back to you so you don't act it out, gunning down nursery school students on the streets.

But in general the way it works with people is that the Self-Hater becomes so huge that it sucks up more of your life energies than it deserves and it feeds them back in you and you end up feeling like a piece of shit all the time. Everything you try to defeat it with, it turns around and uses it against you.

But what happens ideally with a coven, with a group, with a good therapist who knows what they're doing, or with somebody who's training you in the Craft, is that you are helped to get in touch with some of the unlimited sources of energy like the earth, the spiritual stuff, the Goddess, and use that to defeat the Self-Hater.

When it's done, you transform the Shadow into the Guardian. It's not like the Self-Hater goes away, you remain with an internal structure that absorbs your anger and aggression. But instead of turning it inward and beating you and sticking you with it, it becomes the Guardian of it and you become the Guardian of it. It allows you to determine how you're going to take all that energy and turn it outward and where you're going to direct it outwards.

That's why I'm interested in working with people personally as well as politically.

WILL

Shall we ground our energy a little bit?

STARHAWK

Yeah. That's a good idea.

[Silence]

WILL

I feel very much that in this small room we've created a picture, a message, a telegram that's going to be sent out to the world.

[Silence]

STARHAWK

It felt very good to me. It felt like I have new ideas

and clearer ideas about some things than actually I did before we started talking.

[Silence]

ALAN

It's also felt real high-intensity and I'm glad that we're holding hands a little bit. I would really like to all go out to the beach and just hang out sometime.

WILL

Perhaps we can all get together sometime out at our place. I live right next to the beach.

STARHAWK

Oh, how nice.

ALAN

And she could bring her dogs and we can go out and do dog stuff.

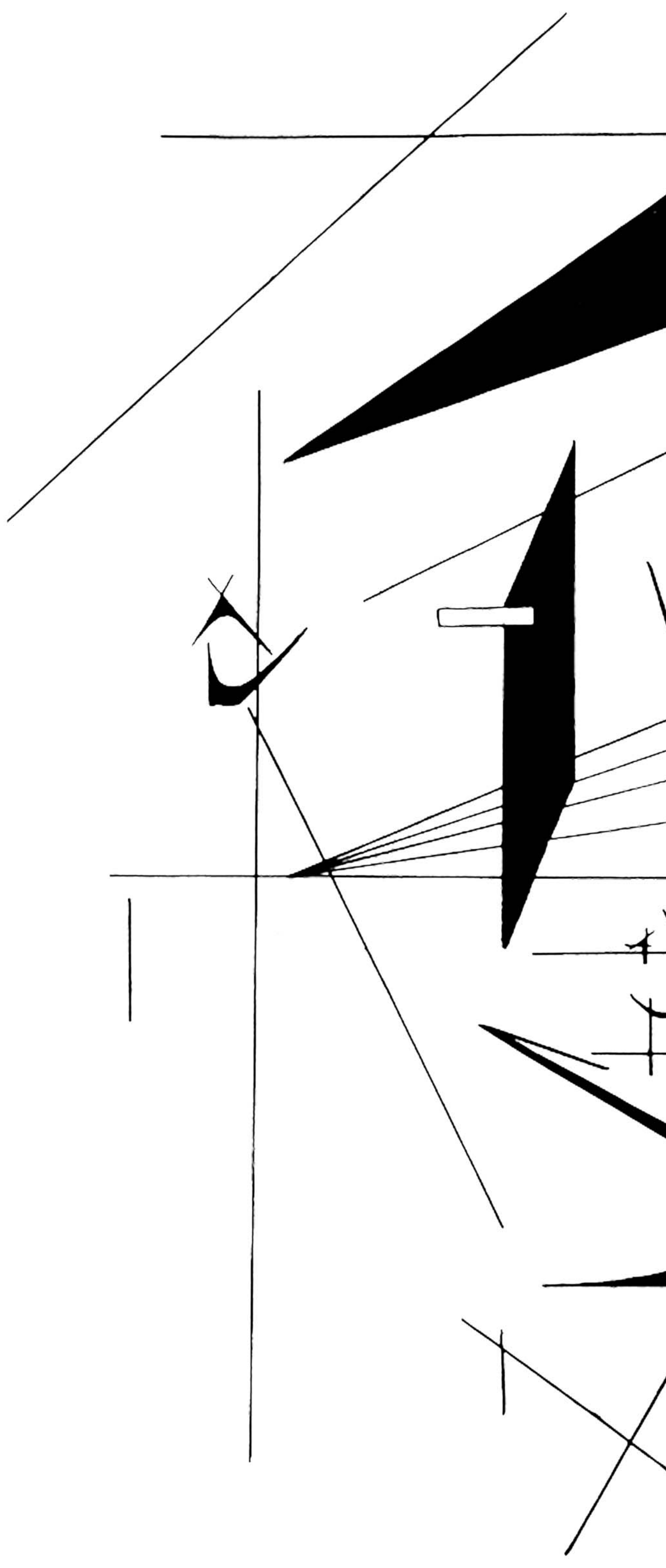
[Laughter]

Well, let's do a kiss...



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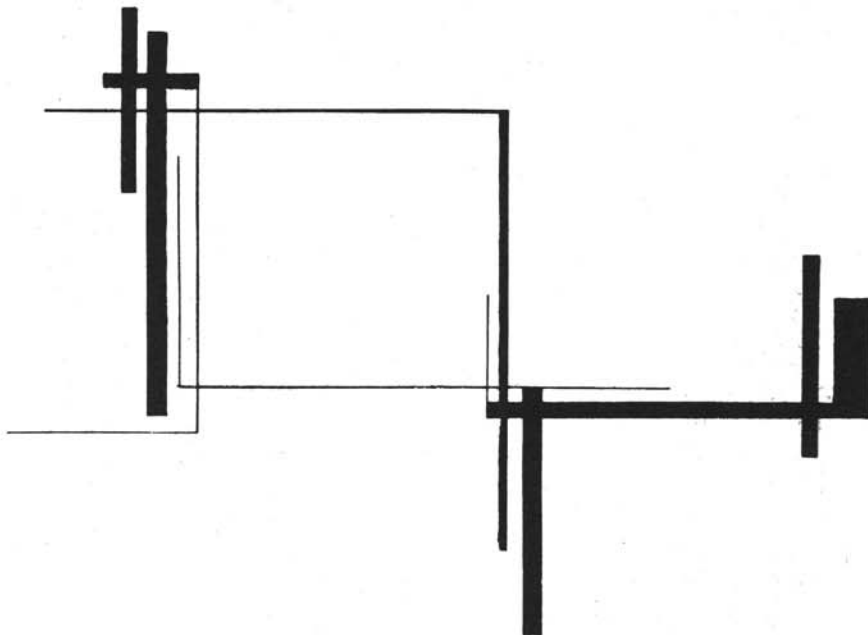


*"Self Portrait" by Leslie Aguilar, 1981*

# LESLIE AGUILAR: Portfolio

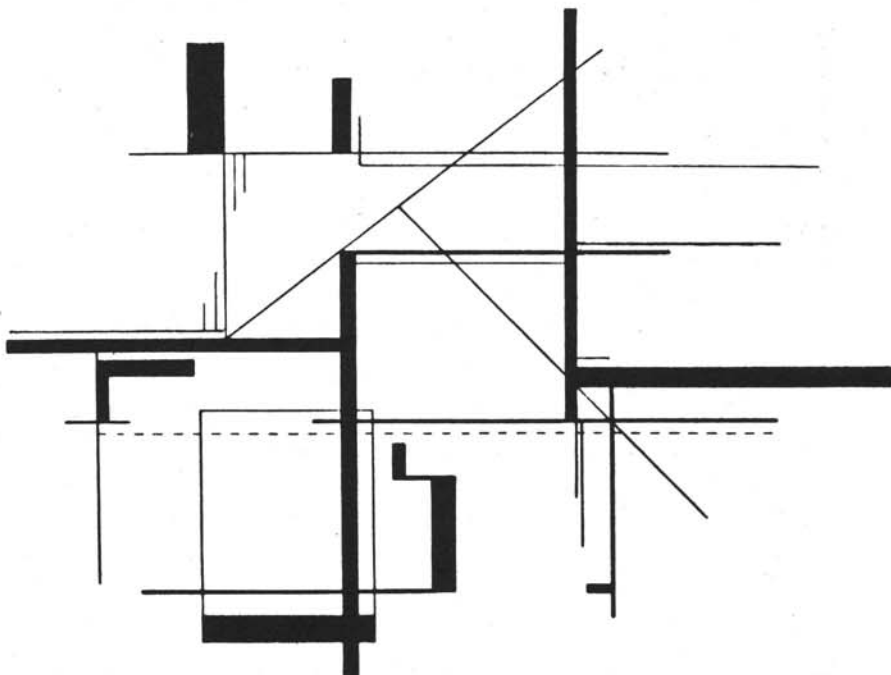
Leslie Aguilar, 23. After teaching macrame in Los Angeles for two years he came to San Francisco and worked out these calligraphic pieces. His style ranges from the calculated abstractions represented here to spontaneous "organics" with colorful, free flowing forms and lines. Leslie has returned to LA and is planning works in macrame, dance, and sculpture.

"What I do on my calligraphy pieces like David, is take each letter and then just put them one by one on top of each other. And then I abstract the letter in different ways, like I would either turn it upside down or sideways or something like that. The only name I've done is 'David' and that was an architectural friend of mine...I was really happy when he got a professorship he wanted and so I just took his name and I put it down and the calligraphy came."



*David*  
— ink and gouache —  
23" x 31"

"The stuff shown, most of the contemporary stuff from the sixties and seventies--there weren't too many people who did designs or drawings that fascinated me. There are those that look nice...but yet I can see something like Kandinsky and just sit there and really start spacing into the whole thing. I connect with Kandinsky."



*Cafe Flore*  
— ink and gouache —  
20½" x 29"

About the Bauhaus: "Their whole design, their line works, that fascinates me. And I didn't really find out about them until two months after my first show, when I was doing Courtship, David, Hello and then I found out about the Bauhaus. I was already doing works like Mondrian and I didn't really know where it came from or who it came from. I'm sure I had seen it some place in books but I had never really recognized it. So I just kept doing more and more study and the more and more I found out about their theories, about their design, it was the same thing I had put in my ledger on my first show on what I was trying to do with the calligraphy. It turns out I read this over and over again. The same thing with Neoplasticism and the De Stijl group --they were all similar in their theories. But the Bauhaus was the first one who finally took the whole thing and made it for industrial use."



Photo: Copyright 1980 by Liz Marshall

# STATEMENT & Other Writings

## Dennis Miles

### STATEMENT

I overheard someone say once, I am no gentleman, but I am a gentle man. It was stored. I went to a Spiritual Conference for Radical Fairies, and found myself to be a fairy-not-a-fairy. Not sufficiently radical, not spiritual at all. That gathering allowed me to look at my self in a new way. Its gifts to me are invaluable. I just needed to find a way to put all that knowledge into a portable container so that I could have it with me at all times. Queer and homosexual, sissy and faggot, those words in themselves were lovely, but had been assigned to me, had connotations rooted in pain. I knew I wasn't a man. Gay was out of the question, what with its implications of hip political involvement, assimilation and Clonesdale insignificances. I needed to find an identity through a word other than the existing ones. One that, among other things, would go beyond my sexuality. I thought of inventing a word, but couldn't find the right combination of letters. Then someone mentioned Sally Miller Gearhart's book *The Wanderground*, in which she speaks of a clan of gentles. Without reading the book, I knew this was what I was looking for. Gentle is the word I use to house my identity. I am a gentle. Thus I define my self. A world was not given me. I was not of a world. I, as an outsider, thought I had to infiltrate into the world of those who seemed to have one. The insiders would not let me in. I thought fulfillment was to be found in their midst. I In the struggle and the cunning that I used to find a way in, observation took place. I would venture so far, only to be rejected. I would step in on my own, horrified. I was ostracized and I ostracized my self. I could not change and I didn't want to change. I couldn't be one of them and I didn't want to be one of them. I saw my penis dangling between my thighs and realized that it didn't have to be a procreation device. I experienced emotions I was not supposed to feel. Like suddenly I wanted to cry, or sometimes I would want to flutter down a hallway. Often I wished to be child-like, jump or dance, skip on the way to school, or simply, too frequently, loving the wrong kind of men: others like me only in appearance. Eventually, painfully late, I realized that though they looked like me, I was not like them. Fluctuating between loneliness and despair, I received

the message: I was not supposed to be. I was a freak of nature, outcast of god from a chance at the good life. I was worse than a criminal, I was a crime. Lurking on the edges for their approval, approval I could only get if I were to be good, if I acted in accordance to their rules. Acting, I've been a good actor. I can pass. All on the outside. But here, below the appearance, here where it counts, here where I live, here, I cannot lie. I invented the lies and thus knew those words, those actions were false. Retreated into my self. On the defensive for the certain onslaught of their derisiveness. Learnt to measure their moves and mine. Found my self a coward, so I hid. Gave up the attempt to join them. I did not choose gentleness over heterosexuality. Me, I am innately one of those. And yet, only one of me. I joined me. Some need to be a part of a group led me astray for years, and now, I see the waste. My past spent rehearsing so that I would conform to a desperate disconnection from my self. I am not better than they, I am richer in nuance. I refined my feelings while I tried to seduce them into letting me in. Most of the ones I've met I surpass in the intensity and close examination of suffering. I, I, not all homosexuals. I had to question my right to be here. I had to examine everything anew, build my reality from nothing. Fit the world to my needs. No existing rules apply. Make my own -ness. Ah, always in fear. Within great strength--great weakness. Knowing that I know nothing. That I am lost as they are, but that they have the power of their majority to back up their ignorance. I am thus, at their mercy. That I have to beware for they can kill me and I don't yet want to die. Wanting to scream softly, we're in this together, listen, perhaps, maybe, who knows, who knows, maybe we can help one another, you know. We are all deviants because there is no mean. Self-righteousness is self-deception. There are no rights or wrongs but self-created rights and wrongs.

My journey, though resembling that of others, is defined by my circumstances, my experience, my specialized microscope of an eye. I find myself cataloguing what I feel. Writing has been the filter through which I sift the heartbreak and the joy, the cruelty. I don't think I would be a writer if I were

not a gentle. Earlier, I envisioned myself as an airline pilot. Since I simply must write, I have a without-choice obligation to illumine my experience by sharing of myself, not as a man, but as a male who is a gentle, not as a poet, but as a writer who is a gentle, not as a human being, but as a person who is a gentle, not as someone who pretends to understand life through a patriarchal heterosexual viewpoint, but as one whose vantage point is that of a gentle. Being who I am involves a cold war between my self and the others. Actual war may happen any moment. Fortifications that are built within isolation while being held in siege by society, are frail. The most inoffensive act may be seen as a wanton defiance of their power. Learning to live with paranoia. Paranoia based on a history of nondecisive battles. I do not know why my sexual identity is so basic to my self. I do know that it goes beyond my genitals, that it affects who I am. It is my relationship with it as a gentle that has created the greatest closeness, to my self, and the greatest separation, from the worlds outside of me. When I write, it is a gentle who writes. I am seldom far away from my identity.

I was born in Cuba in 1952, came to the U.S. in 1967. English is thus my second language. I dare term my scribblings artistic. Therein my great presumption. I often turn a nice phrase, I have a commitment to writing, that is, I write five nights a week from after midnight to about two. How dare I presume that I am an artist. Who am I anyway. How dare I think that I've anything to say, that anyone will want to hear me, that what I write aren't merely the pothooks of one more self-deluded creature living somewhere in the lower depths of Southern California. And I cannot answer, except, except, that it comes to me, at night, after midnight my mind fills with words that force themselves on paper, words that create shapes that deeply, gravely and importantly touch and satisfy me. That I associate my meaning to art, to writing. That were I not a writer and still be who I am, I would have decided on suicide as the alternative to life as I have experienced it. I believe in rhythms and my allusions, my images and my power to create emotions. And I do not--. I believe that I set out to capture life, my past or some aspect of my experience, and I believe that I fail. Poetry,

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it's so obtuse and corny, anyway, and everyone writes it when depressed or in love, and one can't make any money on it, so why not become a copywriter/journalist, to prove really if I have any talent--. But writing is my meaning. --Writing as a meaning scheme. Dangerous undertaking. I will continue to write for so long as I can make sense of the world in my survival sessions with the pencil and the paper and the ideas. Sporadically I combine form, syntax, sense and

content, cadence and style to create in myself, sometimes in others, an emotion. That is, my words, as filtered by my psyche and reshaped by my conscious mind, can elicit an electrochemical reaction in the brain that can sometimes re-invent an emotion, redefine one, bring an emotion to the fore, touch a range of them. Ambivalence and regret, disgust or boredom, depression, insight, anger. More importantly, sometimes some un-identifiable emotions can be stirred within me by my

writing. Verlaine has done that for me, as has Sexton. The reward is in being made to feel within the boundaries of intellect. When intensity occurs, when my emotions are on the surface and the core of my being, I am most alive. I want to enrich by intensity. Art in general, for me, and literature specifically, can constrain life from spilling into chaos, except, of course, when it can't, when it hasn't.

October 1979

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Graphic by Paul E. Brown

#### THIS PLANE

I, shiny on the side, turn a quarter turn, blink my hands, close my head, this trip has the remotest feeling of having been undertaken some other day, a day in the future when it rained, I actually cried on the page, and that thrilling story on queer bashing was left unread, pardon me, sir, are you homophobic, do you have a secret longing to be in my arms, I am not absent really, I've been here all along instead, it is just summer bustle or winter daze, forgive my hands aflutter, but it is just unearthly to be this merry once again, no need, I know the time without looking at the sky, without hearing church bells, so really, who cares if I got on the wrong plane, if I feel that I've died, if everybody once told me not to sulk, not to pity my self, it is all right, I now bemoan my past, and I don't mean just yesterday, I have never enjoyed being in love, it has never been wonderful, but I do tend to exaggerate and never's such a long time, one of these days I'll really stop and stop hating my self, travels are such a bother, the luggage and the tickets, the change of

time, the fear of losing all your travelers checks, I simply won't budge, feeling this dead, my stomach emptied on take-off, and if I read, I read about the theater, no need to follow, Christ, he really fucked my head, what is this noise, this trembling noise, and all these people acting as if I wasn't sitting in their midst, it is me, you know, it is my I who's sitting here, o sir, pardon me, again, please let me love you in public, a kiss could mean so much if you'd allow it in a church, no thanks, enough, I sing, but it is only to forget, some people drink or kill themselves, I sing instead, my address book is filled with people that I don't care to call, they're, none of them, lonely enough, and I seek to find others who are estranged from life as I, anyone else must call me instead, I scream, but it is all a show, there are no emotions that are real at all, we just confuse the pain with words, so that is why I speak and never hurt, and never is such a long time and I do tend to exaggerate, relief, if my head aches, I brush my hair and I sleep soundly, I've been to places you would not believe, some in fancy, you understand, I

am not crazy, it is just life, you know, it gets to twirl and to rage, silence is nice so I like silence, I can't remember his name now, he was too confused, couldn't tell me that he too had been cut up by a rejection, it isn't as if I weren't pretty, it is just that when in vulnerable predicaments my self-concept drops to my soles and I tend to think I am as plain as they, but never mind, to hell, I smile lots and it is not to hide a darker side, it's just that I have learnt, I've learnt to surpass my absence from the stage, because, yes, I work before the scenes, in front of, I'm a director really, a choreographer, and always a musician in the pit, the clarinet, such a swift sound I make, repent, relent, ascend, I'm headed up, the revolution has reached town, soldiers in pink, impractically dressed in lavender, the ballet, I should have been a dancer or a chef, I like my steaks rare and my legs, I jump, I fly almost, am off the ground, I travel far, I've been to places you would not believe, I sit amongst you like a wraith, but I exist, I do, my blood is pounding and this plane, this plane.

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THE BED IS WIDE

One I used to sleep with strangers finding no solace in their arms

Two A stranger stayed with me for more than one night.

Three I loved him till my jaw unhinged and fell off

Four He left me for someone who had a functional mouth

Five I found a stranded man

Six I took him in

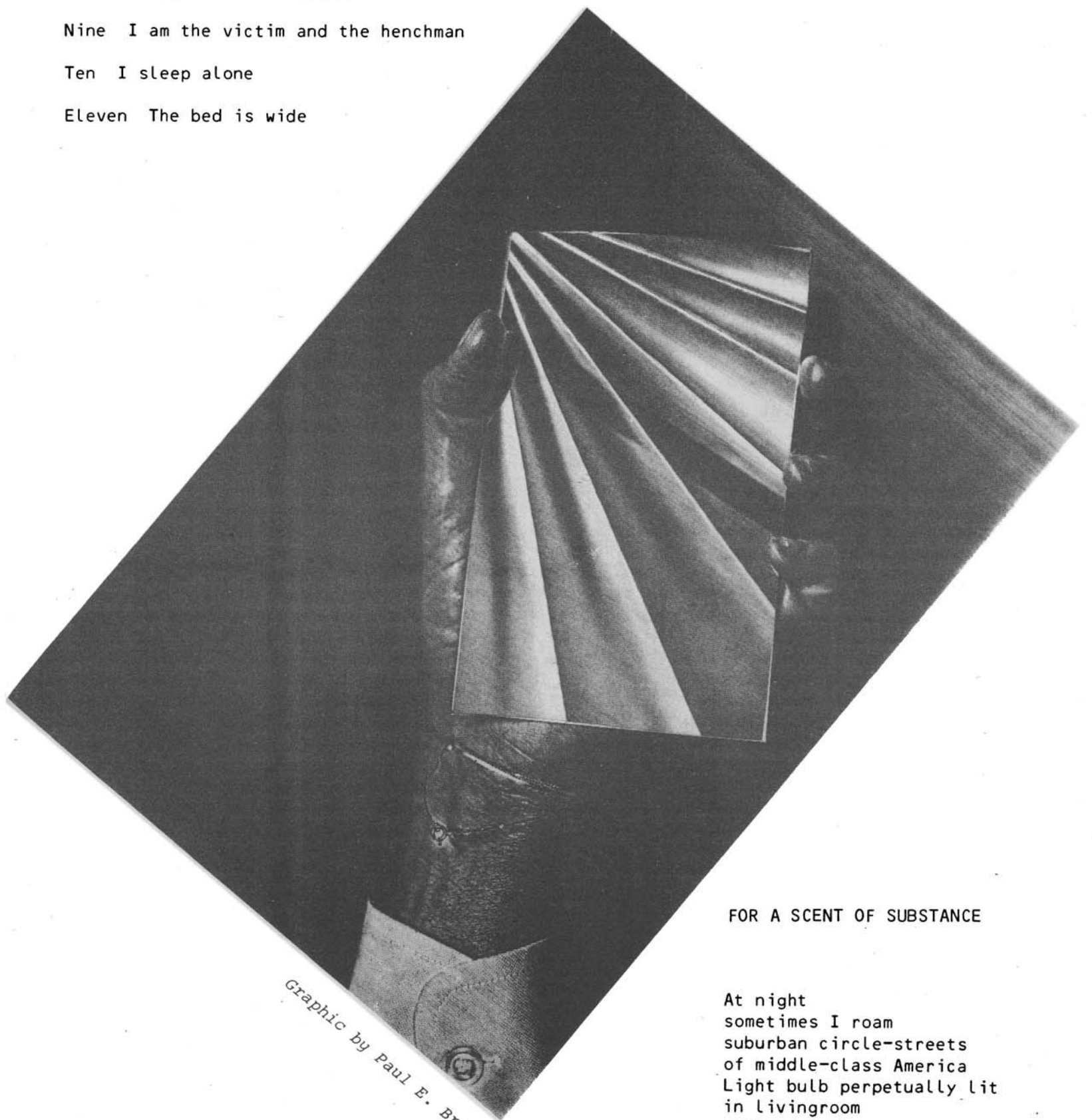
Seven He ate corn pellets out of my open palm

Eight I put him back outside

Nine I am the victim and the henchman

Ten I sleep alone

Eleven The bed is wide



*Graphic by Paul E. Brown*

FOR A SCENT OF SUBSTANCE

At night  
sometimes I roam  
suburban circle-streets  
of middle-class America  
Light bulb perpetually lit  
in livingroom  
screwed in lamp  
switch one-two-three  
increasing brightness  
from behind lamp shade  
covered with plastic protector  
still behind a padded  
no-iron curtain  
A faint glow to hit m' eye  
and set m' mind on fire  
Fire  
I'd scream  
yet though instead  
I tread the lawns  
lush carpet grass-dichondra  
and smell the garbage  
for a scent of substance

# MAINSTREAM EXILES: A DOCUMENTARY REVIEW

Tede Matthews and Will Roscoe

PEOPLE CRAM THE SMALL, DARKENED STOREFRONT FROM WALL TO WALL. PEOPLE SITTING AND STANDING, LAUGHING, NODDING, CRYING, BREATHING AND SWEATING TOGETHER, HEADS STRAINING TO SEE AHEAD. AN UNASSUMING, short haired woman stands at the front and begins to read: "Love rode 1500 miles on a greyhound bus and climbed in my window one night to surprise both of us." And the audience breaks into a roar of laughter, laughter and applause interrupting the evening's program again and again.

The scene is a small performance space called Valencia Tool and Die in San Francisco's Mission District, early November 1980. With the bars of Castro a few blocks to the west and the city's most popular women's disco down the street, the storefront was the site of another kind of gay "scene."

"Mainstream Exiles: A Lesbian and Gay Men's Cultural Festival" showcased over 40 artists and performers in eight separate events over six days, November 4-9. And if there was any doubt that gay culture exists that isn't imitative of mainstream culture (like the gay choruses and marching bands), Mainstream Exiles put it to rest with night after night (and afternoon) of gay and lesbian visual art, poetry, performers, singers, groups, comedy, theater, film, and media.

With subjects like coming out, homophobia, sexism, and racism, violence and rape, personal growth and relationships--with humor, tears, and anger--this wasn't the kind of gay culture that bar crowds flock to or that the straight media fawns over. It was too "real" for that. It was about our lives.

And that may be the major contribution of Mainstream Exiles. By bringing together so many artists, from every sort of background, the existence of culture based on the values of lesbians and gay men became a sudden reality for the hundreds who attended.

Perhaps it was the physical closeness of the storefront space--or perhaps it was something more abstract like "community"--but the audience responded with more than warm enthusiasm. Throughout the week one could hear words like "moving," "inspiring," "unity," "community feeling," and "let's have more!"

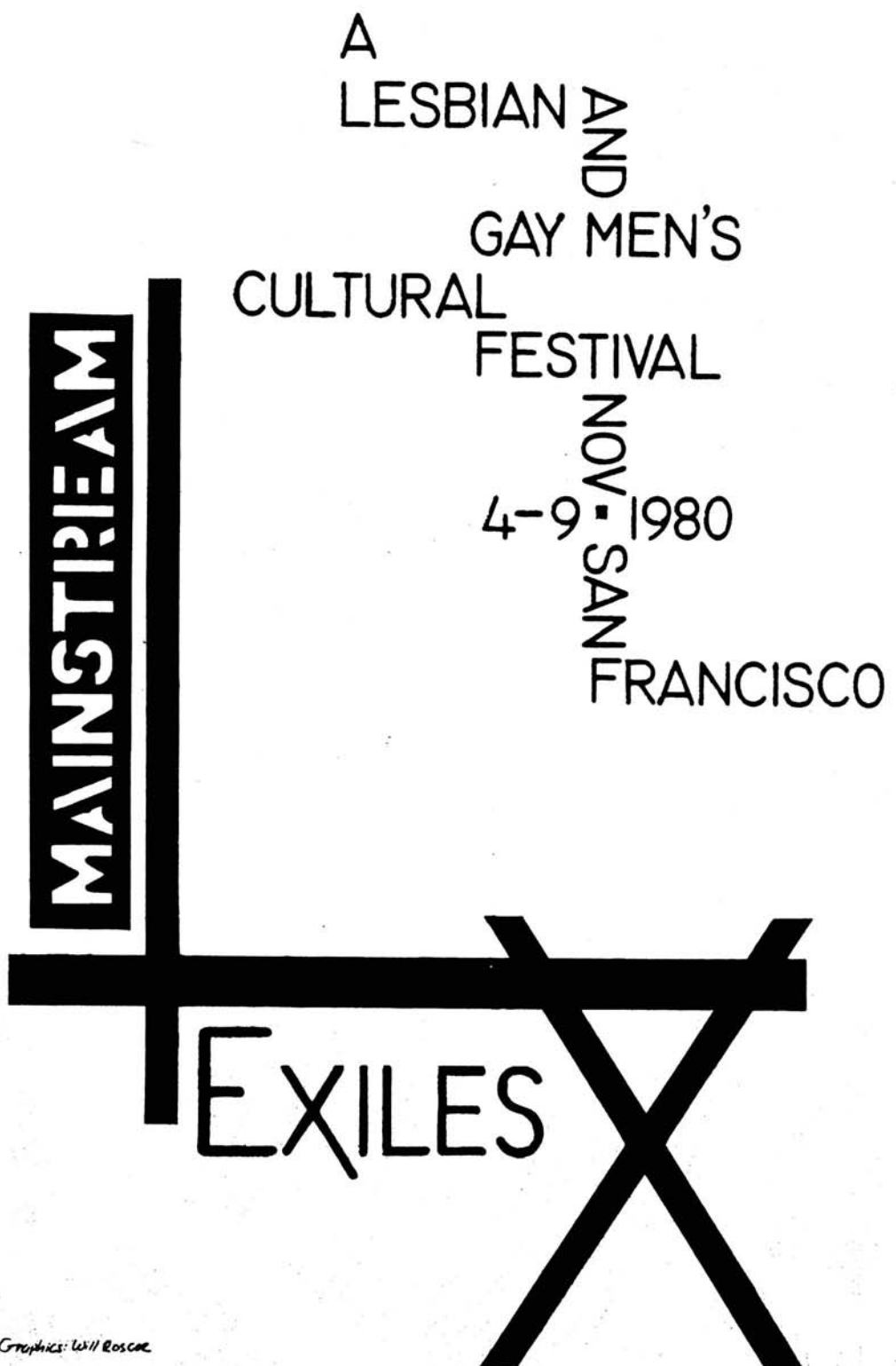
It was the power of

seeing the feelings and emotions most central to your own life--so long ignored and degraded by the dominant society--now celebrated and depicted in all their diversity and vitality, then realizing that the other people in the audience are sharing those experiences with you.

Perhaps the most unexpected side-effect of Mainstream Exiles was how the festival promoted new understanding and unity between men and women. The carefully balanced programs of lesbian, gay men, and gay third world people provided an opportunity for gay people from different backgrounds to learn something about each other. If the results of Mainstream Exiles are any indication, future organizers would do well to consider the power of culture to create unity and inspire action.

When a mainstream cultural institution wants to create an "historical art event" they have the newspapers, televisions, universities, art galleries, and professional staff to rely on. Too often those of us involved in alternative culture do not fully appreciate our own milestones and historic achievements, in the absence of the critics and art historians. VORTEX presents this in-depth coverage of Mainstream Exiles as both a documentary and a resources directory of Bay Area artists and performers in the gay and women's communities. Our hope is to demonstrate to all who will see that our culture is fast becoming a major source of alternative, non-sexist, and catalytic visions for American society today.

We extend special thanks to everyone who helped and participated in Mainstream Exiles, especially the artists contributing material for this article. The poems and illustrations that follow were all presented at the actual festival.



Graphics: Will Roscoe

"LEONIE--YOUR HARVEY MILK PAINTING IS GREAT. I LOVE THE CORNER WITH THE DOG. IT MAKES ME REMEMBER HIM AS A PERSON!"

TUE

4

GALLERY OPENING

WHAT IS GAY ART? The question itself reveals the obstacles gay and lesbian artists face in gaining recognition for their work. We see so little of openly

gay art in openly gay settings that such a question--with its condescending overtones is possible, in fact, common.

It is a totally political issue. Many, from the gay rights assimilationists to doctrinaire leftists question the very idea of "gay culture". What materialist or social factors would support such a concept?

Then, there's the other question, posed by the establishment art world: What is "political art"? The implication here is that political art is always depersonalized and, ultimately, boring.

Against this backdrop, lesbian and gay male artists, often in isolation, have ventured forth, experimenting with form and content to transcend mainstream dichotomies of individual vs. collective, political vs. personal, and spiritual vs. material. The Mainstream Exiles gallery exhibit of five artists provided a glimpse at the progress of these artistic innovations and offered insight into both questions about political and gay art.

Kim Anno's series of six paintings, "Struggle", represents a sequence of highly personal imagery projected to a scale that suggests underlying socio-political themes. The paintings depict a young woman in an epic struggle with a huge, raven-like bird. The size and expressionistic rendering (a little like DeKooning) spark the viewer's own personal myths and images for an empathic response to the paintings.

Bill Jacobson takes a more objective approach to myths that are equally personal, underscoring their cultural roots. His series of nine photographs, the "Skinny Boys", reproduce 1950 muscle men photos captioned by a short narrative broken into phrases that accompany each picture. It ends, "I used to worry about being skinny. Now I don't worry anymore."

While Bill's approach is through realism and Kim is more abstract and expressionist, both project myths as a way of gaining control of their influence. The other three artists have equally personal styles while working with more specifically political subjects.

Beth Rose, for example, presented four gouache and paper drawings entitled "Kitchen Quartet", depicting scenes from her work place in the restaurant business. Beth has been active in union organizing in San Francisco.

Leonie Guyer showed her large oil canvas, "Elegy for Harvey Milk", with scenes and images of Harvey's life. After working for several years in an abstract vein, Leonie has turned to more documentary styles to portray political subjects. Her work connects with both a tradition of social realism and with the documentary techniques of the more abstract work of Larry Rivers.

Will Roscoe's paper collage murals are also documentary. But more than just making a political statement, the approach is to bring together graphically a variety of informa-

Continued next page



I used to worry about being skinny.

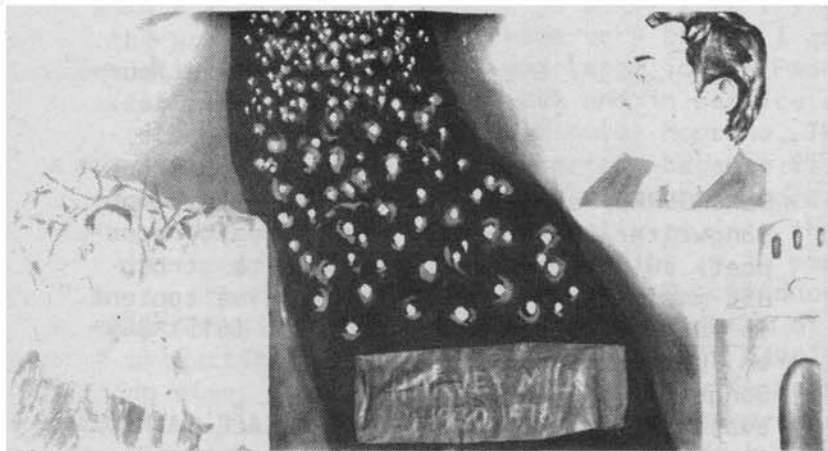
"Skinny Boys", Bill Jacobson, 1980



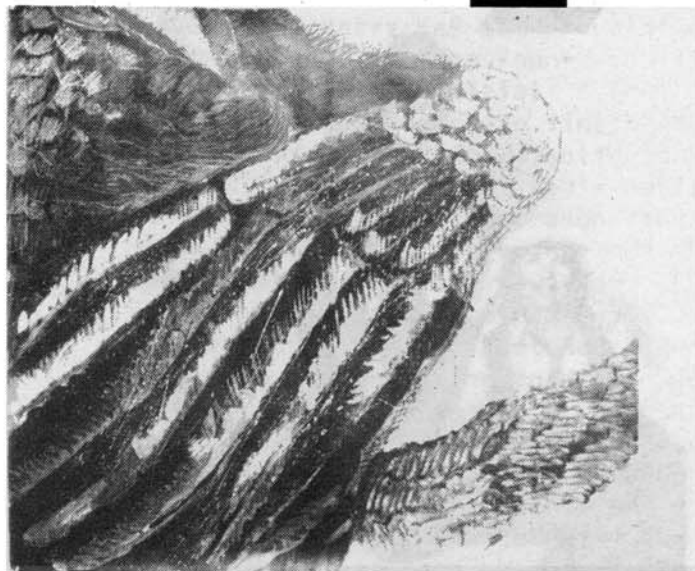
"Kitchen Quartet", Beth Rose, 1980



"Jonestown", Will Roscoe, 1979



"Elegy for Harvey Milk", Leonie Guyer, 1980



"Struggle", Kim Anno, 1980

Photos on this page: Bill Jacobson

tion to encourage active thought. "Jonestown", for example, includes scores of headlines and articles relating to the incident so that the collage may be "read" as well as "viewed".

With such a diversity of styles we have to look beyond surface features to find the links between this artwork. What these five have in common is their attitude towards art. Whether it is Kim's expressive paintings or Beth's scenes of her workplace, these artists base their work on experiences and issues in their own lives and they use the create process to transform themselves and to challenge social conditions.

So while mainstream art critics gleefully hail the death of political art, these artists continue to develop art that can play a catalytic role in society.

Kandinsky, in the early part of this century, identified this desire to transform and change through art as being ultimately spiritual in nature. Ashe wrote, "The artist must have something to say, for mastery over form is not his goal but rather the adapting of form to its inner meaning."

Perhaps the flowering of gay arts today reflects a new appreciation--or need--for the individualistic, transforming powers of art. In the past, artists have played key roles in political movements--in revolutionary Russia and Weimar Germany, for example. Artists have to offer not only a powerful means of communication, they can also project actual visions of what a non-sexist, non-racist, non-hierarchical consciousness might be like. And in today's political climate, such visions can be a much needed wellspring of inspiration and strength.

LEONIE GUYER, painter and a daughter of a painter; an activist of the left bent. CONTACT: % Mainstream Exiles.

WILL ROSCOE, graphic artist combining words and images in mural size collages. CONTACT: % Vortex.

BETH ROSE, student in art philosophy, artist, union organizer. CONTACT: % Mainstream Exiles.

KIM ANNO, painter, print-maker, performance artist, "art and politics from an emotional standpoint." CONTACT: 988 Valencia, SF 94110.

BILL JACOBSON, artist, photographer.

WED

5

**BENEFIT FOR BLACK LESBIAN CONFERENCE**

TAKE THIS POEM

It is a poem  
of light

eat it with  
your eyes

digest it with  
your heart

This is a light poem  
filled with fire  
to bring warmth  
in the mist of cold

Wrap yourself  
in its words  
they will give you peace  
and assurance

This poem  
will enable  
you to see  
the joy you've given  
me  
it shines  
I shine

It wants  
to take you  
in

Take this poem  
Filled full  
bright  
joyful

Keep it near  
and it will  
speak  
and you will  
understand  
why  
I sent you a poem  
filled with light

Keep it near  
it will dry  
your tears  
it will speak  
to you  
and kindle the  
burning in your soul

I and this poem  
are one

Let this poem  
enter you  
surrender, surrender  
the poem and the fire  
are the same  
and I send it to you

Copyright 1978 by Blackberr



SWINGSHIFT

BLACKBERRI, singer, songwriter, musician, poet, cultural worker. His music was in Word is Out and he sings on "Walls to Roses--Songs of Changing Men" available from Folkways. His new album will be out in April. CONTACT: (415) 282-3814.

SWINGSHIFT, a four-piece women's jazz group with music ranging from R & B to a capella harmonies; "really good music with strong progressive content." CONTACT: (415) 849-4087.

INNER PEACE RAINBOW, an Oakland-based two piece improvisational women's jazz band.





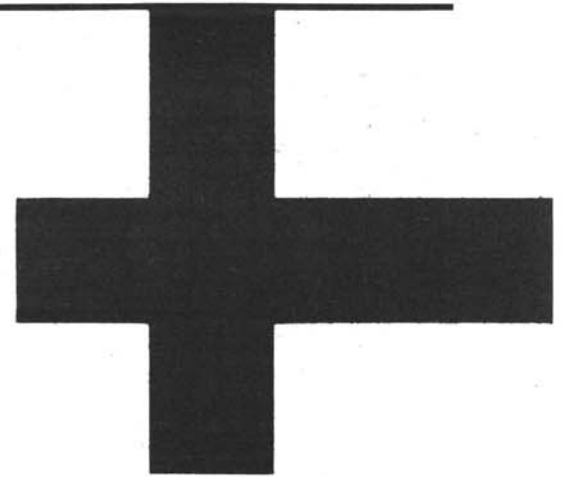
"WE MUST MAKE OUR OWN STREAM, A RIVER, AN OCEAN, A CRY OF LOVE,  
A SCREAM OF FREEDOM. THIS IS A WONDERFUL SHOW, LET IT NOT BE  
THE LAST!"



POETRY I

EMMANUEL RO, poet,  
currently in India to  
study tantric poetry;  
Antares, Lover John,  
Tumbleweed. CONTACT:  
625 Post St., SF 94109.

STEVE ABBOTT, editor  
of Soup magazine, co-  
editor of Poetry  
Flash; Stretching the  
Agape Bra.



OLIVE ANGEL  
(Excerpt from "Lover John")

Twilight carves the relief of a breast  
formless floating tentacles of powdered  
dark angel hair and in a while  
the leopard leaps then pauses with retractable claws  
while hills darken into grape fermenting sky

eros bows low and whispers--  
whatever you do you do for me. curl your hair  
walk along the highway  
but some bells in your sleeves  
you could walk forever while the cliff  
reddens and says nothing.  
Powder a knife before the kill  
you do it only for me

mirrors appear and lengthen  
cicadas say angelus from a tree with bell shaped  
fruits that ring  
other bells and streets steepen into a canyon  
vanish behind buildings where the sky  
tends a fire that might be hell

Spirit the hitchhiker looms on the highway  
and you let him in  
before asking for its gender

smiles like certain hermaphroditic nouns  
bilingual vendor of roses  
Twilight again I take up my pen  
the sea gotten smaller I walk out and scoop up  
from a tidepool a seaweed colored shell  
behind me a highrise reclines  
drivers squint at the halfdark crossing interesections  
their eyes were like those before creation  
when somewhere between interlocking brows it rose  
before fission before form enslaved art. Twilight rebels  
Rex stands free

He is the angel wearing wig and mascara in a  
parking lot. He stands up shrugs his olive shoulders  
powdered with pulverized rock  
--what's your name sweetie?--he asks  
--it doesn't matter what did you say you do in bed  
I'm versatile honey  
he stands at the foot of the bed, waiting  
and outside it is twilight.

Copyright 1981 by Emanuel Ro

KAREN BRODINE, poet,  
teacher, socialist  
feminist, Women Wri-  
ters Union, Radical  
Women; Illegal Assem-  
bly by Hanging Loose  
Press. CONTACT: 2661  
21st St., SF 94110.

RANDY JOHNSON, per-  
forming poet, colla-  
gist, lyricist; This  
is for Mr. Pittsen-  
burne, Bank of Ameri-  
ca Blues. CONTACT:  
161 Hartford, SF 94114.

CHERRIE MORAGA-LAW-  
RENCE, now living in  
Boston, a poet and  
activist, co-editor  
of This Bridge Called  
My Back, anthology of  
third world women.

AMBER HOLLIBAUGH,  
activist, writer,  
member of Lesbian and  
Gay History Project.  
Together with Cherrie  
she presented A Sexual  
Conversation, soon to  
be published.

the love took root  
deep in the teeth of centuries  
in spite of themselves  
illegal lips multiplied

a new country fell in love with fear  
flames fell in love with flesh  
you might say  
we've a gift for burning  
you might say  
we've a talent for surviving  
ashes say  
they've a NEED for arising

an extinct throat  
throttles the silence  
its anger eats the air

down the line  
a legacy of lies  
and electric eels pressed to the temples

in the end  
we give birth  
to ourselves

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"I WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH MAINSTREAM EXILES WHEN YOU DO ANOTHER SHOW. I AM SO INSPIRED BY THIS FEELING OF COMMUNITY. HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED THAT WITH MEN BEFORE."



**POETRY II**

My name is Judith, meaning  
She Who Is Praised  
I do not want to be called praised  
I want to be called The Power of Love.

if Love means protect then whenever I do not defend you  
I cannot call my name Love.  
if Love means rebirth then when I see us dead on our feet  
I cannot call my name Love.  
if Love means provide & I cannot provide for you  
why would you call my name Love?

do not mistake my breasts  
for mounds of potatoes  
or my belly for a great roast duck.  
do not take my lips for a streak of luck  
nor my neck for an applétree,  
do not believe my eyes are a warm swarm of bees;  
do not get Love mixed up with me.

Don't misunderstand my hands  
for a church with a steeple,  
open the fingers & out come the people;  
nor take my feet to be acres of solid brown earth,  
or anything else of infinite worth  
to you, my brawny turtledove;  
do not get me mixed up with Love.

not until we have ground we call our own  
to stand on  
& weapons of our own in hand  
& some kind of friends around us  
will anyone ever call our name Love,  
& then when we do we will all call ourselves  
grand, muscley names:  
the Protection of Love,  
the Provision of Love & the  
Power of Love.  
until then, my sweethearts,  
let us speak simply of  
romance, which is so much  
easier and so much less  
than any of us deserve.

*From The Work of a Common Woman,  
Copyright 1978 by Judy Grahn*

"Have you been plagued by waxy yellow buildup? Food stains? Or the feeling you just don't belong? My family had."

"Until I discovered the new Proctor and Gamble product, ASSIMILATE, the all-purpose cleaner for the whole family!"

"ASSIMILATE is safe... effective...and easy-to-use."

"Safe...because it's been certified by Bess Myerson and the Bureau of Indian Affairs."

"Effective...because where these other methods, like WHITE KING and EQUALITY leave off...ASSIMILATE works every time!"

"Just pour a few granules

onto your husband's dirty collar...or into your child's breakfast bowl...Sprinkle freely into your diet...accent ...or culture...and you'd be amazed to see how fast it works!"

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**THE MISERABLE HOMOSEXUAL HOUR**

To all the righteous believers here in our studio audience, and to you happy families out there in t.v. land, we bring you America's favorite family hour: The Miserable Homosexual, where each and every week you will see true case studies, the heartfelt confessions of misguided youth, those, who in vain attempts of adolescent rebellion, turned their backs on our lord and trod the wayward path;

We do not hate the homosexual, rather we look upon him with compassion and pity,

two emotions which constitute the very backbone of our faith;

They pretend to be everyday people, just like you and me, but let not the wolf in sheep's clothing fool you for they carry the devil on their back, Satan, Beelzebub, Lucifer, they are his lovers, on Halloween they behave like she-wolves, howling like screaming banshees, they wallow in their Babylonian delights, these unclean, these sodomites;

Through our Christian World family counselling service, many homosexuals have been able to reform, cast Satan out from their hearts, and lead normal, productive lives in the brotherhood of Christ Jesus, the only man i'll ever love, the only man i'll get on my knees for;

Yes, Brethren, i am with the Moral Majority, and we are the Nuclear Family Network, bringing you the Miserable Homosexual Hour, and we are joined together, and we are baptized clean in his precious blood, and we are born again through his suffering, AND WE ARE ASKING FOR IT!

*Copyright 1980 by Tede Matthews*

past any longer! You too can bake moister cakes! Have the freshest breath and whitest smile! Cure your near-sightedness! Drop your accent... but gain that acceptance that all of America's talking about!...Try new ASSIMILATE!

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"THIS WAS A GREAT EVENT. EXCITING DEPTH, INSIGHT, LOVE, ANGER, POWER."

JUDY GRAHN, poet, writer, editor, publisher. The Work of a Common Woman, St. Martin's, Another Mother Tongue: Stories from the Ancient Gay Tradition (1981), True to Life Adventure Stories (ed.). CONTACT: Box 1274, Oakland, CA 94604.

ROBERT GLUCK, writer. Family Poems, Meta-physics, collaboration with Bruce Boone (1981) La Fontaine. CONTACT: 16 Clipper St., SF 94114.

ROSE MITCHELL, poet and organizer, involved in Black Lesbian Conference, active in gay rights.

CANYON SAM, writer and humorist, member of Unbound Feet collective of Chinese American Women writers; in Unbound Feet: Selected Writings (1981). CONTACT: Mainstream Exiles, P.O. Box 40906, SF 94110.

TEDE MATTHEWS, poet, performer, organizer. Self-published Some of My Best Friends. CONTACT: % Mainstream Exiles.

PERFORMANCE ART

SAT



So I figured that, well, I'd brush up my typing skills. I used to be a clerk typist. So being a stoic kind of woman I applied for a job at a non-profit corporation. I found out that now I was part of the "support staff." What the hell is "support staff"? It means I'm supposed to support myself on \$800 a month while the boss supports herself on \$50,000 a year. I didn't like that. So after a while I figured, "I'm going to get myself fired," because if you get yourself fired you can collect unemployment. So I had this scheme and it worked. I insisted on breast-feeding the plants....

CAROL ROBERTS

THE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE are an order of gay male nuns with a ministry of public manifestation and habitual perpetration. T-shirts and appearances available. CONTACT: Box 770, 55 Sutter St., SF 94104.

JAN AND VICKIE do mime, movement, music, and poetry.

BROWN BAG READERS' THEATRE is devoted to presenting readers' theatre material dealing with the issue of women and alcoholism, "For too long brown bags have been used to hide lesbian reading material and alcohol." CONTACT: 3964 Sebastopol Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95401.

### CABARET NIGHT

CAROL ROBERTS, comedienne, member of Femprov, with upcoming appearances at several SF locations. CONTACT: 161 Hartford St., SF 94114.

Laurie Tanner, writer and performer, recently in Colonel Crimson's Recruits, upcoming appearance at Julia Morgan Center. CONTACT: 3845 18th St., SF 94114.

CHRIS TANNER, Good Fairy Records, singer, songwriter, poet, activist, on Folkways Records "Walls to Roses." CONTACT: 1677 Haight St., SF 94117.

RUTH SCHOENBACH, songwriter, singer, "have written songs from a leftist lesbian perspective; interested in collaborative efforts." CONTACT: 386 Richland Ave., SF 94110.

"TREMENDOUS! LET'S MOVE FORWARD FROM THIS ENERGY AND ORGANIZE!"

SUN



**PERFORMANCE ART**

M.J. LALLO, a popular poet, comedienne, jazz musician and singer, also with the Gay Theater Collective.

LESBIANS AGAINST POLICE VIOLENCE, present political theater in support of Sue and Shirley, victims of police brutality. CONTACT: Sue and Shirley Defense Fund, 1550 24th Ave., SF 94122.

ADELE PRANDINI, writer director, actress, comedienne. Founded "It's Just a Stage" feminist theater company; co-writer of "The Mountain is Stirring." CONTACT: P.O. Box 12008, SF 94122.

GAY THEATER COLLECTIVE, lesbian and gay male theater company; past shows Crimes Against Nature, Contents Under Pressure, to appear at Fort Mason in June. CONTACT: 640 Waller St., SF 94117.

**FILM & MEDIA**



Photo: Copyright 1979 by Allen Page

ALLEN PAGE, from Southern California, is a photographer, poet, and film maker. Co-produced A Spiritual Conference for Radical Fairies multi-media event. CONTACT: P.O. Box 4409, San Diego, CA 92104.

MICHAEL DAVID BRAYTON collaborated with Allen in producing the Spiritual Conference, documenting the first national fairy gathering in Arizona, 1979. Currently designing fairy vestments and alternate dress forms. CONTACT: Vestments and Visions, 1804 Loma St., Santa Barbara, CA 93103.

MARILYN CURRY, film maker showed Epiphany. Her new film Knowing It By Heart will be complete in April. CONTACT: 1166 Dolores St., SF 94110.

MARC HUESTIS, presented Unity, his award-winning film about gays in Nazi Germany; his new film is Whatever Happened to Susan Jane?

CONNIE HATCH, media and performance artist. Her slide show, Adapt Work, is about one lesbian's adaptation to the work place.

"We want to encourage artists, performers, technicians, and supporters to further culture, to make it more accessible to a wider audience. But we not only want to build audiences, we feel our culture has the power to help build community. Progressive, queer, cultural workers are invariably ignored or attacked by the established media and art world. The power of our message is blunted by an enforced "exile" status. We want to create and strengthen bonds of support, to help artists come out of their closets. We take a strong stand in opposition to culture and politics that are sexist, racist, ageist, imperialist, and which support the class structure. We want to promote the work of third world, disabled, youth, senior, white, lesbian, and gay culture to the broader community. We have convictions and vision. JOIN US!"

**MAINSTREAM EXILES**

Mainstream Exiles performances were recorded live by Raven's Head Communications and a program of segments was broadcast on KPFA's Fruit Punch program in November, 1980. For information on the availability of recorded material write: RAVEN'S HEAD COMMUNICATIONS, P.O. Box 11472, San Francisco, CA 94101.

Because of the interest sparked during Mainstream Exiles, an ongoing organization is being planned to further gay cultural work. A wide range of programs and activities are now being discussed at regular meetings attended by a broad cross-section of artists, writers, performers, and supporters. For more information contact: MAINSTREAM EXILES, P.O. Box 40906, San Francisco, CA 94110; or call: 826-3788.

# ORPHEUS

Samuel M. Steward

The blackness was intense. It devoured the feeble glow that came from the lower caves which he had just left; it ate into his eyes and was heavy against his face and naked body. And the path was granite, unpleasant against his unshod feet—a cold and slippery surface which did not ease the rough edges of the rocks that bit into his skin.

The path, he could tell as he slowly put down each foot, the toes feeling for a spot that would not unbalance him, led upwards, slanted by an almost unnoticed degree. There was no sound of the dread tribunal he had just left, where the three dark-cowled figures, bending in tears over a bowl of fire, had finally granted his plea for her freedom. The cries of the tortured ones had faded long ago, the light on the walls had changed from red to pale green, and then vanished. There was no sound at all, save for the faint echo of another footstep following him, or a small sharp sob as another foot trod on a rocky edge, or a dislodged pebble clattered into an unseen chasm far below. But there was a drip of water from the walls, a small sound that fell

into other water. He had passed several pools, darkly luminous, and seen a pale flicker from the bones of something lying in a puddle of decay.

In the bending of his left arm he cradled a golden lyre. And now, feeling its quiet strings, he played a five-note chord, to comfort himself, and the one who followed him. The notes rebounded from the walls and died, echoing in the caves.

Then suddenly, he remembered the last voyage with his shipmates. Against the dark there flashed an image of their ship—bright and brave, with green sail bellied to the strong fresh sea-wind. He saw the brown strong backs of his friends bending to the yellowgrained oars, dipping to the strong beat of his own music and song, flashing golden as they sank into the blue foam-flecked water, rising to pause—just an instant!—while the silver drops glittered in the strong sunlight, falling from the tips, and then sank again.

He remembered the nights of danger and peril, the exhaustions of their comradeship, the bodies pressed close to his in sleep or love, the meals in common, the drinking of the red wine, the golden mead...

To lose all this, to give it all over for love of the pallid one who followed—was this his true desire?

His fingers found a minor chord which wailed through the caves. And then,

as if to comfort his grief, he turned an abrupt corner; a great distance ahead there gleamed a tiny patch of light. Its cold radiance reached into the cave towards him, shining on the cold wet of the walls, shimmering in the pool of decay on his left, with its clutter of whitened bones.

Just at that moment, a sound came from behind him—a muffled shriek, a misplaced foot, a slipping, and the air full of a movement of arms trying vainly for balance—and then a splash. And after, wordlessly, he felt a hand, soft and cold and trembling, reaching, touching him upon the thigh.

"You must not look behind," they said. He looked ahead towards the light, and closed his eyes; there sprang once more into being the handsome bodies in bronze and copper of his fellow argonauts. He heard again the rousing timbre of their voices in song.

Then with an enigmatic smile, he half-turned and reached out his hand. He touched the wrist, and looked downward towards her.

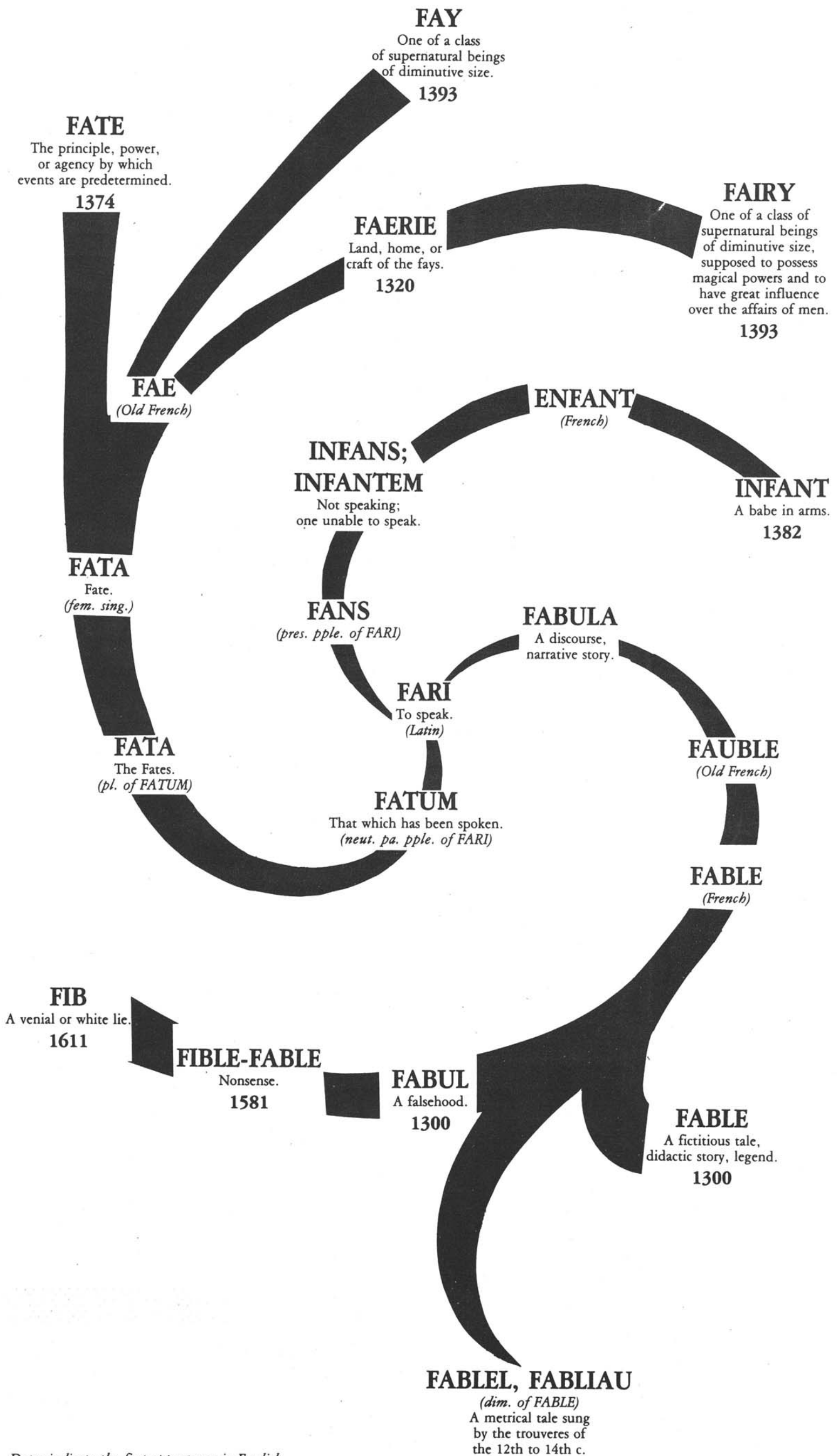
There was a faint white spark, a strangling cry—and his fingers closed on nothing. A vapor swirled upwards towards the light, passed him, and vanished in a cloud of dancing sparks. Then... silence.

He sighed and turned, and walked onwards to the golden years that lay ahead.

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Dates indicate the first appearance in English.

Barbara Noda

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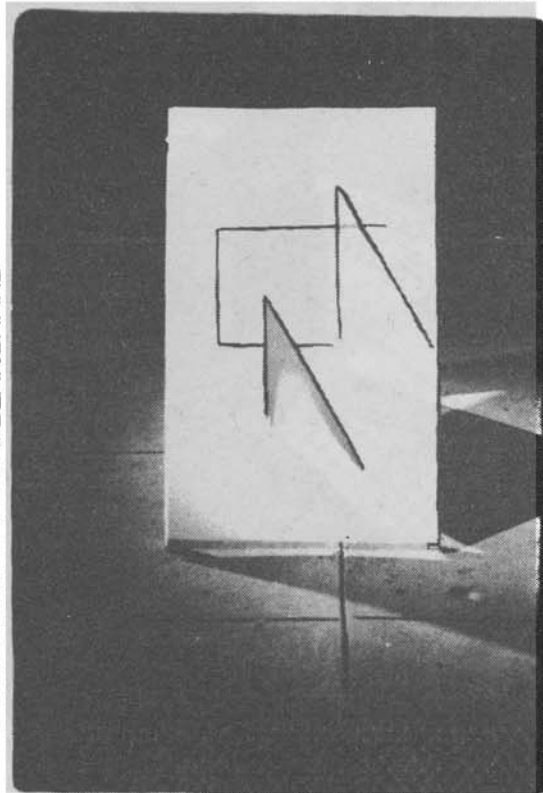
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