

The Blotter

July Johnson 2004

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Uva uvam vivendo varia fit



WE DON'T RENT PIGS!

But Get a Load of Eva Rubin and Jeff DeBoer's Artwork.
There's Also Swell Stuff from Jaya Mangelou, Bob Funck, James Huff,
Ian J. Holcomb, Silvanus Slaughter, and Michael Owen.
Plus, a Big Fried Spam Sandwich, a New Dream Journal, and Marty
Smith's Paper Cuts.

The Blotter is:

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Cover art: detail of a painting by Eva
Rubin, See pp. 4-5 for more from
this artist.

Cover Motto borrowed from *Lonesome
Dove*, by Larry McMurtry. The motto
doesn't really mean anything at all, but
was also the motto of the Hat Creek
Cattle Company.

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This magazine may contain typos or bad words

Items Worth Mentioning
from the desk of Johnny Pence**Don't Be a Chickenshit**

Some unexpected changes have happened which will land me in Athens, GA, by September or October. So it would be nice if I could get those two issues edited and laid out before I move, but **I need you to send in your submissions** so I can make that happen.

In fact, submissions have been lagging a little lately, and I suspect that this is largely due to the fact that people tend to be a little nervous about submitting their stuff to this magazine.

Rest assured that there is nothing to be afraid of, and you should draw from that well deep inside you and send Jenny a submission package. She replies to every e-mail she gets, and she has specific instructions not to mock you or be rude in those replies.

A surprising amount of our submissions actually do end up in print, so it seems as if the right people are submitting, and submitting the right stuff. It's just that for the next couple months, I'll need a little bit more of it. Do you think you can handle that?

Don't Worry

Despite the fact that I'm leaving town, *The Blotter* will carry on here in the Triangle, Richmond, Charlottesville, and Nashville, with the same distribution sites and numbers as before. Well, that is, until the debt collectors catch up with us and we end up in jail. But barring prison, shame, and inconvenience, there shouldn't be any change that you'd notice. And of course, I'll be distributing in Athens too.

Don't Forget

Blotter subscriptions are for sale, and you should get one for your uncle Phil or aunt Lurleen. I think they make better gifts than they do personal indulgences, but you never know—all you Pittsboro cats and kittens will no longer be able to pick up the magazine down there, so indulge in a subscription. Sorry about that, but I can't find a distribution site that's friendly enough to us to make it worth the drive. However, you could get it delivered right to your house, which is all that much closer to your toilet tank anyhow.

—ediot@blotterrag.com

The Withholding

by Silvanus Slaughter

Originally Published 1994,
Sweet Life Press

He loved her like one holds a thing. Devoted in his way, certainly, owning the responsibilities of proprietorship without fail, the bottom line being that he would always be able to write the check regardless of whatever else he might not extend. There was something to that—measurable worth—and he never took it lightly or dismissed its value.

One day a stranger stopped her in the plaza, and with a lyrical nod and generous smile remarked how deeply beautiful she seemed to him. "You don't even know how incredibly beautiful you are," he added.

As she began to laugh more often, her husband grew withdrawn, contentious, but yes, still devoted, but to what she could not figure! To having her? To knowing she would always behave a certain way, overlook his surliness, corroborate with him that they were the central figures in each other's dream, and that regardless of what did or didn't happen on their side of the fence.... Well, at least they owned one.

She changed her hair. Took to wearing heels. Began painting with oils. The husband sank deeper into a gloomy silence.

A week later the stranger was waiting in the plaza for her with a bouquet of freshly cut roses. "Just because you're beautiful," he told her. He bartered for nothing.

She came home and asked her husband why he had never told her she was beautiful. Why he'd criticized her hair ... ignored her paintings.

"I ... I was terrified I would lose you," he answered.



Silvanus Slaughter authored many screenplays during his previous life in L.A.; a recent Southern novel, *sweet piece* was published in 2003; his upcoming rock opera "The Constellations Compromised" is currently in production. His debut as writer-director, *an encounter* was televised nationally in 1995. He resides in Oxford and is currently at work on a new novel of psychosexual intrigue, *Waylon in the Ruins of Rome*.

The Blotter Dream Journal

real dreams, real weird

i dreamed my friend was trying to shoot down a stealth fighter with a compound bow, but he didn't know what he was doing. the arrows kept falling on my car, poking holes in it. i punched him in the nose really hard because he was going to just leave the holes there and not tell me—that slacker. but it just happened that i had a bow and arrows in my car, so i got them out and showed him how to shoot properly.

—D.S., Hillsborough

I am lying in bed with my lover. The bed is in a grassy field that slopes down to the ocean. Instead of a beach, there is a highway along the deep ocean just a few feet above ocean level. There are tall dark blue hill-like waves slowly moving toward the shore. I check the unexplained swollen lump in my lower body. Then I discover a larger equally firm lump inside my intestines that I can feel through my soft lower belly skin. It must be cancer. I tell my lover that I want him to know the truth. I have serious cancer and I will not be around much longer. I tell my lover that the ocean is beautiful. A wave starts to cross the highway with granite blocks floating up on its steep face. The wave gently deflates itself on the highway, depositing several refrigerator-sized granite blocks in the middle of the road, obstructing traffic.

—R.G. Raleigh

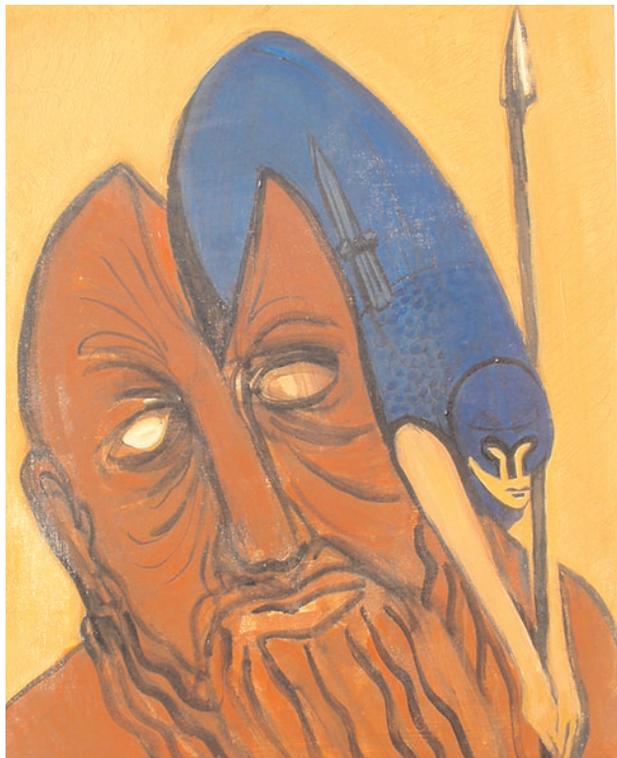
Please send excerpts from your dream journals to Jenny at mermaid@blotterrag.com. If nothing else, we love to read them. We won't publish your whole name.

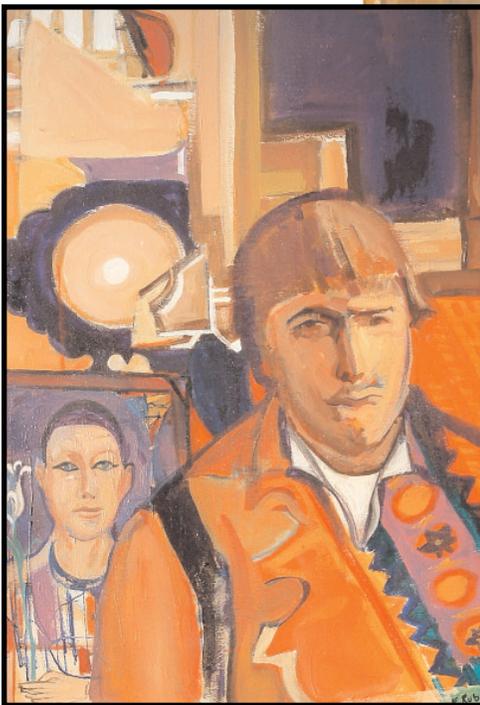


Eva Rubin

EVA RUBIN WILL BE SHOWING AT TEMPLE BALL GALLERY IN CARRBORO FROM JULY 9 UNTIL AUGUST 4. OPENING RECEPTION ON JULY 9 FROM 6-8 P.M.

THESE PIECES DON'T HAVE FIRM TITLES, BUT THE ONE AT RIGHT DEPICTS THE BIRTH OF ATHENA, WHO POPPED OUT OF HER POP'S HEAD ONE DAY.





Managed Healthcare in 2050: Touchstone Healthcare Corporation

by Michael B. Owen

Customer Service Representative (CSR): Hello. My name is Susan. I am your Touchstone Health Care Customer Service Representative. This call may be recorded to ensure quality and compliance with federal regulations. How may I help you today?

Ralph: My name is Ralph and I am calling to get an authorization for a medical procedure.

CSR: Ralph, are you a patient or a medical professional?

Ralph: Patient.

CSR: Well, I am sorry, Ralph, but Touchstone only authorizes procedures that are requested by a licensed physician.

Ralph: But I was told by my doctor that I could directly request an assisted suicide from Touchstone.

CSR: Oh, yes sir, that is correct. Assisted suicide is an exempt procedure. We need only an automated order from your physician and your verbal statement requesting the procedure. Please give me your account number, and I can verify your doctor's automated request.

Ralph: 217-502-4569.

CSR: Thank you. The verification will only take a second.

Ralph: While I am waiting, do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

CSR: Of course not. I am your Touchstone customer service representative and happy to help in any way I can.

Ralph: Why is assisted suicide an exempt procedure?

CSR: Assisted suicide is exempt because it does not require medical intervention from a health care provider. It is an in-home procedure that patients may administer themselves.

Ralph: You mean there is no medical supervision at all? What part is "assisted"?

CSR: The term "assisted suicide" was first used around the turn of the century when physicians administered and monitored high-cost, inpatient, suicide procedures. Since that time research has proven that self-administered suicide procedures have identical outcomes to physician-assisted suicide and can be provided at a much lower cost. Although the physician-assisted concept has been obsolete for many years, we still refer to the procedure as assisted suicide.

Ralph: If I administer the suicide myself, why do I even need to use my health care plan?

CSR: It is the law, Ralph. Assisted suicide procedures and methods are regulated by both federal and state governments. It is administered under END-A, the Early Need for Death Act that was passed by Congress in 2020. Since that time, unapproved suicides are illegal and punishable by fine and imprisonment.

Ralph: What's the reason for that?

CSR: Unapproved suicides can be highly ineffective and often result in incomplete suicides. One incomplete suicide can leave a patient and his or her family with extremely high long-term health care costs. Ten years ago, Unregulated Incomplete Suicides (UIS) were threatening the viability of the entire Managed Universal Care System. On the other hand, Approved Assisted Suicide is the most cost-effective medical procedure in the history of healthcare. The Administration of END-A has now established best-practice guidelines and inexpensive toolkits that ensure an effective, safe suicide experience for about 98 percent of patients who are eligible for the procedure.

Ralph: Well, I have always tried to follow the advice of my personal physician.

CSR: Very wise, Ralph. Touchstone Healthcare encourages all eligible patients to use Approved Assisted Suicide. Most patients are highly satisfied with the outcome and benefit package....

Oh, good, I see your doctor's order is on my screen. Okay, I can move to the authorization process.

Ralph: How does that work?

CSR: I will ask you a series of questions. I will record your answers for privacy and compliance requirements. Ready?

Ralph: I guess so.

CSR: Okay. Ralph, state your name, date of birth, and patient account number.

Ralph: Ralph Craven. Date of birth was 06/27/20. My account number is 217-502-4569.

CSR: Ralph, what is your physician-approved END?

Ralph: What?

CSR: What is your Early Need for Death?

Ralph: I have Predicted Genetic Terminal Illness.

CSR: Has your physician explained what that means?

Ralph: Yes. It means that DNA tests have determined that I definitely will die from something within three to five years. It is not possible to predict what disease will cause my death, but the DNA predictive test results were conclusive. My doctor said the three- to five-year prognosis makes me eligible for Approved Assisted Suicide.

CSR: Ralph, did your physician explain the Suicide Benefit Package?

Ralph: Yes. In fact, the benefit package is what helped me make the decision to go with assisted suicide.

The package is just too good to pass up. My family will receive a Suicide Choice Rebate from Touchstone Healthcare, and they will still collect my life insurance.

CSR: Right, Ralph. For most people it is a real win-win situation. Well, let me go ahead and e-mail you the Patient Suicide Handbook and ship out the Toolkit. The Handbook describes the procedure and tells you how to prepare and what to expect from your assisted suicide. The Toolkit includes your choice of a lethal dose of Endal or a reusable handgun. If you choose the handgun option, a family member must ship the gun back to Touchstone within thirty days or its cost will be deducted from your Suicide Choice Rebate. The Patient Suicide Handbook is also loaded with other practical information about crematoria and other

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"No thank you, Susan. You have been very helpful. I'm sure I will be quite satisfied."

resources that you might be interested in. Shall I ship your Handbook and Toolkit today?

Ralph: Okay. And I will take the Endal option.

CSR: Excellent choice, Ralph. Your Handbook and complete Assisted Suicide Toolkit will arrive by UPS within 24 hours.

Ralph: Thanks.

CSR: Is there anything else I can help you with today, Ralph?

Ralph: No thank you, Susan. You have been very helpful. I'm sure I will be quite satisfied.

Michael B. Owen lives in Chapel Hill and is a member of the Mental Health Association of Orange County. He believes in fostering mental health as a way of combating mental illness.

Paper Cuts Books You Might Not Have Read by Martin K. Smith

Transit Gloria Mundi Trolley & Light Rail Video Catalog (Baltimore, MD. Spring 2004)

The last time my friends Kurt and Amy were over, Amy picked up this catalogue, looked through it, and said "Oh, okay: train porn." She shrugged and smiled. "Oh well; I have lots of 'knitting porn' at home."

Let's back up and explain, shall we? Transit Gloria Mundi, out of Baltimore, collects old train fans' home movies of trolley lines from the 1940s and 50s, and edits them into videos. They then sell them—at substantial prices—to young train fans,

like me, who never got to see the old trolleys in their natural habitats. (Most of America's trolley-car systems were supplanted by buses in the decades after World War II.) They also offer videos of some foreign systems, and of the new "light rail" lines cropping up round the country, "light rail" being the modern yuppie name for a trolley car.

Catalogues will be catalogues, regardless of what they're selling, with prose that sometimes seems to have drunk a little too much caffeine. "Sacramento Northern: Relive the days of the midwestern interurbans in their prime. No Kidding! If your vision of the interurban is trains of heavy wooden arch-window cars looking fresh from the paintshop, rumbling slowly through tree-shaded city streets before racing across the open countryside, then this tape will allow you to realize your vision in motion and gorgeous color. (Order code SNI, color, 50 minutes...\$39.95.)" I'm able to tune out the salesman B.S. and enjoy the films themselves.

They truly are enjoyable. They're time capsules; it's not some movie backlot costumed as the Fifties, it is the 1950s. Girls in poodle skirts, matrons in Mamie Eisenhower hats; the men in ties and suitcoats and private-eye fedoras. Plump Packards



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and Studebakers, tailfined Oldsmobiles and Cadillacs pass movie marquees announcing “WILLIAM HOLDEN IN *STALAG 17*” or “CLAUDETTE COLBERT—*CLEOPATRA*—GRAND SPECTACLE,” and Sinclair stations with the green dinosaur emblem, offering gas at 25 cents per gallon. The streets are bustling and the downtown stores all open—shopping malls have not yet risen to vampirize away the urban lifeblood. The trolleys themselves are beauties: Most of them are a 1930s model called the “PCC car,” for Presidents’ Conference Committee, a think tank of trolley bosses that commissioned the design. They’re streamlined in that lush, curvy 1930s style that informed the Chrysler Building, Jean Harlow’s gowns, and Flash Gordon’s rocket ships. PCCs in fact look rather like one of Flash’s dreadnoughts, albeit with wheels and a trolley pole, sailing majestically down the middle of the street. They even have a pair of stylized chrome wings flanking the headlight.

The music and narration can be as cheesy as those old Coronet Instructional films from our school days. *Steel City Traction 2—West End Story* opens with a triumphant fanfare and a newsreel-announcer voice declaiming “Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania!—where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers join to form the Ohio! Home to one of the largest U.S. streetcar systems of the postwar era!” No matter; a little retro-fromage just adds to the fun.

Watching closely, you can see some of the old trolleys’ drawbacks.

Here’s a scene from *Carvey Davis’s Baltimore Streetcar Films*: Falls Road, on a day in early spring (judging by the bare trees and watery sunlight). Two lanes run in each direction, with trolley tracks in the inner lanes. An outbound Mount Washington car pauses to set down a matron (in a Mamie Eisenhower hat). Trolleys, however, cannot leave their tracks and pull to the curb like a bus. (Actually they can leave their tracks; but trust me, you really don’t want them to.) So Mamie must cross another lane of traffic to reach the sidewalk. A panel truck obligingly stops for her—but heaven help the poor dear if she tried it today. She’d be promptly splatted by some frantic late-for-yoga soccer mom in a minivan, or a drunk frat boy in the Humvee his daddy bought him. Then of course would come the lawsuits....

You’ll also note how much infrastructure trolleys need: tracks to run on, overhead wires for power, generating stations to feed the wires. Many lines had stretches of private right-of-way, with embankments, trestles and property-tax bills. Pittsburgh’s system had tunnels, Baltimore’s a bunch of drawbridges. The biggest reason for the trolleys’ demise, though, is easily seen: Packards and Oldses and Caddys (oh my). In shot after 50s shot, the trolleys are surrounded by them, putting me in mind of an old dinosaur perplexed and peeved by hordes of little smartass egg-sucking protomammals constantly underfoot. Nearly everyone who could drive, did (and still does), out to the new suburbs. Ridership dwindled, operating

costs did not; the private for-profit trolley companies went bankrupt, and city governments had to take over operations or be left transitless. Public officials are wary of spending the public’s tax money (unless they can spend it on themselves and not get caught), so the economics of bus conversion made sense. Yes, there was that GM/Firestone conspiracy, where their proxy company National City Lines bought trolley systems and bus-ified them; and yes, IMHO, it was illegal and a Bad Thing; but it was exploiting a trend that would’ve happened anyway.

The last trolley line in my hometown, Washington DC, closed just months after I was born (though I’m sure there’s no connection between the two events). By the time I was old enough to notice stuff, the remaining traces were few but fascinating: old tracks in the streets; subway-style entrance stairs to the Dupont Circle station, where the line dived down into a tunnel under the park; and crumbling trestles in wooded bluffs above the Potomac, where that last line ran on private trackage out to Cabin John amusement park. The 2004 catalogue mentions that their next release will cover the Washington system. It’s on my shopping list, no matter how much hyper-java’ed prose they fanfare over it.

Marty Smith is publisher of *The Blotter*, and apparently an unabashed train nerd. Live and let live, I reckon.

You've Got Spam!

from the Yahoo inbox of Johnny Pence

I knew I would do this piece when I saw that Wozniak E. Concise had sent me an e-mail. While I've long been fascinated by the accidental art inherent in spam, having seen the name Wozniak E. Concise, I saw my duty to share this art with you.

The bodies and subject headings of e-mails are pure genius, both as Dada poetry and as text that is written for the sole purpose of evading spam filters, but we'll save the bodies and subjects for another time.

Today, we examine fake names. For several months, I deliberately did not delete any e-mail from my Yahoo account. I collected about 200 spams, and culled the herd to the best fake names. Herewith, the cream of the crop of fake names. Roosevelt Ezekwo, you've made us proud.

Folks, I wouldn't recommend you try this at home. Bear in mind that I had to sift through 200 just to get this little list.

Sonia Redsun	achieve an e-rection up to 36 hours after ingestion.	Mon 05/24	2k
Pedro Gordon	Get Valium over night - no prescription needed	Sat 05/29	13k
Meghan Buckner	Re: ellison	Fri 05/28	5k
Clementina Devin	Re:	Fri 05/28	5k
Rosalie Kelsie	though Ever Thought To Increase Thickness Of Ur Pen-i-s? No? confidence doubt le...	Thu 05/27	4k
Dado C. Julienned	Read:-800 world best software - 90 % savings	Wed 05/26	3k
Fiona Staci	settled DONT BE SILLY TO PAY HUNDRED FOR SOFTWARES sir	Wed 05/26	4k
Prioritizing H. Metabolized	Read:-Windows Xp for 50 bucks	Tue 06/01	3k
Brittney Kum	Re:	Tue 06/01	4k
Gema Siobhan	RE:	Mon 05/31	5k
Ignacia Demetria	re:	Sun 06/06	5k
Wozniak E. Concise	Read:-Windows Xp for 50 bucks	Fri 06/04	3k
Enriqueta Tapawan-Conway	CIALIS & LEVITRA is the ANTI-Impotence drug to win approval from the U.S.A FOO...	Fri 06/04	2k
Felicity C. Parabola	Read:-Cheape software - all you can imagine	Tue 06/08	3k
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Pandora Tamesha	hi	Sun 06/27	4k
Roosevelt Ezekwo	CIALIS & LEVITRA-huge savings compared to VIAGR-A~ !	Sat 06/26	2k
Quaking P. Rotational	Read:-Windows Xp for 50 bucks	Fri 06/25	3k
Dong Brigg	Trader Update...XLPI Going Insane! dermatology	Fri 06/25	6k

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 - Sept 24: Skeeter Brandon



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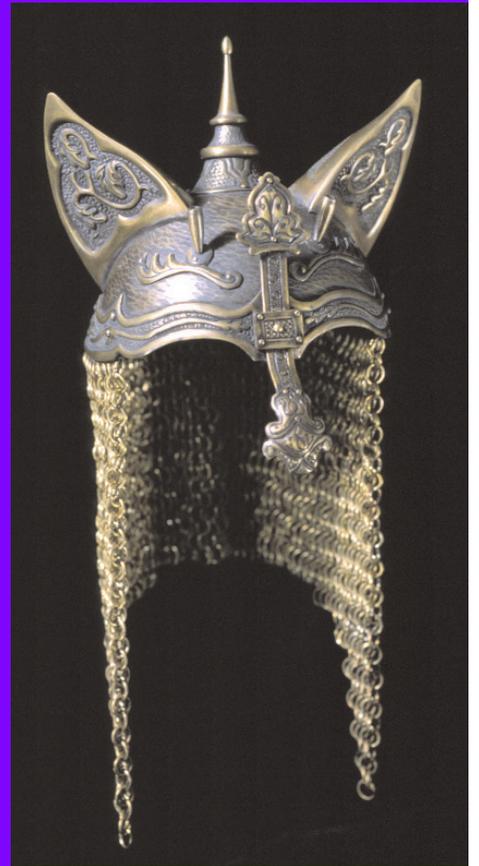
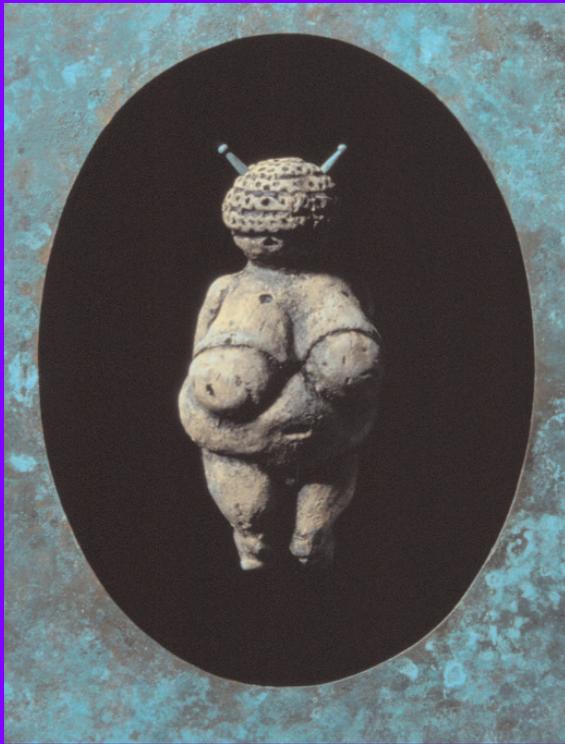
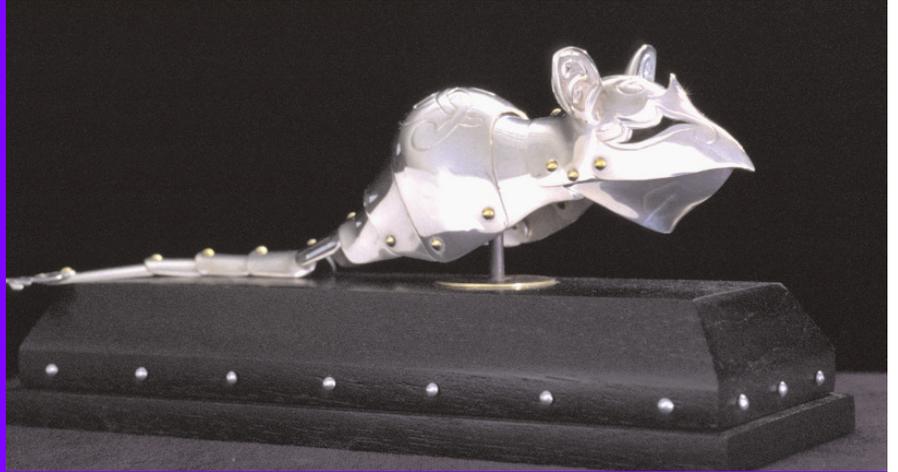


THIS PAGE: BRIEFCASE FOR CORPORATE VIKING RAIDER, RAY DERRINGER, FLASH GORDON GAS MASK

OPPOSITE: DUCHESS MOUSE, VENUS OF VENUS, PERSIAN CAT HELMET

JEFF DE BOER IS A CALGARY-BASED ARTIST, DESCENDENT FROM A LONG LINE OF METALSMITHS. HE IS KNOWN FOR CAREFULLY CRAFTED WORKING SUITS OF ARMOR FOR CATS AND MICE (A SUIT OF CAT ARMOR WILL APPEAR IN THE UPCOMING *CATWOMAN* MOVIE), ARMOR TIES AND SWORD-HANDLED BRIEFCASES, ROCKET LAMPS, AND POP-CULTURE RAY GUNS.

www.jeffdeboer.com



Everybody wears some kind of armor

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"Cinda-fuckin-rella" by Jaya Mangelou

You would think a "Pick 3" winning
in Georgia's state lottery
Would help a ho stop her hoin'
Yet still I walk down Peachtree

Never schooled in the ways of class
to new teachers my cash flowed
Designing women made me look
as though I had never ho'ed

One chunk of cash went to diction
One to the latest fashions
One went to learnin' good manners
three pygmalion passions

With speech and dress and etiquette
I was the belle of the ball
I once sucked dicks for cash
And yet I fooled them all

But fall every glass slipper must
Whether it lights up or not
Those limousines became punkins
A damn lie is what I bought

So if a ho wins "Pick 3"
she betta be a cynic
It's like turning left on Piedmont
From Peachtree during Freaknick

Jaya Mangelou is a Nashville drag
queen. She has performed live
around town and is the author of *Just
Publish Some of My Poetry 'Fore I
Diiiiie* and the forthcoming *I Know
Why the Tied-Up Dog Barks*.

Bob Funck and James Huff didn't
supply a bio.

Ian J. Holcomb is a frightening little
fellow with a mind full of spiders.

Roundy Rounds by Bob Funck

Through sleep,
...Slowly penetrating,
The sound of engines racing

...I surface to the light of the screen,
One motor failing,
Spitting smoke...

...OK,

I'm here,
Lazy sofa summer sunday
Afternoon.

Nothing to do and no one to please,
Shades drawn for cool and dark.
Just right for the depressed.

It's Michigan,
Lap 263,
And the 6 is running fourth.

on road south in
scotland
by James Huff

stayed up all night again

yesterday happened on its own
today came before being ready at dawn
tomorrow hangs out all alone

on the t in boston
on the m in paris
on the el in philly

playing bass on 25th & snyder
singing words no one hears
waiting externally
sleeping through life's events

8 feb 04

Statue of Liberty
by Ian J. Holcomb

Me, more or less somber, me also
stupid. I care. I'm brave. I stand up
for myself and bow and scrape.
There is only me in me, only the me
and the dark hole of the fear of death.
When I'm drunk I bounce recklessly
off the walls. I drive recklessly, yes,
I drink and drive. Doesn't everybody?
I drink and bounce up and down
and drive home in wretched recklessness
like so much wretched refuse.

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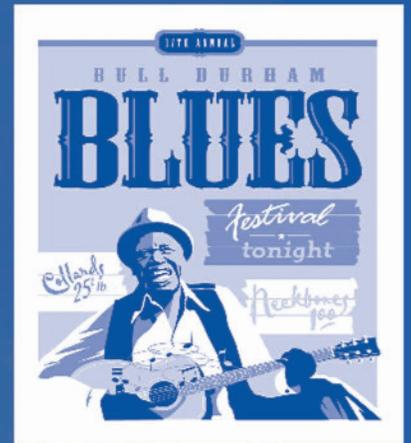
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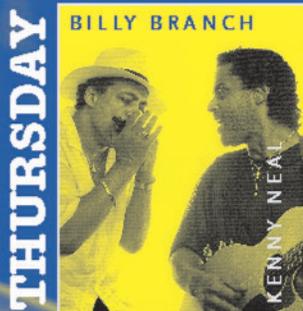
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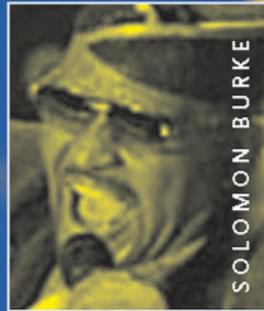
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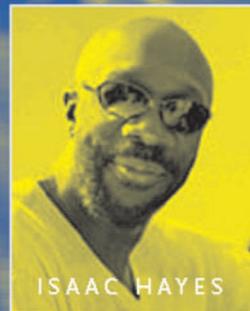
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