

Volume 28 Number 4 \$5.50

ART MEDIA POLITICS

www.fusemagazine.org

FUSE

MAGAZINE

National Security



In this Issue

Grey Filastine and tobias c. van Veen on sonic warfare

The case against CAE's Steve Kurtz

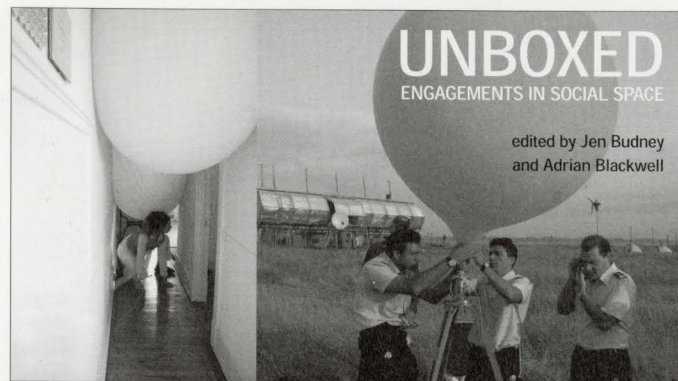
John Greyson in conversation with Tim Miller



ARTEXTE
508-460 RUE STE-CATHERINE O
MONTREAL QC H3B 1A7

4 more issues after this one.

PM40022164 R8623



UNBOXED

ENGAGEMENTS IN SOCIAL SPACE

edited by Jen Budney
and Adrian Blackwell

Vito Acconci
Lucy Orta
Steve Topping
Ana Rewakowicz
Adrian Blackwell
Eduardo Aquino
Marko Peljhan
Jan-Erik Andersson
Marie-Paule Macdonald
Jean-François Prost
Luc Lévesque

Publications G-101®

236, rue Nepean St.,
Ottawa, ON, K2P 0B8
T: 613.230.2799
F: 613.230.3253
info@gallery101.org
www.gallery101.org

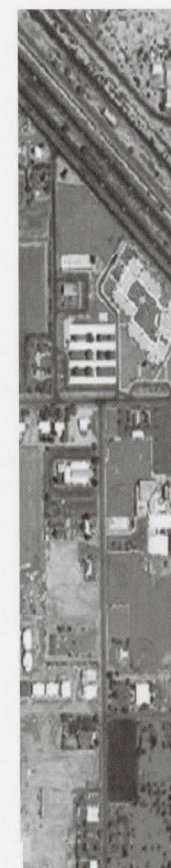
G-101®

SPRING 2006 / OTTAWA
Find out the prize winner for
Canada's most Caucasian art gallery!

WHITE CUBE

Award for Contemporary Art

CODE RÉGIONAL



with Final Cut Pro HD + AVID Xpress HD
+ Pro Tools + AirPort Extreme cards

rentable
offsite digital media stations
ideal for training, group projects and media exhibitions

CHARLES STREET VIDEO

satellite CSV

www.charlesstreetvideo.com

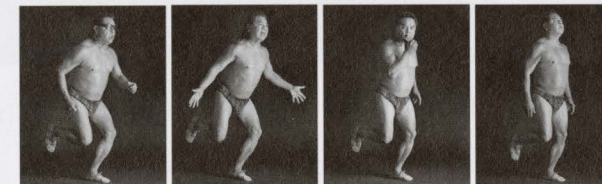
for more information contact us at:

416.603.6564

or csv@charlesstreetvideo.com

JAMES LUNA

October 19 to November 12, 2005



James Luna, *Petroglyphs in Motion*, video installation, 2000

Presented in collaboration with imagineNATIVE film + media arts festival

I REPRESENT

Curated by Natalie Wood

January 13 to February 11, 2006

Michael Chambers . Stephen Fakiyesi
Dana Inkster . Dionne Simpson
Camille Turner . Syrus Ware

401 RICHMOND STREET WEST . SUITE 110
TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5V 3A8 . 416-979-9633
INFO@ASPACEGALLERY.ORG WWW.ASPACEGALLERY.ORG

A Space gratefully acknowledges the support of our members and project partners as well as the Canada Council, The Ontario Arts Council and the City of Toronto through the Toronto Art Council.

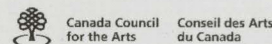


electric fields

Electronic Music and Media Forum
October 27 - November 19, 2005
SAW Video Centre for the Media Arts, Ottawa

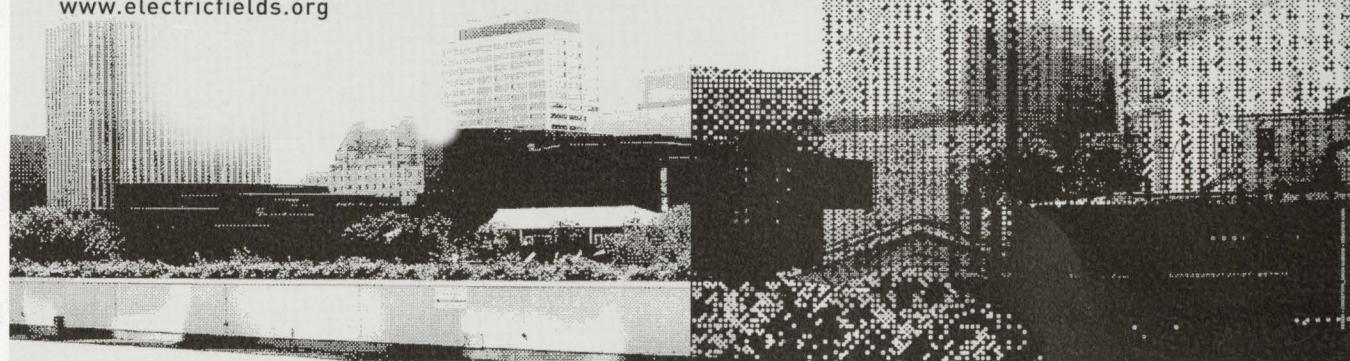
Steve Bates (Québec) Stéphanie Brodeur (Canada)
Juan Geuer (Québec) if then do (Canada) Karø Goldt (Austria)
Jason Kahn (Switzerland) Élément Kuuda (Québec)
Christian Kuras (UK) LAL (Canada) Le lecteur (Québec)
Takeshi Murata (United States) Aki Onda (Japan)
sinequanon (Québec) Tadasu Takamine (Japan)

Curated by Jason St-Laurent



www.electricfields.org

SAW VIDEO



kamloops ART GALLERY

Kamloops Art Gallery
101-465 Victoria Street
Kamloops, BC V2C 2A9
T 250-377-2400
kamloopsartgallery@kag.bc.ca
www.kag.bc.ca



PROXIMITIES:

artists' statements and their works

OCTOBER 16 - DECEMBER 31

Curators: W.F. Garrett-Petts & Rachel Nash

Stephan Kurr Paula Levine Kristi Malakoff
Ashok Mathur Donald Lawrence Jan Peacock
Brenda Pelkey Brigitte Radecki Sandra Semchuk

Exhibition sponsored by Funk Signs, Kamloops
Catalogue distribution by ABC Art Books, Canada

Donovan Harrion
ETERNAL RETURN: homage to the sockeye
SEPTEMBER 4 - NOVEMBER 14 Cube Gallery

Alison Petty
FLUID
OCTOBER 5 - NOVEMBER 14 Gallery Under Glass

image: detail from *The Black Notebooks* series, by Brigitte Radecki, 2004-05

aceartinc.

between sounds and abstractions
Catherine Béchard and Sabin Hudon
October 15 - November 12

wobblers: a graphic history
Curated by Paul Buhle
and Nicole Schulman
October 4 - October 21

the winter warmer
aceart open member show
November 25 - December 9

brian flynn
Cover Series: Belfast Portraits
January 25 - February 25

2nd floor, 290 McDermot Ave.
Winnipeg MB R3B 0T2
p: 204.944.9763
f: 204.944.9101
www.aceart.org



McMaster Museum of Art
 Alvin A. Lee Building, McMaster University
 1280 Main St. W., Hamilton ON L8S 4L6
 (905) 525-9140 x23081 www.mcmaster.ca/museum
 Hours: Tues-Fri 11am-5pm, Sunday 12-5 pm

CHEWA MASKS OF PAIN AND LOSS

AIDS IN MALAWI
 November 1 - December 23, 2005
 Contemporary expressions of an ancient artistic tradition.
 Guest Curated by Dr. Mané Arratia, Dept. of Anthropology.

...THE BEAST NOT FOUND IN VERSE

November 6 - December 23, 2005
 An investigation of the human condition through the animal imagery
 of **Daniel Erban, Mary Catherine Newcomb, Leesa Streifler, Michael Belmore,**
 and **Mary Anne Barkhouse.**
ARTISTS TALK Thursday November 10 at 6 pm

UN-NATURAL DISASTERS

November 10, 2005 - February 26, 2006
 Historical moments of tragedy and upheaval are explored through the
 art of **Oscar de las Flores, Rochelle Rubinstein, Goya, Dix, Turner,**
Kollwitz and others.

PUBLIC RECEPTION for November Exhibitions
 Thursday November 10, 7-9 pm

WILFREDO PRIETO
 January 8 - February 26, 2006



Gallery

One One One
 & FitzGerald Study Centre

FitzGerald Building
 University of Manitoba
 Fort Garry Campus
 Winnipeg, R3T 2N2

GORDON LEBREDT:
By the Numbers
 curated by Robert Epp
 10 Nov. 2005 - 27 Jan. 2006

26/TWO SICKS/TOO-SIX...
 curated by Cliff Eyland
 9 Feb. - 10 Mar. 2006

[www.umanitoba.ca/schools/art/
 content/galleryoneoneone/111.html](http://www.umanitoba.ca/schools/art/content/galleryoneoneone/111.html)

204 474-9322 Fax 474-7605
 eppr@ms.umanitoba.ca

Current Gallery Exhibitions

Lisa Klapstock

LIMINAL



September 23 to November 6, 2005

Sarah Nind: FICTIONS

September 23 to November 6, 2005

18 ILLUMINATIONS

November 25, 2005 to January 29, 2006

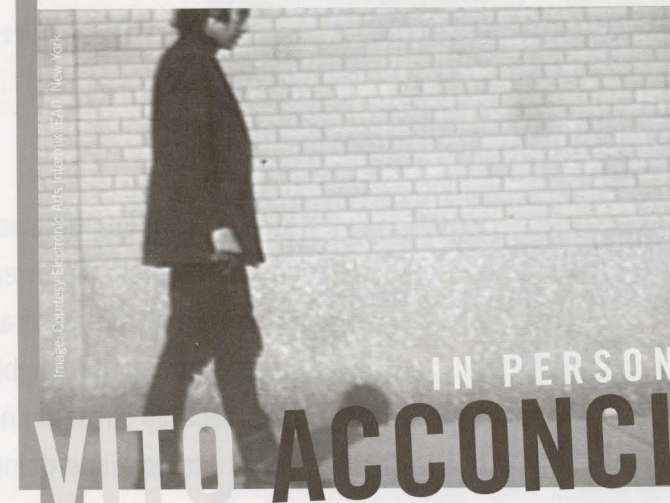
Tom Thomson

TOM THOMSON MEMORIAL ART GALLERY

840 First Avenue West, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 4K4
 (519) 376-1932 www.tomthomson.org

pleasure DOME

Pleasure Dome & MOCCA present



VITO ACCONCI
 IN PERSON

Thursday, November 10, 7pm
 MOCCA, 952 Queen Street West • \$5

MOCCA

7-9 pm > Acconci Studio Projects:
 Interiors, Buildings, Parks

9 pm > Early Super 8 Films
 1969-1973

WALTER PHILLIPS GALLERY

**Jimmie Durham:
 Knew Urk**

**NOVEMBER 12, 2005 -
 MARCH 26, 2006**

Curators: Robert Blackson
 and Candice Hopkins
 Co-organized with the Reg Vardy
 Gallery, Sunderland, UK

GALLERY HOURS
 Tuesday to Sunday
 noon to five
 Thursday noon to nine
 tel 403-762-6281
 fax 403-762-6659

www.banffcentre.ca/wpg

Box 1020-14, Banff AB
 Canada T1L 1H5

The Walter Phillips Gallery
 is supported, in part,
 by the Canadian Heritage,
 Museum Assistance
 Programme, the Canada
 Council for the Arts, and the
 Alberta Foundation for the Arts.



Plan B:
 A new WPG project launching
NOVEMBER 12, 2005
www.banffcentre.ca/wpg/planb

Weathervane

curated by Karen Love
19 November 2005 - 15 January 2006

exhibition and catalogue co-produced by Oakville Galleries
 and the Ottawa Art Gallery

Marlene Creates
 Paterson Ewen
 Rodney Graham

Tania Kitchell
 Mark Lewis
 Richard Rhodes

Seifollah Samadian
 Alan Storey
 T & T

Diana Thater
 Lawrence Weiner
 Chris Welsby



Tania Kitchell, *Fargo*, 2004, photo/text, inkjet printout (detail), collection of the artist

at Centennial Square
 120 Navy Street
 in Gairloch Gardens
 1306 Lakeshore Road East
 Oakville, Ontario Canada L6J 1L6
www.oakvillegalleries.com
 <info@oakvillegalleries.com>
 telephone 905.844.4402
 fax 905.844.7968



Oakville galleries

ARTIST-RUN CALGARY

ménage à trois?



1004 MacLeod Trail SE
 Calgary, AB T2G 2M7
 T. 403.262.8507
 F. 403.269.5220
 E. stride2@telusplanet.net
 U. www.stride.ab.ca

Submission Deadline :
 ongoing



516 - D 9th Avenue SW
 Calgary, AB T2P 1L4
 T. 403.233.2399
 F. 403.290.1714
 E. info@thenewgallery.org
 U. www.thenewgallery.org

Submission Deadline :
 May 01, 2006



815 First Street SW (lower level)
 Calgary, AB T2P 1N3
 T. 403.261.7702
 F. 403.264.7737
 E. truck@netway.ab.ca
 U. www.truck.ca

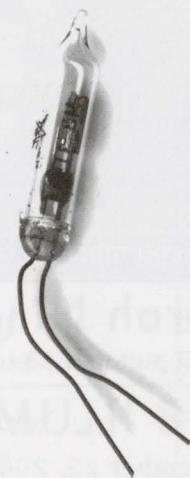
Submission Deadline :
 May 01, 2006

A note to Canadian public art galleries:

Have you noticed a change in the climate recently?

We have.

That's why, in the last few years, we've published in-depth articles on the closure of the Nova Scotia Arts Council, the threatened closure of the Dunlop Art Gallery, the state of artist-run culture, the role of community arts in public art gallery programming, the ongoing changes to funding at the Canada Council, and the debates surrounding the maintenance of public art collections. We'd like to continue doing this.



Please keep this in mind when planning your advertising strategies.

FUSE MAGAZINE

Volume 28 Number 4 November 2005

Board of Directors

Marilyn Jung, Janna Graham, Adrian Blackwell,
Janis Demkiw, Michelle Jacques, Robinder Sehdev,
Syrus Marcus Ware, Natalie Kallio

Editorial Committee

Janna Graham, Jessica Wyman, Gita Hashemi,
Michelle Jacques

Staff

Izida Zorde (associate editor)
Michael Maranda (associate publisher)
Suzanne Noga (design)
Liz Clayton (copy editor)

Contributing Editors

Joane Cardinal-Schubert (Calgary), Robin Curtis
(Berlin), Randy Lee Cutler (Vancouver), Allan
deSouza (Los Angeles), Cliff Eyland (Winnipeg),
Andrea Fatona (Peterborough), Sylvie Fortin
(Durham NC), Richard Fung (Toronto), Tere Badia
(Barcelona), Ashok Mathur (Calgary), Ian Rashid
(London), Clive Robertson (Kingston), Nell
Tenhaaf (Toronto), Reggie Woolery (New York),
Sharon Rosenberg (Edmonton), Kirsten Forkert
(Vancouver), tobias c. van veen (Montreal),
Joseph Rosen (Montreal), Trish Salah (Montreal)
R William Hill (London UK), Dot Tuer (Toronto
and Argentina)

Errata

In issue 28:3, Persevering Realpolitik: A conversation with
Marie-Hélène Cousineau of Armit Video Productions was
co-authored by the cache collective, which consists of
Emily Rothwell, Erin Morton, Lindsay Leitch, Andrea Terry,
Michelle Veitch and Taryn Sirove.

FUSE is published four times a year by Artons Cultural Affairs Society
and Publishing Inc., a non-profit artists' organization. All inquiries and
return of undeliverables to the following address:

Artons Cultural Affairs
454-401 Richmond St W
Toronto ON M5V 3A8 (Canada)
email: subscriptions@fusemagazine.org
tel: (416) 340-8026

Publications Mail agreement No. 1396609
Registration No. 8623
ISSN 0838-603X

Copyright © 2005 Artons Publishing Inc. All rights reserved under
International Copyright Union. Any reproduction without permission is
prohibited. Send permission requests to CANCOPY, (416) 868-1620. Artons
Publishing purchases First North American Serial Rights and copyright
reverts to the writer after publication. Artons Publishing assumes no
responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts will not be
returned. A copy of our Writers' Guidelines is available on our website.
Publication of an advertisement in FUSE does not include endorsement of
the advertiser by the magazine. Opinions expressed outside of specifically
marked editorials are not necessarily held by members of the Editorial
Board.

Subscription rates: \$20 per year, Institutions \$32 per year (in Canada only).
Outside Canada \$24 U.S. per year, Institutions \$38 U.S. Decisions regarding
who qualifies as an individual subscriber remain the right of the publisher.

Printed in Canada by Sonic Print Management.

FUSE is indexed in the Alternative Press Index and is distributed by, and a
member of, the Canadian Magazine Publisher's Association, 700-425 Adelaide
St W, Toronto, Ontario M5V 3C1, tel: (416) 504-0274. FUSE is a member of the
Independent Press Association, San Francisco. FUSE acknowledges the
financial support of the Government of Canada through the Publications
Assistance Program and the Canada Magazine Fund toward our mailing,
editorial, production, and project costs. We also acknowledge financial
assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.
Finally, we are grateful for the many hours of volunteer and partially paid
labour that are provided by everyone listed on our masthead, and some not
so listed.

Canada Council for the Arts
Conseil des Arts du Canada

Canada

40 YEARS OF
ARTS
ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

contents 28.4

6 Editorial
National Security

7 Obituary: Carl Beam
by Richard W. Hill

11 Sonic warfare, tactical soundsystems and the post-world of
Grey Filastine
by tobias c. van Veen

18 Securing the Nation Post-9/11: the case against Steve Kurtz
interview by Gita Hashemi and Janna Graham

30 Leaves of Ass: an e-interview with Tim Miller
by John Greyson

40 Making Books the Hard Way: Off Printing: Situating
Publishing Practices in Artist-run Centres (Regroupement
des Centres d'Artistes Autogérés du Québec)
review by Sally McKay

43 Owning Something: The Interventionists
review by Marc Herbst

46 Cri de Coeur?: The 59th Avignon Theatre Festival
review by Barry Edwards

49 Cancer: A Metaphoric Re/Vision: Aiko Suzuki's
Bombard/Invade/Radiate (Toronto)
by Pam Patterson

52 Short Fuse
All the makings of a stereotype
by Nadia Kurd

26 Artist Project
Acts of Being: Kazemi Against Libman
Concept, sampling and remix by OpinionWare,
Design: Daniel Ellis

CANADIAN DOCUMENTATION
ARTEXTE
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

Columns



Features



Reviews



Short Fuse Artist Project

National Security

On day 77 of his hunger strike, Mohammad Mahjoub — held in a Toronto short-term detention centre without charge for five years — demanded that his and his family's dignity be recognized. Along with not knowing the charges against him, the requests repeatedly denied him by the Canadian government were one hour per month contact visits with his two young children and access to proper medical attention for eyeglasses, a leg injury and the Hepatitis C he contracted in prison. Mahjoub is being held indefinitely on a Canadian Security Certificate, a secret proceeding increasingly used under the rubric of anti-terrorism, and may, like others in Canadian detention centres, be deported without ever learning the evidence against him or the scope of his crime.

Secrecy and censorship, racial profiling and the prosecution of dissent are pervasive features of post-9/11 political culture. The rhetoric of a freedom and democracy in jeopardy along with propaganda of lurking and hidden dangers create a culture in which civil liberties and democratic rights are cast aside in the name of security. The passing of legislation granting intelligence and law enforcement agencies broader powers, pervasive government and media censorship, the silencing of dissent and widespread racial profiling and criminalization of Muslim, Arab and South Asian communities are fundamental features of the war on terror.

In this issue's "Securing the Nation Post 9/11: The case against Steve Kurtz,"

members of Critical Art Ensemble and the CAE Legal Defense Fund consider the interconnectedness of the seemingly disparate acts committed in the name of national security. Speaking to the legal case against Kurtz, as well as the broader implications of the USA PATRIOT Act on intellectual and societal freedom in the US, the collaborative considers how democracy and human rights are increasingly at the discretion of first world super powers internationally and law enforcement agencies domestically.

The investigation and prosecution of Kurtz, which has involved the FBI, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, State Marshall's office and the US Justice Department demonstrates the zeal with which the US government will search out and prosecute dissidents on a host of different fronts.

CAE's Claire Pentacost asserts that one of the ways the war on terror is carried out is through the creation of a belief that the enemy can be anywhere, locatable not just in an identifiable other but in secret, unexpected pockets in universities, museums, art exhibitions, theatres, social and political organizations. "As the architects of a privileged society wage war on a population they have deemed a threat," she argues, "they consolidate the loyalty of the included. This requires disciplining any serious criticism of the system being defended."

The consolidation process Pentacost speaks of happens on multiple fronts simultaneously. Immigrants and refugees not protected by the rights of citizenship

are threatened with detention, racial profiling targets and erodes communities, media and cultural monopolies censor information, and government and private sector funding bodies loom over public institutions. Who is included in the collective as well as what it means to be transgressive is defined through the sanctioning of individuals and systemic controls and pressure points.

The censoring and removal of photographs by Zahra Kazemi at Montreal's Côte St. Luc Library, documented through letters of protest in this issue's artist project, brought together a community of people shocked and angered that an art exhibit would be censored because it came out on the wrong side of the Israel/Palestine debate. That the exhibit was unbalanced was among the reasons given for its censoring. Kazemi was too sympathetic to the Palestinian resistance movement and portrayed the modern democracy of Israel as an oppressive regime. Borough Mayor Robert Libman made it clear that the views expressed in the exhibition could not be represented in the community. In response, many people questioned whom the library serves and what its role should be as a public institution. As Rebecca Garrett wrote to Libman, "there is nothing in the constitution that says that the space of respectful dialogue should only exist if everyone has the same opinions about any particular issue. On the contrary, the whole point is to maintain a space where differing viewpoints can be spoken ... This is a fundamental right as well as the challenge and privilege of life in a democracy."

Carl Beam
1943-2005

obituary by Richard William Hill

I met Carl Beam a few years ago when he was in Toronto for a residency at the Gardiner Museum of Ceramics. He and his wife Ann were making and painting bowls in one of the galleries and for the better part of an afternoon I sat on the floor near him, along with a number of passers-by, and listened to him speak about art and life. People would ask questions and Carl's answers never failed to get me. They seemed to wander off in many directions, each more unexpected than the last. Just when you thought he might have wandered away from the point entirely, his discussion would take one last turn and suddenly you would see how all the pieces fit brilliantly together. Many creative people aspire to non-linear thinking, but Carl was non-linear at some deeply serious and fundamental level — for him it seemed to be all at once an epistemology, an ethic, a politic and an aesthetic. At the opening for the exhibition "Indigena" he said:

I promised myself when I got here I wouldn't try to pull any of this elder stuff on you — like [expounding on] the cosmic wisdom of native people. I said I'll leave that to the elders, and just tell people that I'm a practising artist In this context, probably, nobody would recognize a shaman if they'd seen one right now. They're looking for an old paradigm. The Trickster Shift, they can't recognize that thing. Well, I've been practising that kind of stuff for quite a while — in my own estimation of course — I'm quite an accomplished magician.

Exactly.

No wonder he made so many works titled *Burying the Ruler*. In his art he was obsessed with subverting regulatory systems. His imagery abounds with ominous clock faces, traffic lights, graphs and, yes,

rulers. Against this linear organization of time and space — which he associated with the imposition of colonial rule (including his own experience in residential school) — he set out a vision of history and experience as collage. Not a linear meta-narrative of history, but history as it comes to us in our lives: fragmented, personal and political, often covered-over and partially obscured by neglect or the simple loss of memory over time.

Carl led a generation of Aboriginal artists out of the dead-end of romantic myth painting, and he did so by re-invigorating Anishinabe ideas in ways that showed them to be unabashedly avant-garde. His art continues to resonate because this is still a world that badly needs alternative ways to think about history, power and the environment.

Carl Beam died on July 30th after an extended illness. He was 62.


WHERE ARE THE **CHILDREN?**




HEALING THE LEGACY OF
THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

September 25 -
January 8, 2006

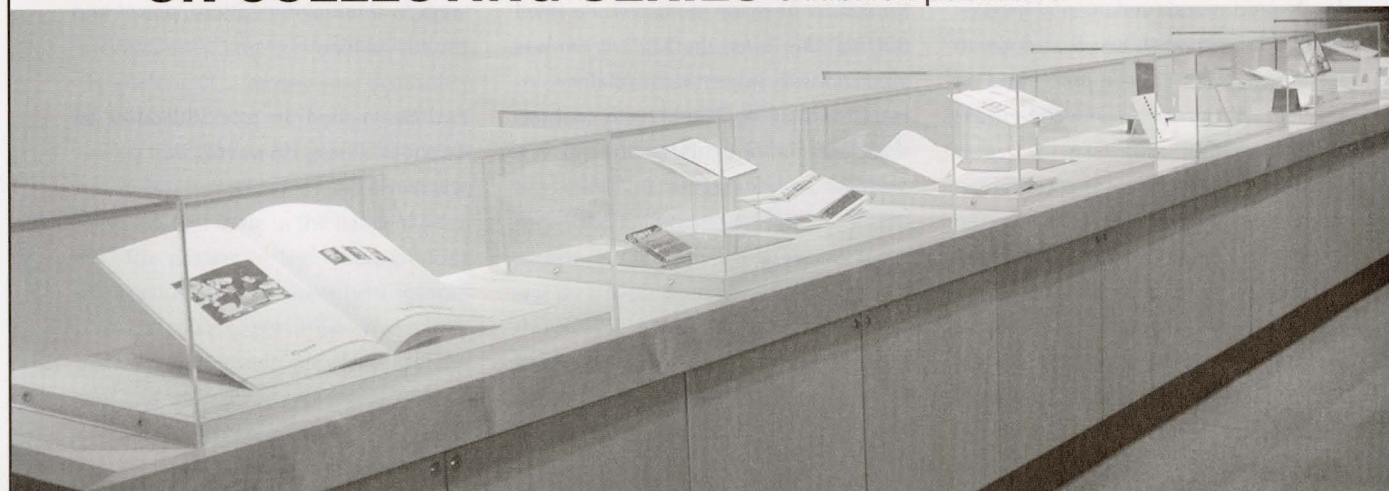
WOODLAND CULTURAL CENTRE
184 MOHAWK ST.
BRANTFORD ON
519 759 - 2650

 Aboriginal Healing Foundation
Fondation autochtone de guérison

 Legacy of Hope Foundation
Fondation autochtone de l'espoir

 Library and Archives
Canada  Bibliothèque et Archives
Canada

ON COLLECTING SERIES exhibition publication



Curated by Josephine Mills Essay by Nancy Tousley Artist projects by Geoffrey Farmer, Michael Miranda & Sugar Estate www.uleth.ca/artgallery

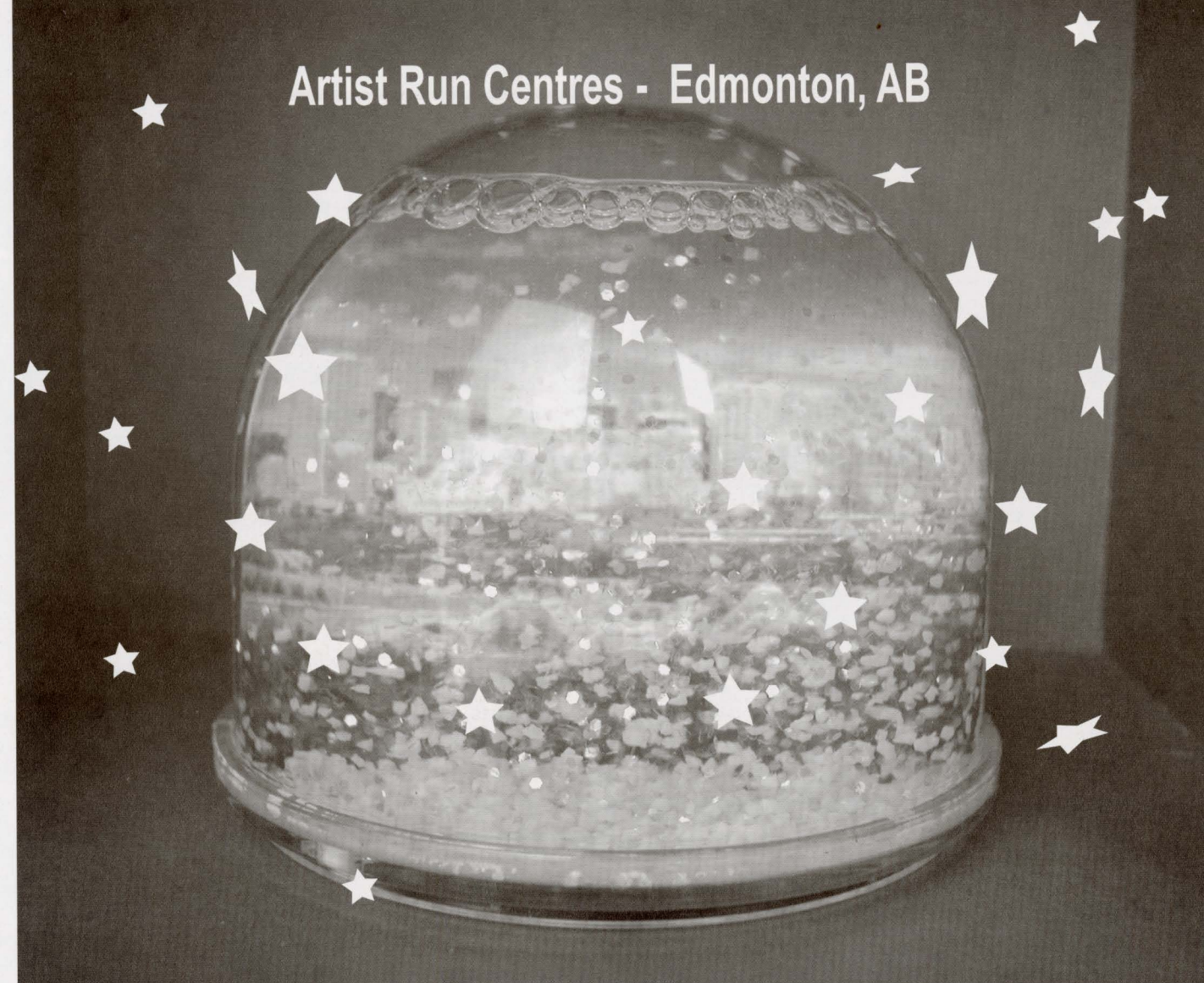
 University of
Lethbridge
Art Gallery

University of Lethbridge Art Gallery

 Alberta
Foundation
for the Arts

 Canada Council
for the Arts  Conseil des Arts
du Canada

Artist Run Centres - Edmonton, AB



hh

harcourthouse

Third Floor, 10215 - 112 St.
Edmonton, AB T5K 1M7
T (780) 426 4180 F (780) 425 5523
harcourthouse.ab.ca
harcourt@telusplanet.net

November 19, 05
Off yer head: Treasures of the Table,
Silent Auction Event

Nov. 17 - Dec. 17, 05
Montreal artist- Candice Tarnowski
In the front room - Carole Epp
- A Collection of Small Miseries

January 5 - February 4, 06
Helena Wadsley - Mellifluous
In the Front Room - Kris Lindskoog

SNAP GALLERY

society of northern alberta print-artists

10309 - 97 St
Edmonton, AB T5J 0M1
T (780) 423 1492 F (780) 426 1177
snapartists.com
snap@snapartists.com

October 29 - November 29, 05
Language + Art - Stories & Prints
by students from
Glendale Elementary School

December 3 - 22, 05
Exhibition & Fundraiser
"A Perfect Christmas Print Affair"
Launch: Sat. December 3,
10 am - 1 pm

January 6 - February 18, 06
David Armstrong

LATITUDE53

CONTEMPORARY VISUAL CULTURE

10248 - 106 St.
Edmonton, AB T5J 1H5
T (780) 423 5353 F (780) 424 9117
latitude53.Org
info@latitude53.org

October 26--November 26, 2005
The Clothes Project
Megan Wilson + Rob Ochiena
Spectre - Joanne Lyons

November 17, 2005
Launch of fifty3 magazine
issue 6.4 "Sacred"

December 10, 2005
Schmoozy: An evening of fashion,
featuring a silent art auction, DJs &
fashion show.

Weathervane

2 September to 6 November 2005
Curated by Karen Love



SEIFOLLAH SAMADIAN, THE WHITE STATION (DETAIL, 1999)

Body

New Art from the U.K.
25 November 2005 to 5 February 2006
Curated by Bruce Grenville and Colin Ledwith



Vancouver Artgallery

SARAH LUCAS, SELF PORTRAITS 1990-1998, 1999, FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE (DETAIL, 1996), COLLECTION OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND SADI COLES HQ, LONDON

The
Ottawa
Art
Gallery

2 Daly Avenue
(613) 233-8699
info@ottawaartgallery.ca
www.ottawaartgallery.ca

oagAO



YYZ Artists' Outlet

401 Richmond Street West, Suite 140
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3A8
telephone: 416.598.4546
fax: 416.598.2282
e-mail: yyz@yyzartistsoutlet.org
gallery hours: 11-5

emblem and information to be written
instead of copied. icon above title to
communicate the appropriate tone of the
letter or publication.

THE HUGGING CENTRE/PAMÉLA LANDRY//
//DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH/DANIEL OLSON//
/////THIS IS ME/CHANDRA BULUCON
//05 NOVEMBER 05 - 17 DECEMBER 05//
//ART+ACTIVISM/KYM PREUSSE, CURATOR/
/////14 JANUARY 06 - 25 FEBRUARY 06//

YYZ LOGO PROPOSAL
DESIGNED BY ZIN TAYLOR,
TORONTO

YYZ ACKNOWLEDGES THE
SUPPORT OF THE CANADA
COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS,
THE ONTARIO ARTS
COUNCIL AND THE
TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL.



Detail, painting by Shari-Anne Gibson

Emerging Exteriors

October 12 to November 5, 2005
Reception: Thursday, October 13, 5 to 7 pm

Through photo, textile, and painting based installations, Mildred Avendano, Mohammad R. Mofrad, Jeannette Nguyen, and Vicky Talwar explore surface and texture, and the meanings held within.

Nomansland

November 16 to December 10, 2005
Reception: Thursday, November 17, 5 to 7 pm

Karen Crawford, Alice Gibney, Shari-Anne Gibson, Braden LaBonté and Adi Zeharia present drawings and paintings that construct realms integrating the human world with the forces of nature.

Sculpture/Installation, Photography and Video

January 18 to February 11, 2006
Reception: Thursday, January 19, 5 to 7 pm

Molly Buckle, Danielle Davies, Melissa Fisher, Robert Murphy, Laura Paolini, Jared Prince and Kristen Wulff explore how the body exists when it is not there through the mediums of sculpture, installation, photography and video. The exhibition questions—how much of one's identity is physical and how do we relate within society through purely physical means?

OCAD Student Gallery

285 Dundas Street West, Toronto
416.977.6000 x262/263 cswidorski@ocad.on.ca
www.ocad.ca Wednesday to Saturday, 12 to 6 pm



All images in this article are of Grey Filastine, *Noizekart* intervention, Mutek 2004, Photo: tobias c. van Veen

Sonic Warfare, Tactical Sound Systems and the Post-World of Grey Filastine

by tobias c. van Veen

Being involved in a conflict, you have the right to use the tools of conflict. That's what a lot of direct action is about. I feel that using this music in this way, as a force, is just using the tools in the toolbox.

— Grey Filastine¹

The deployment of sound as a tactic in social dis/organisation is as ancient as the arts themselves. Sound is the great alien communicator. It orbits our unconscious desires with transmissions from altered states; it leads to orgiastic bliss and ecstasy just as easily as it fuels hatred and destruction. Hence its inscription in military as well as pagan history. A great reductionist theory might inscribe all of human movement within this thought: the arrangement of human society as the rhythm clash between the soundtrack to the marching band vs. the talking drums of a ritual...²

Many contemporary musicians exhibit the common trait of avoiding discussion of their practice. Sensationalist and often banal music journalism on the one channel and overwrought calls for theoretical justification on the other often buffer the sonic composer into silence. Yet, with the increasing incorporation of sophisticated, complex technologies — laptops, P2P file-sharing, sampling, software — the position of a cultural producer, interventionist, composer, etc., is even more intensified in the whirlwind of contention over issues of property,

author/ity, appropriation, and (live) performance. The retreat to an acousmatic formalism on behalf of a contingent of electro-acoustic and renegade avant-gardists has only added to the obfuscation. When the laptop is synecdoche to the (absent) (hu)man, it follows that the production of *sonic events* has been all too easily confused with the calculative operations of an algorithm. The horror show is substituted for the math lecture.³

Which is to provide somewhat of an intro to this wordswap with Grey Filastine. I

inadvertently experienced Mr. Filastine at some point in the mid-1990s at a jtkkung! concert on the west coast of North America. jtkkung! were the fire to the night. Noise-rhythms, AK-47s unloading blank clips over the crowd, pyrotechnics, screaming chants and a procession beyond the confines of the club to the street, invoking pavement occupations and late-night bonfires. jtkkung! were a no-holds barred invocation of anarchic potential in its immediacy, and provided the inspiration for the transposition of their energy and tactics, for me as well as others, into technoculture. As Grey puts it, "jtkkung! was formed when a small posse of okie emigres, myself included, began mixing oil barrels, drums, power tools, radical politics, fire, and disruptive chaos in a squatted blackberry-overgrown forgotten corner of Seattle."

The first time I met Grey was in NYC 2003, playing at a benefit for *Sound Generation* (a forthcoming publication on tactical sound practitioners from Autonomedia). In June of 2004, Grey popped up for Mutek, Montreal's experimental electronic music festival, at which he demonstrated the intervention of his Noise-Kart. Wearing his orange Guantanamo prison suit and clad in a black bandana, Grey's shopping cart, laptop and loudspeaker set-up broadcasted high-volume militaristic noise barrages and eastern rhythms to the somewhat uncertain übercöolische of Mutek's digerati.

The common language of Grey's sonology — the "logic" of a particular sonic thread — is the drum.

The drum is the backbone to any military march, which is why any facile division between, say, bourgeois entertainment (as "spectacle") vs. avant-garde music (as "progressive") unstitches at the seams, even

more so when one considers the deployment of the drum throughout the world's vibrant cultures. To break the rhythm of the 4/4 is not necessarily a radical act: off-sync "avant-garde" rhythm often merely advocates complacency in an audience, constituting the audience as chair — rather than, say, *building* — squatters.

Which is perhaps why the drum drives the Infernal Noise Brigade (INB), an activist marching band co-founded by Grey in time for the Seattle WTO '99 demonstrations.⁴ The INB is a tightly organised unit: "We are a tactical mobile rhythmic unit consisting of a majorette, medic, tactical advisers, rifle twirling contingent, flag corps, sound generating kart, vocalists, horns, and between eight and twelve percussionists."⁵ The INB uses uniforms (green and black for political actions; orange, black and silver for non-political events), advanced organisation and complex rhythms ("complex rhythms ... create complex ideas"), to produce movement, impetus, trajectory: "The idea is to read the crowd, to be a social accelerant, a cultural accelerant, a street accelerant."

The inherent violence to sound is requisite of Filastine's desire to reclaim the "mob" and its vitality. Reclaim the Streets: Remix the Mob. In acknowledging that the State expects disorganised protest, one grasps that the collective organisation of sound is in itself a little understood *art*. An art in the sense of *tekhne*, a technology. A technology in the hands of the people (if even a "mob"), although also, in the everyday life, a technology rendered all but invisible in the efficient functioning of the State. People forget how to dance, save for purchasing the occasional two-step to an advertising jingle. Resample that old statement from *On the Poverty of Student Life*, whydontchya: "Proletarian revolutions will be *festivals* or they will be nothing, for

celebration is the keynote of the life they herald. *Play* is the fundamental principle of this festival, and the only rules it recognizes are to live without dead time and to enjoy without restraints."⁶

The following is a remixed transcript of a conversation. It's not so much an interview as a chance to replay the possibilities of a trajectory wherein a certain collaboration between the occupation movements of rave culture, the anarchic, mobile squats of Reclaim the Streets and the fiery protests of alter-globalization protests find their homecoming. And to get a sense of how this plugs into the questions that sharply define our time: militancy/fundamentalism, aesthetics/politics, technology/appropriation, us/them ...

Sound and System: Email and Transcripts, remixed 05.02–25.05, Japan/Montreal

tv: You run postworldindustries.com, an independent label and distributor. You are an ex-member of jtkkung! and founding marching band member of the Infernal Noise Brigade. You make your own beats, not so much "sampled" but collectively generated from the recording of your world travels. You have recently released a number of seven inches. You're off to the next 68 in Scotland, and replying from Japan. So Grey, how did you come to sound? I have some myths I tell myself as to how sound both affects me (beyond any "justification of politics") as well as how it has become a force to be engaged, to transform a situation ... these myths have to do with rave culture, and are very real, but are the imaginative framework which sustains the openness of the future. So, how did you start thinking, 'yeah, sound is the means to combust the scenario?'

Grey: I found sound through drums, which, are for my purposes, a noise

instrument. Nothing but the repetitious interruption of silence, the focused movement of air, or a disturbance. I think it's funny that rave culture and the electronic festival underground often refers to its events as "tribal." I totally agree, but not for the poorly executed riffs on traditional cultures, but because the music, with its repetition and experiential ritual, speaks to the pre-civilized part of the brain. Seeing as how civilization has brought us the regimentation of the clock, slavery in many forms, and the end of clean air and water, I'm fond of anything that experiments with reversing recent trends. By recent I mean like the past few thousand years. So, if each strike of a drum is a small explosion, than it's natural for me to consider it a political act, and that the explosions that I detonate have targets, and that my music is one very primitive but satisfying way to "combust the scenario." Sometimes I'm a bit more literal, as was the case in jtkkung! when we used blank-loaded AK-47s onstage in a taiko-inspired composition, or with this collaborative track I'm currently working on, which includes a baile funk rapper in Rio that features a lot of gunfire. Gunfire is often part of the vernacular of this music, but this time it is repurposed for a more political aim.

Arrhythmic sound too has a history of use in conflict, employed by both power and counter-power. Railey's Rodeo, a special US unit in World War II, is the first documented use of amplified sound to confuse and scare the enemy. They used massive loudspeaker trucks obscured by smoke to spread aural panic. [...] The counter-hegemonic use of ambient sound is less clear. I've certainly practiced this art with the Moukabir Sawte sound attacks on corporate media outlets during the onset of War on Iraq II.⁷ For this we surrounded different media headquarters, such as Fox, CBS, newspapers, Clear Channel Radio, and

the likes, with five different mobile loudspeaker stations. At a coordinated moment a collage blasted forth, part Muezzin call, party air-raid siren, media samples, Bush excerpts. After five minutes we disappeared and regrouped at the next target. [...] Within recorded sound there is a movement afoot where artists using gathered ambience as the palette for musical composition, and this is an excellent (and far more subtle) politic. Quiet American, AudioFile Collective, Climax Golden Twins, Sonarchy Radio are all working in this field, editing and composing dissonant ambiances.



tv: Ok, the reason I wanted to cover this ground was thinking about the way certain bands become representations, spectacles, entertainment, and how there is little connection between the musician and the audience save for an asymmetrical fan-worship on the one channel, perhaps disdain on the other; and then these other "bands," these fringe musicians, where the whole idea is to generate a context for the mutual appreciation of sound and its force — i.e., to make connections with the people around you ... where the musician is part of the mix, so to speak. Does this make sense for you? Is this jiving with, for example, the way you might have felt when playing off your laptop in Barcelona, during the 2003 anarchist gathering and march?

Grey: Fortunately there was a flatbed-truck-based soundsystem on that anarchist march, so it was possible to provide the soundtrack. (Since I can't always count on someone else arranging a mobile soundsystem.) I've got my hands in two full range sound systems, one in Seattle and the other in Rio de Janeiro, and three shopping-cart-based systems, in Seattle, NYC and Berlin. And some even smaller ones, good only for interventions. I just finished the smallest model for this Japan trip. It fits in a shoulder bag, is incredibly loud and will be tested inside the biggest department store I can find here in Tokyo.

It's odd, but both my current projects, as opposite as they might seem, are a stab at circumventing a few levels of mediation, to deliver the sounds with a minimum of intermediaries. With the Infernal Noise Brigade, a marching band that plays amidst crowds, that's obvious, but with the material produced electronically, it results in a product that bypasses recording studios, record labels, distro networks, to be sold or given away directly by hand or via the internet, and can even be delivered to ears in public sphere venues via these mobile soundsystems.

tv: How does electronic music plug into the potential of crossing the performer/audience divide for you?

Grey: I'm just using the master's tools. Our current master is the global system of commerce and wealth consolidation. They build all the tools I use, the best thing I can do is steal and pirate as much as possible. It's awful to pay for something, I hate contributing to the market, circulating money, but you've got to work on the frontier to make anything interesting. The frontier is certainly in these little machines crunching binary. I've produced tracks and collaborated in all kinds of odd scenarios from Marrakech to Habana, why on earth would I want to be in a fucking rock and roll band? How soon can we sign off on rock as a dead art? Even punk — let's salvage the

attitude and discard the tired soundtrack. I'm not sure what can be accomplished by this music other than nostalgic references. It is a corpse. Back to drums — the drumkit used in nearly all modern music is called a trapset, short for contraption, because it was a contraption of different things innovated by a few really clever cats back in the day. Why did the innovation stop there and then fossilize? I think because companies got a hold of it and did their reverse-midas touch, which brings us back to the soul-sucking and numbing mediocrity of industrial capital.

tv: Does sampling contain the power to motivate a particular relation between performer and people? With the power of the laptop, does it approach something like the folk-guitar of the twenty-first century? I'm curious if this is what you're feeling when you travel to the east ... if this connection is being made.

Grey: Sampling has been powerfully argued as the beginning of the end of ownership, and with that I totally agree. The popularization of the laptop is only going to hasten this process. The results are interesting, but I'm a little concerned about old-fashioned things like respect, musicianship, and giving credit. Mostly because tech-privileged young white dudes mine from music of Afro-america or the world's poorest nations. It's usually harmless, but can get sketchy if profits are made, or if the aesthetic is so dubious that it degrades the original material. But I don't think that laptopism will replace guitars, because it can't be quickly and easily taught and shared, at least not yet. It could go that way, especially with the new powered PA speakers being put out, that we might see an expanded soundsystem culture, which is what it would take to elevate (or denigrate?) this music to a folk art.

tv: I have a few tendencies I want to address from the question of sampling: militancy and fundamentalism; aesthetics and ethics. These are somewhat connected in the matrix we are both involved in. For example, when you performed your Mutek 2004 intervention, there were beats sampled from corners of the Middle East. Through the broadcast megaphone, it sounded like calls to Jihad remixed.

Grey: The beats were of my own manufacture, mostly programmed, but some live playing and sampling of myself. There may have been some street noise and loud-speaker rebroadcasting samples from Morocco, Egypt, Turkey or India that may give the impression of something angry happening, but for the most part these sounds are apolitical, only through the disassociated context do they take a political hue. With these public sound interventions I always include these kinds of sounds; there are many reasons for this, both philosophical and emotional. The idea is to re-broadcast ambience recorded in the ragged edges of this empire, curating these sounds into collage for an attack on the silence at the center. North America is aurally located at the eye of a hurricane ... destruction all around the world and calmness at the center, and I have this rare opportunity to redistribute the chaos. The less theoretical reason I put these sounds into the mix is simply that I love them, and it is a purely aesthetic tribute.

tv: In practice, how does one — how do you — go about sampling and recording beats from across the world without becoming one of these beat-mining white dudes, as you put it? What relations do you establish (personal, political, economic) to develop connections to this other world?

In a situation wherein sound is used as a tactical force — in militant situations —

The fact that people in the wealthy states know little about music except as promoted and sold by the big five record companies is an embarrassment, and pretty clearly demonstrates how the flow of information works in the world ...

sampling and engaging "the East" is also about learning cultures of militancy and how this might differ, I would hope, from militarism. This is a fine line and a fine distinction: like understanding that Jihad is about reforming the self, not that different from Socrates when he said "know thyself" (sampled from the pagan Oracle at Delphi, of course). And that the perception of Jihad as equivalent to "Holy War" is quite a misfire, so to speak, but also one that serves the west's attempts and ideologies to conquer "the East."

So what ethical considerations/questions do you ask yourself when engaging and sampling, musically, personally, politically? And it follows: what *aesthetic* considerations/questions do you ask yourself or investigate when hitting the question of ethics? E.g., how do you know when sampling a polyrhythmic drum from Marrakech borderlines on the superficial resonance of "worldbeat" and "ethnobreaks"?

Grey: First of all, let's strike that term — worldbeat — from our language. Can there be a more ethnocentric term? If you go to Nigeria or Nepal they can identify and distinguish between nearly all of popular music forms from the English world. The fact that people in the wealthy states know little about music except as promoted and sold by the big five record companies is an embarrassment, and

How soon can we sign off on rock as a dead art? Even punk — let's salvage the attitude and discard the tired soundtrack.



pretty clearly demonstrates how the flow of information works in the world: the entire “developing” world is just a big homogenous glob, a place where resources are collected, labour is outsourced, and where they’d better acculturate to our model or risk getting labeled as a rogue state.

tV: This comes down to the almost impenetrable question: how can one be critical of the point wherein the context allows us to say “ha! that is CHEESE — and its sampling, here, is unethical”? What are the markers of this context, for you?

This is a difficult question ... I can see there being no answer in firm and forever (of course not — for this is a complex interplay between cultures, musics,

rhythms, politics, peoples) ... what I want to do is figure out ways to talk about it. Or, act: it feels like you encountered these difficulties with the release of Mamouat Abde ElHakim’s *Direct from the Djema al Fna*. Can you tell me a bit about it?

Grey: I was in Morocco in 2000, visiting the Master Musicians of Jajouka and traveling around recording the street sounds. On this trip I spent a lot of time in the Djema al Fna, the central square of Marrakech, recording street musicians. I was recording just for my own later listening, not really for sampling or anything because it’s usually not very appropriate. After a few years of listening to one particular group I decided that I should release an album of their music. I wasn’t sure they were still alive, since they are old

men, but I came with some amazing volunteers — a sound engineer, photographer and translator, and managed to conduct a session and produce this album. About a year later I returned and delivered a few boxes of CDs. It was pretty intense for them to see the full on jewelcase with all the photos, liner notes, and all.

[As for the aesthetics and ethics]: This is so personal, frequently I can’t stomach some music [...]. This can make you feel like a snobby asshole, but you can’t deny your own sensibilities. I believe that how this interplay is defined and executed will be a fluid matter, and that we are only beginning to learn how to do this well.

tV: I get the sense that fluidity, here, is what matters: that by travelling,

becoming-fluid, seeking to make connections, the charges of a “cultural tourism” are evaded (or foregrounded) as it becomes more than apparent that what you are doing is generating ad-hoc social networks and permanent nodes. That at your best, you seek not to represent the world but to become so involved in its spinning that you cannot distance yourself from cultural otherness: becoming at home in the world, and, perhaps, a stranger in your own country. You hold it open before you, I feel, as a negotiation: is this the case?

Grey: Exactly, it is a phenomena of inverse proportion. The more internationalized the less nationalized. Obviously I’ve never come from a position of nationalism, but being a citizen of any nation builds from birth a set of unconscious references and codes that give a sensitive insight into your country’s modus operandi. Any expanded consciousness wrought by interfacing with different cultures usually results in a distancing from your own, at least in my experience. With regards to nodes and networks, I believe this is the difference between living vs. touring or travelling, the former necessitating both more time and energy, learning some language, and integrating with local underground projects. Paul Bowles once defined a distinction between tourists and travelers, but with so many stoned post-ravers and ersatz adventurers who are self-identified travelers, it’s not a word that I can embrace.

tV: Have there been spaces and times in which this fluidity and negotiation hasn’t worked? In which you have either been accosted, harmed, threatened, or, when you’ve come away feeling that you’ve done something wrong?

Grey: Normally a performer, especially one that travels from a distant country,

gets paid, but this can get ambiguous when I’m coming from a financially rich nation and performing in a poor one. It can get a little sticky trying to negotiate what is fair, but I’ve only had things go sour once — recently in Buenos Aires. Usually I leave it to the promoter’s discretion. Much of the earth’s money is consolidated in the United States and I’ve got a few ways of extracting it, so performing at a loss or gifting music is sometimes okay. I’ve received a few small grants too, but usually pimping myself to the non-profit world is more trouble than it’s worth, life is too short to deal with that crap.

And sure, I’ve been robbed, attacked by a mob and things like that while abroad, but usually it is unrelated to any transgression other than having more money in my wallet. Although it sucks, I understand it, if I lived in some of these situations I would think about robbing me, and certainly try to pull some hustle. Just to be clear, the most extreme hostility I encounter is in the United States, where I’ve been beaten by both white skinheads and young black kids in acts of semi-random violence, driven I suppose by the alienating and divisive culture of that place. Also, I drive a taxi and what’s curious is that I’ve never been robbed, but have been assaulted many times for no compelling reason.

tobias c. van Veen is a contributing editor for Fuse magazine. He still mixes a mean absynthe martini while spinning wax for BURN.FM, curating new media for The Upgrade! Montreal and performing sound interventions. He is doctoral candidate in philosophy and communication studies at McGill University.
< <http://www.quadrantcrossing.org> >

Grey Filastine can be found at <http://www.postworldindustries.com> and at a Cocktail Hour near you.

Sample Sources

- 1 “Music for an Angry Mob.” Grey Filastine interviewed by Lex Bhagat in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest* 1:2 (2003). <<http://www.journalofaestheticsandprotest.org/1/musicMob/index.html>>. This interview is slated for publication in *Sound Generation*, ed. Alexis Bhagat, (Brooklyn: Autonomedia Press).
2. In fact, one finds nearly this thesis — or at least its form — in Jacques Attali, *Noise: The political economy of music*, trans. Brian Massumi. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985).
3. Which is not to belittle algorithmic development in sound research (say, the brilliant genesis of granular synthesis, for example). But it is to question where and how a sonic event differs from a pedagogical exercise in sound articulation, the latter perhaps just as interesting, but lacking the force to provoke what sound can upset.
4. See <<http://www.infernalnoise.org/>>.
5. From “Music for an Angry Mob,” the *ivb* statement. All quotes in this paragraph from the article.
6. Situationist International and some students at the University of Strassbourg, *On the Poverty of Student Life*, trans. Lorraine Perlman. (Detroit: Black and Red, 2000), p. 29.
7. See the video: <<http://postworldindustries.com/video/MoukabarSawtestream.mov>>. Also the Cocktail Hour: <http://postworldindustries.com/video/Cocktail_Hour.mov>

Securing the nation post-9/11: the case against Steve Kurtz

interview by Gita Hashemi and Janna Graham

Since 1987, Critical Art Ensemble have written manifestos, conducted research and staged participatory performative events that explore the intersections of art, technology, radical politics and critical theory. Their recent investigations into biotechnology have included the creation of a process for testing food for genetically modified ingredients and research into the history of the United States' biological warfare program. In 2004, a number of events triggered the detainment and prosecution of CAE's Steve Kurtz under the USA PATRIOT Act.

In this interview with FUSE's Gita Hashemi and Janna Graham, Steve Kurtz, Lucia Sommer and Claire Pentecost, members of CAE and Members of the CAE Legal Defense Fund (Steve cannot speak directly to issues in his legal case) discuss Steve's recent experiences in US courts and the implications of the USA PATRIOT Act on CAE's work on bio-technology, tactical media and the democratization of science.



Critical Art Ensemble and Beatriz da Costa, *Free Range Grains*, banner, 2003. Courtesy: Critical Art Ensemble

FUSE: Steve, We'd like to start by expressing how sorry we are about the personal circumstances under which this fiasco with the FBI took place. Lucia, could you tell us how this case came about?

LUCIA SOMMER: On May 11, 2004, Steve Kurtz's wife of 20 years, Hope, died of heart failure in their home in Buffalo. Steve called 911. In what was apparently a symptom of the new "war on terror" political climate in the US, the Buffalo Police, who responded along with emergency workers, became alarmed by the presence of scientific equipment and petri dishes in Steve's home. The petri dishes contained a harmless bacteria — *Serratia marcescens*. Most of this material had previously been used in CAE's exhibited work in galleries and museums throughout Europe and North America; the rest was for a new project that CAE was working on. On his way to the funeral home the next day, Steve was detained by agents from the FBI and Joint Terrorism Task Force, who informed him he was being investigated for "bioterrorism." At no point during the next 22 hours in which Steve was held and questioned did the agents fully Mirandize him or inform him he could leave. Meanwhile, agents from numerous federal law enforcement agencies — including five regional branches of the FBI, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, and the Buffalo Police, Fire Department and State Marshall's office — descended on Steve's home in Hazmat suits. They cordoned off half a block around the house and seized his cat, car, computers, manuscripts, books and equipment. They seized Hope's body from the county coroner — who had already determined she had died of natural causes — for further analysis. The Erie County Health Department condemned Steve's house as a possible "health risk." A week later, only after the Commissioner of Public Health for New York State had tested samples from the home and announced there was no public safety threat, and the military coroner had also determined Hope had died of natural causes, was Steve allowed to return to his home and to recover her body and his cat, who had been locked in the attic without food or water. To this day, the FBI has not

released most of the tens of thousands of dollars worth of impounded materials, including the research for a book Steve was working on.

FUSE: Our understanding is that Steve is no longer charged with "bioterrorism." What is the charge against him?

LS: On June 29, 2004, a federal Grand Jury appeared to reject any "terrorism" charges and instead handed down indictments of two counts each of "mail fraud" and "wire fraud" under Title 18, United States Code, sections 1341 and 1343. Also indicted was Robert Ferrell, former head of the Department of Genetics at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Public Health. The charges concern technicalities of how Bob helped Steve obtain \$256 worth of harmless bacteria for one of CAE's projects. Although they're a far cry from the charges the District Attorney originally sought, these are still serious federal charges, and they carry the same potential sentence as the original bioterrorism charge would have: up to 20 years in prison.

Charges of mail fraud and wire fraud, are designed to dismantle financial schemes that defraud people out of money through the mail, credit cards or the Internet. These laws are written very broadly, so they're also used to convict figures in organized crime — and they've been used historically to put away social and political dissidents, from Marcus Garvey on. In this case, the prosecution is trying to make what could *at best* be a civil contract dispute into a federal crime. It's important to note that even if the defendants did what is alleged in the indictment, at most this would be a petty contract dispute to be settled between the University of Pittsburgh and American Type Culture Collection (the suppliers of the bacteria). But, clearly, it's not even *that*, because neither of these parties, nor the New York or Pennsylvania state authorities, have brought any complaint whatsoever against Steve or Bob! To our knowledge, this is the first time the US Justice Department is intervening in the alleged breach of a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) of non-hazardous materials in order to redefine it as a crim-

inal offense — and they are going way outside of their own prosecutorial guidelines to do this. The Justice Department's "Prosecution Policy Relating to Mail Fraud and Wire Fraud" states very clearly that prosecutions of fraud should not be undertaken unless a scheme is directed to defrauding "a class of persons, or the general public, with a substantial pattern of conduct." Any actions by Steve and Bob in no way fit any of these guidelines.

FUSE: But how did this alleged contract dispute end up in criminal courts?

LS: According to affidavits and search warrants obtained by Steve's lawyer, Paul Cambria, the FBI and federal prosecuting attorney William Hochul obtained the search warrants to Steve's home and office by intentionally misleading a judge. That judge was never told of Steve's explanation of what the harmless bacterial substances were being used for, nor that Steve was a professor and artist (instead he was referred to as a "political advocate") who had exhibited the materials at museums and galleries internationally, nor of the fact that Steve tasted the bacteria in one of the petri dishes in front of an officer to prove it was harmless. Also, in a blatant (and illegal) use of racial profiling, the judge was told of Steve's possession of a photograph with Arabic writing beside it, but not of the photograph's context: an invitation to an art exhibition at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art! The photograph, by The Atlas Group, was one of several exhibited pieces pictured on the invitation.

FUSE: When you were in Toronto last spring, the case was about to go to pre-trial. What happened at court?

LS: The evidentiary hearing finally happened in April, and at the moment, Steve is still waiting for a judge to rule on the pre-trial motions. The hearing did seem to go very well for us, with the judge appearing genuinely incredulous at several points during William Hochul's presentation — but that's not necessarily a good indication of what a judge will do. Judges generally don't like to overturn Grand Jury indictments. We're hoping for a

dismissal, but realize that's not very likely. While most observers assumed the FBI would realize its initial investigation was a terrible mistake, the Department of Justice seems determined to press its "case" against Steve and Bob. Despite the Public Health Commissioner's conclusion as to the safety of the materials Steve was using, and despite the fact that the FBI's own field and laboratory tests showed they were not used for any illegal purpose, the US District Attorney continues to waste millions of dollars of taxpayer money on what is now clearly a politically motivated prosecution.

FUSE: The obvious question about what is happening to Steve is how it relates to other arrests being made under the USA PATRIOT Act/war on terror. Claire, you've written an excellent article categorizing the different types of arrests made under the Act and the Act's use in current prosecutorial strategies.¹ How does Steve and Bob's case fit into the overall strategies used by the US legal system?

CLAIRE PENTECOST: As I mention in the essay, it's hard to know just how much the USA PATRIOT Act is being used in investigations because part of the power of "sneak and peek" is that the law never has to disclose the wire-taps, searches, surveillances, and DNA swabs they may have deemed necessary to determine suspicion. But at the level of the courts we are seeing an earlier, less publicized law become a handy prosecutor's hammer. Among other provisions, "The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996," signed by Bill Clinton after the Oklahoma City bombing, renders it a crime for US citizens to provide material support to the lawful political or humanitarian activities of any foreign group designated by the Secretary of State as "terrorist."

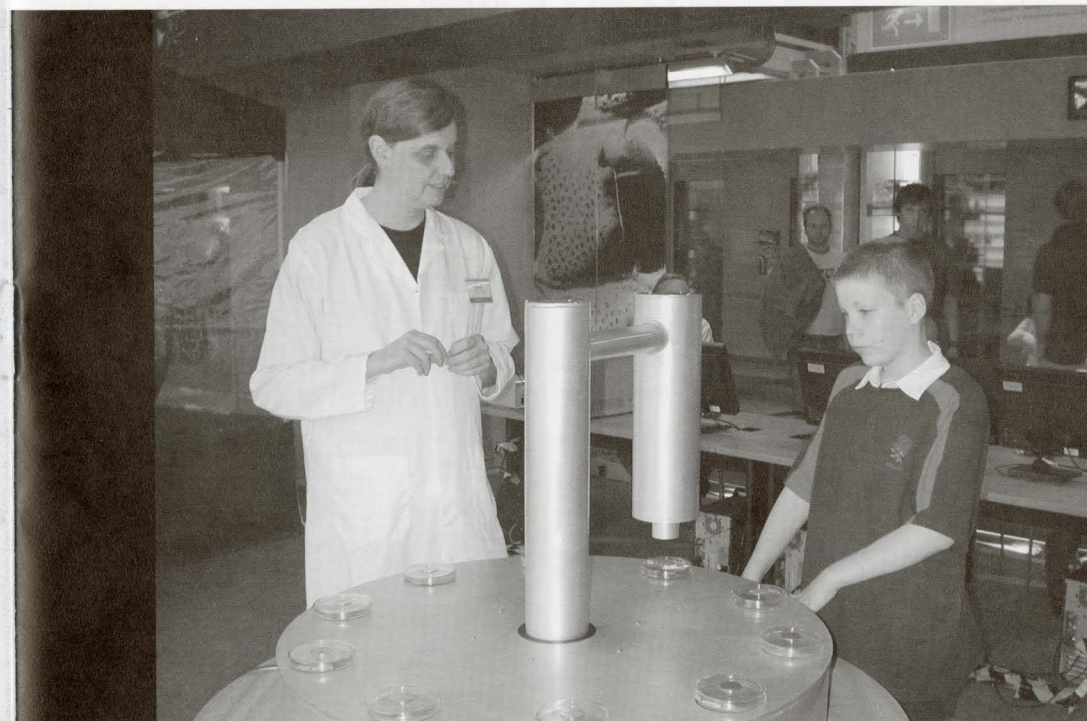
A somewhat ambiguous and tragic case delivering convictions in 2003 on the basis of the material support argument is that of six young Yemeni Americans from the defunct steel town of Lackawanna, New York. These low-income, working, first- and second-generation Americans were recruited by a religious fundamentalist to an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan in the

spring of 2001 where some of them actually met Osama bin Laden. Confronted with the reality of a jihadi organization, they returned home, and ceased all ties with the man who recruited them (who was later killed by a US Predator drone in Yemen). By all accounts they got on with their lives and never knew about, planned or in any other way supported terrorists or terrorist actions. The travesty in this case was the severity of the punishment and the way it was won. The axe over the defense was the constant threat of being declared enemy combatants, which would deliver them to a military prison without access to lawyers, courts or their families — possibly a life sentence by executive fiat. The prosecutors never offered evidence that the Lackawanna defendants intended to commit an act of terrorism, but under the pressure of losing all legal rights, they pleaded guilty and received sentences ranging from 6 ½ to 10 years. A condition of the plea was a waiver by each defendant of the right to appeal, even if the Supreme Court were later to find the law unconstitutional.

As the 9/11 report attests, in the spring of 2001 Ashcroft had taken terrorism off the list of funding priorities and Condoleezza Rice didn't have the time of day for the state department terrorism experts. Although people at the top level of government have not been held to account for being unable or unwilling to heed mounting evidence that al-Qaeda would become the

number one US threat, six young men from Lackawanna should have known that they risked 25-year prison sentences by exploring the promises of radical forms of their religion.

With particular regard to the domestic sweeps and persecutions, many ask, why have we so violently alienated the community whose cooperation might actually help us in the war on terrorism? Clearly, cooperation is not a priority. "Catching terrorists" may be the advertised objective, but what these policies demonstrate is that there is a broader goal, a more urgent necessity for a larger vision. What the terrorist attacks of 9/11 represented to their target, Multinational Capital, embodied in the World Trade Center, and its ally, the US military, embodied in the Pentagon, is that the pan-Islamic independence movement is out of control and must be eliminated. For global capital to continue to integrate one "nonintegrated" region after another, especially those with valuable resources, the notion of Islamic independence, like any vigorous third world independence movement, is *in the way* and must be crushed. And this means that any *potential* sympathizers with such a movement must be set straight. In this case, people of Islamic identification everywhere must be disciplined, must be shown that the privileges of the first world, including democracy and basic human rights, are only theirs by the discretion of first world superpowers, the US and the EU.



Critical Art Ensemble and Beatriz da Costa, *GenTerra*, The Museum of Natural History's Darwin Center, London, 2003. Courtesy: Critical Art Ensemble

Of the Lackawanna Six, Bush boasted that we had broken up a terrorist sleeper cell. In 2003 John Ashcroft gave the Justice Department's highest award, "The Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service" to the members of the Buffalo Joint Terrorism Task Force for the dismantlement of the Lackawanna terrorist cell. Many of the award recipients were part of the team that conducted the investigation of Kurtz. The award-winning prosecutor who presented the case against the Yemeni Americans, William Hochul, is now prosecuting Steve Kurtz and Robert Ferrell. Besides heading the anti-terrorism unit in the Western District of New York State, his specialty is the use of fraud and racketeering charges in criminal cases against white collar, violent and organized crime.

FUSE: Beyond this connection to Hochul, what are the ideological grounds or pragmatic considerations that allow the state to pull a white man of an elite class into this whirlpool? Surely he doesn't fit the racial profile driven by xenophobia ...

CP: Referring to the Lackawanna case, Deputy Attorney General Larry D. Thompson said, "[t]errorism and support of terrorists is not confined to large cities. It lurks in small towns and rural areas." An advantage of the Kurtz-Ferrell case is that it illustrates that US Justice does not only prosecute the dark and the poor, but that it will also hunt the white and the professionally salaried. The enemy is not confined to those we easily recognize as other, but comes disguised as college professors in the arts and sciences. Justice is fair; the enemy is everywhere.

In this way, even as the architects of a privileged society wage war on a population they have deemed a threat or obstacle, they consolidate the loyalty of the included. This requires disciplining any serious criticism of the system being defended. Even in the best of times, the law is multifarious and discretionary, meaning that laws are generally enforced in an unequal manner, so the more enfranchised, "valued" citizenry are less likely to encounter the law for the same actions that will trip the less enfranchised, generally suspected, disposable people. And this is always put to political ends, sometimes urgently when a "present danger" can be broadcast and other times more routinely. When the reigning defence moves from routine mechanisms of ideology and enforcement to broader operations of brutality, the tactics must be justified by vilifying more than just the outsiders, but by showing any class of detractor to be deviant and punishable.

It's easy to believe this ambitious prosecutor and his team find the content of Critical Art Ensemble's work, especially their writings, so radically deviant from their own plan for America that they consider it criminal. Everything about the art group's activity has always been completely legal and their ideas are protected by the First Amendment. As little respect as the Bush administration shows for the US Constitution or any other inconvenient law, national or international, they have not yet been able to openly trump the First Amendment. But the judicial trance induced by the mantra of terrorism currently gives the prosecution supraconstitutional powers, specifically end-runs around First Amendment

rights. Unfortunately, the Kurtz-Ferrell case may follow the formula of the neutral infraction + leftist politics = inflation to terrorist proportions.

FUSE: How has your case impacted the scientific community and how much support have you had from the field of science?

STEVE KURTZ: The case is reasonably well known. Enough for a minor crackdown to begin, especially within academia. A lot of warnings regarding MTAs are being memoed about. Scientists are being told they need to run a tighter ship. The days of free exchanges without worry are over. Also, there has been more talk about cutting off support to amateurs, or anyone outside one's own lab. Lab supply distributors have been warned as well and have complied to the extent they will not sell wetware to amateurs.

Support for the case has been OK. There was a lot of positive editorializing in the beginning in science journals. And enough scientists have come forward to mount a defense with highly qualified expert witnesses. It's not as good as it could be though. There are two problems: One, Bob is too ill to put a lot effort into the campaign; and two, there are many scientists who are scared they will lose funding if they stand up against the government.

FUSE: CAE has extensively addressed this climate of fear and control within the scientific community in theorizing the notion of "amateur" critical inquiry into "life science knowledge systems." What is your definition of "amateur" and how has CAE used "amateur" practices in its work?

SK: An amateur is someone who has not been formally trained as an expert within a given specialized discourse, but still has an interest in exploring the discipline, and does so. When the amateur comes to this discourse armed with critical capabilities, a good imagination, or both, s/he can do things that specialists cannot. S/he can challenge paradigms, and if the challenge is a lost cause

there is no problem because nothing is riding on the results. S/he does not have to answer to investors, granting agencies, the government, bosses, the military, peers, etc. For CAE, we can take a critical position within the life sciences that would be unwise if we were trying to build a career. We can imagine how to use the knowledge, materials and procedures of the life sciences in ways in which the powers that direct or pressure research initiatives would not approve. Obviously, the limitations are many. We can't do Big Science, but we can make our presence felt.

FUSE: How does this work challenge both governments and multi-national companies like Monsanto in the increasing regulation and control over all aspects of knowledge production in bioscience?

SK: First, CAE does not recognize these institutions' self-proclaimed right of ownership of the life sciences. We attempt to remind them and the public that this knowledge system is part of the commonwealth and everyone has a right to access the knowledge, processes, and the unregulated materials. Second, we take direct cultural action to stop exploitive corporate practices, or, at the very least, expose the practices and undermine the rhetoric used to mislead the public.

FUSE: And what are your demands?

SK: In concrete terms, here are what we struggle for in regard to the life sciences and biotechnology.

1) A halt to corporate initiatives to consolidate and control the world's food supply. Food supplies should be decentralized and diversified so that they cannot be used as a means to reinforce hegemony and colonial dependency.

2) All biotech initiatives and policies that are going to have a profound effect on the environment and/or humans should be in the democratic control of the public, as opposed to the current status of corporate/bureaucratic control.

Decentralize and Diversify

Critical Art Ensemble What Contestational Biologists Want

What Contestational Biologists Want

- 1) A halt to corporate initiatives to consolidate and control the world's food supply. Food supplies should be decentralized and diversified so that they can't be used as a means to reinforce hegemony and colonial dependency.
- 2) All biotech initiatives and policies that are going to have a profound effect on the environment and/or humans should be in the democratic

Critical Art Ensemble,
Claire Pentecost and Beatriz
da Costa, *Molecular Invasion*,
screen shot, first installed at
the Hemicycle at the
Corcoran Museum, 2002.
Courtesy: Critical Art
Ensemble

3) Biotechnologies that could have profound effects on the environment over time must be the subject of long-term study before they can be commercially licensed. We do not want to stop GMO research, only proceed with a caution that indicates a belief that environmental and public safety is of greater importance than profit.

4) The life sciences (in its many cultural forms) should remain a part of the cultural commons, and should not be considered the private property of corporations and the military.

5) All ecological commons should be maintained and defended and corporate eco-pirates prosecuted.

Those have been our primary concerns of late.

FUSE: Does CAE align and/or affiliate itself with GMO-free and anti-corporate activism, much of which must, by necessity, engage in activities rendered illegal by existing institutions and systems?

SK: Again, I have to emphasize that we are not anti-GMO. Genetic modification is a revolutionary field of research that must go forward. We are anti-capitalist, and resist the ways capitalism abuses knowledge by framing it so it serves the few and harms the many. We view ourselves as a radical research wing for a generalized anti-capitalist resistance. Hopefully, we can produce models, methods and tools for those who have chosen resistance, whether they are individuals, groups or popular fronts. We are not formally allied with anyone. We do function within a larger network of cultural researchers with whom we have an informal mutual aid agreement including RTMark, the Institute for Applied Autonomy, the Carbon Defense League, subRosa, World Intelligence Organization, Mongrel, and so on. It's really best to stay independent. To ally with a specific movement will suck you in like a black hole. In the eighties, we got overly involved in the AIDS movement. The next thing we knew, we were just making agitprop and organizing protests and actions.

We weren't doing what we are best at and like to do. After that, no more direct alliances.

FUSE: Given the neo-colonial political economy of First World/Third World relations and the urgency and scope of devastation in the Third World countries resulting from the forced or coerced adoption of GMOs and other industrial agricultural practices, how does your radicalism contribute, tactically or strategically, to the broader activist efforts that are articulated outside the walls of cultural institutions?

SK: CAE hopes that some of the tools, tactics and models we create can be used by anyone. For example, inverting Monsanto's model of agricultural sabotage so it could work for traditional and organic farmers as a means of environmental defense. We also hope to show through our amateur practices that the only thing keeping us from making the master's tools our own, is believing what we are told — tools are dangerous in the wrong hands and we are not trained to properly use them.

FUSE: This question of where one's work is positioned seems extremely critical at this juncture. CAE has always distributed its work in the art world. Is this for protection, to engage with mainstream audiences, to create a framework from which you can be a witness or necessary outsider to the collusion between science, government and multi-nationals?

SK: The first thing to remember is that the art world is not a monolith. It can appear that way sometimes, but there are many different art worlds with wildly different agendas and goals. The second thing is that CAE does not consider itself a group of art specialists. We are interdisciplinarians who explore intersections. We try not to place ourselves in a particular position; rather, we aim for a dynamic flow that moves through specializations for both exploratory and practical reasons. The key logistical issues here are communication, access, and sponsorship (protection has never really been on the table, because, as you mentioned, you can't be protected. CAE's general project is one that assumes risk). We use the

language that we believe the people we want to dialogue with understand best and are most comfortable using. When we need access to an institution, we choose the role (artist, academic, colleague, activist, researcher, whatever) that will give us the best chance for access. If we need production costs covered, we go to where it's most likely to happen. The segments of the "art world" that are interested in experimental and political art have been very good to us in this regard. Like everything that we do, we engage in series of tactical choices in an effort to accomplish what is generally not allowed to happen or is at least strongly discouraged. When we do actions, in the grand majority of cases, our audience does not view what we do as art. Even in a museum. For participants outside of the specialization of art, we are just something out of place that they have discovered. There are too many discourses crossing one another for our actions to be easily categorized unless someone arrives with a preconceived set of assumptions. This is why we discourage publicity for our actions and performances. We want them to be discovered, not attended.

FUSE: For you, does CAE's work operate on a representational or symbolic level or do you employ the art structures as a way to infiltrate certain audiences? Who are the audiences?

SK: The answer is both, although we are not trying to infiltrate anything. We leave that to the "community artists." We are simply trying to engage certain audiences. The audiences are those we believe have a stake in the issues that we are exploring. If the issue is GM food, the people at the grocery store, or at a farmers market are the audience. If it's reproductive technology, the audience is middle class white people between the ages of 25 and 45. If the project is tourism in Halifax, the tourists in Halifax are the audience. The formula is quite simple.

FUSE: To wrap this up and perhaps open the door for a future follow up, in your reflections you've suggested that your research-in-progress on bio-defense policy has been a factor prompting the prosecution's zeal to

pursue the case. Could you tell us about the manuscript that was confiscated when you were arrested? What was your analysis of the United States role and increasing state and corporate interests in bio-terrorism?

SK: We are at the center of a reinvention of McCarthyism, and a new type of enforcement of the privatization of knowledge. In the greater sense, it's not something unique to CAE that is being targeted. There are many other candidates that could serve the same purpose. Our guess is that it was the combination of the FBI stumbling upon us, seeing the content of our work, and then deciding with the Justice Department that this was a good case to make an example of. What makes us an even better candidate is the work we were doing at the time on germ warfare. We think the feds believed that they could throw the term "bioterrorism" around, that it would stick to CAE and then they could get a slam-dunk court win on whatever bogus charge they could come up with.

The project CAE was, and is still, working on is called "Marching Plague." We were looking to show how the history of biowarfare programs reveals that they usually emerged out of false military fear in conjunction with segments of the military seeing a means to generate funds by planting these fears. The technology consistently tested out to be useless even within the logic of the military. We then wanted to go on to show the current germ warfare program generated by the Bush administration is not only a waste of taxpayer dollars, but also competes for funds better used for public and global health initiatives (again, even when placed within the strategic logic of the military). The payoff for the Bush administration in engaging this economy of waste is to maintain the spectacles of fear and commitment to national defense. Of course, this comes at the cost (quite literally) of millions of lives each year.

Notes:

1. See *Reflections on the Case by the US Justice Department against Steven Kurtz and Robert Ferrell* by Claire Penetost, available at <http://www.caedefensefund.org>. For more information about the case against Steve Kurtz and Bob Ferrell, or to contribute to the CAE Legal Defense Fund, please contact www.caedefensefund.org.

Alert: Subject

[+]06/07/05 FROM: Rebecca Garrett SUBJECT: **Kazemi exhibit censored** FORWARD: **Library removes Kazemi photos** after complaint. Last Updated Tue, 07 Jun 2005 13:05:21 EDT CBC Arts **An exhibition of work by slain Canadian photographer Zahra Kazemi has been shut down**, following complaints it was **too sympathetic to the Palestinian uprising**. Last week, a collection of 23 black-and-white photos Kazemi took during her travels in countries like Israel, Iran and Afghanistan opened at a municipal library in the Montreal borough of Côte Saint-Luc, which has a large Jewish population. A library patron complained that several of the photos depict scenes of the intifada, the Palestinian uprising in Israel, and of Palestinian refugee camps. Gallery officials decided to remove five images. Kazemi's son Stephan Hachemi told Radio-Canada Monday that dismantling the exhibition shows a lack of respect. "To me, this is truly a violation of the spirit of my mother's work," he said. Hachemi gave the borough an ultimatum – either display all the photos or none of them – so organizers have closed the exhibit. Côte Saint-Luc Mayor Robert Libman told CBC News Tuesday that the library's gallery isn't there to provoke controversy. "It's a very complicated conflict, and to create an impression where the Palestinian cause is being martyred by oppression by the Israeli government, we don't consider that to be a fair portrait," Libman said. He added that, in the future, such politically charged work won't be displayed at the library. The borough council had commissioned the exhibition to draw attention to the ongoing fight to find out what happened to Kazemi, who died in Tehran on July 11, 2003. At the time, the Montreal-based photographer was in the custody of local police, who had arrested her for shooting pictures of a student demonstration outside an Iranian prison. [+]06/07/05 SUBJECT: Re: **Kazemi exhibit censored** FROM: Jayce Salloum This is really pathetic, is there any email addresses or phone numbers to write in response to this exhibition being cancelled? [+]06/08/05 FROM: Rawi Hage TO: Undisclosed recipients. Dear friends, activist, artists and people of concern, I urge you to write the below officials and voice your protest against such a blunt attack on freedom of expression and marginal voices. I believe we been bullied enough, censored enough and intimidated enough. Everyone has a right to show their own suffering. Enough with the monopoly on suffering. I urge you to write even one small sentence concerning the Kazemi matter. I also suggest that a demonstration should be held in front of the CSL library with the photographs in questions held up high in our hands. Just a reminder that the CSL library belongs to all Canadians not just the few. P.S Send your protests to: Mayor Libman: rlibman@ville.montreal.qc.ca CSL Library: contact@eleanorlondonlibrary.org [+]06/08/05 FROM: Gita Hashemi TO: Undisclosed recipients SUBJECT: Library removes photos. Once again, another case of censorship. I urge you to write protest letters, however short they may be, to: Mayor Libman: rlibman@ville.montreal.qc.ca CSL Library: contact@eleanorlondonlibrary.org

Action: From

To Robert Libman and/or Elenor London Library, [+]06/08/05 FROM: Rebecca Garrett SUBJECT: **Censored** Exhibition. It was with shock and dismay that I read the CBC account of the censoring of Zahra Kazemi's exhibition. It is my understanding that the constitution of Canada guarantees the right of speech and representation for all, and seeks to ensure equity in our civic spaces and public institutions. There is nothing in the constitution that says that this space of respectful dialogue should only exist if everyone has the same opinions about any particular issue. On the contrary, the whole point is to maintain a space where differing viewpoints can be spoken, viewed, discussed. This is a fundamental right, as well as the challenge and the privilege of life in a democracy. If the CBC story is indeed accurate, then what is at stake is not just the censoring of one photographic exhibition. What is at stake is the trust that we Canadians place in our public institutions. I believe that your actions constitute a misuse of public resources, and cannot help but contribute to an erosion of trust in our shared public values. Please tell me there has been some mistake in the reporting of this situation. [+]06/08/05 FROM: Rawi Hage SUBJECT: **Censorship: Côte St-Luc library**. I am appalled at your decision to censor the work of Kazemi. Yet we witness another bureaucratic bullying, discriminatory action aimed at art and freedom of expression. Might I remind you that Arabs and Palestinians in this country also contribute with their taxes to maintain those libraries. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. They do not belong to a single community. There are photos of Israeli soldiers carrying weapons in the Kazemi show, why was the objection only directed at the Palestinians' showing? Why the double standard, the biased representations, the fear and effacement of the "other"? These subjects were obviously the artist's initial choices to photograph, and they ought to be shown and respected. Enough with the cultural hegemony, censorship, racist exclusions. I am certain that there are books in your library's content that are as "controversial" and "menacing" as Kazemi's images. Where and when will it stop, your censorships, your fears and ignorance that is? [+]06/08/05 FROM: Jayce Salloum SUBJECT: To Côte St Luc Mayor Robert Libman, Dear Mayor Libman, Your actions to close the exhibition of Zahra Kazemi are ill-founded, baseless, cowardly, and ignorant. You seek to deny the 'truth', to censor views you don't agree with and basically to run under

a table and hide. Grow up and get a back-bone. [+]06/08/05 FROM: Mary Ellen Davis SUBJECT: **Censorship: Côte St. Luc Library**. The Jewish people do not privately own the notion of suffering. Many other people have experienced the tragedy of genocide, ethnic cleansing, occupation, racism, dispossession. Among them the Palestinians today, who have been inflicted the strange destiny of becoming the Victims of Victims! Please open your mind to the suffering of the other. If necessary, read Haaretz journalists Gideon Levy, Amira Hass, Akiva Eldar, Meron Rappoport. And the reports of Israeli anti-occupation organizations such as Btselem, Gush Shalom, MachSom Watch, Rabbis for Human rights, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, Physicians for Human rights (Israel), etc. Do not censor Kazemi's exhibition. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Freda Guttman SUBJECT: **Kazemi exhibit at Côte St-Luc library**. Mr. Libman, Your act of censorship of the Kazemi exhibition is a part of a pattern in North America of the denial of what is a fact – that Israel daily commits war crimes, illegally occupies land that does not belong to it, and has carried on a regime of cruelty, repression, dispossession and murder under which Palestinians are forced to live. People who speak out against these crimes and the violations of the human rights of Palestinians, are systematically labeled as anti-Semitic or if Jewish, self-hating Jews. It is very similar to the zealotness with which people were persecuted in the days of Senator McCarthy. But rest assured, the truth has a way of seeping out, despite all the attempts to suppress it. History has proved this. In the future people will say, "How could you have allowed this to go on when you knew it was happening?" How will you answer them? Jews who uncritically accept Israel's actions, no matter how criminal, do Israel and indeed all Jews a great wrong. The future will prove this too. You have shamed the Jewish people, the people of Côte St-Luc, the people of Montreal and Canada. It would take a great act of courage on your part to reverse your terribly wrong decision. I hope you do. I would like to add the most shameful thing to the list of wrongs you have done, which is that you have dishonoured the name of Zahra Kazemi, a woman who gave her life for her cause, the human rights of all peoples. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Mireille Astore SUBJECT: A concerned librarian. Dear Sir/Madame. It has come to my attention that you have shut down an exhibition by the Canadian-Iranian photographer Zahra Kazemi. As a librarian I am puzzled by your action since librarianship is a profession that encourages the widespread of knowledge no matter how uncomfortable it seems at the time. The fact of the matter is that this exhibition is one of the many ways the general public can come to grips with the violence that exists, whether we like it or not, and an avenue for the expression of their silent concerns. It is a way to further knowledge and to enlighten. I am saddened by this act as it demonstrates to me also how out of step your library is with the worldwide and Israeli view of the Palestinian question. As a librarian I urge you to reconsider your action and to allow the exhibition to open. I am attaching below an article from the Israeli newspaper Haaretz which might help you in your decision. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/09/05 FROM: Gita Hashemi SUBJECT: **Zahra Kazemi's photos**. I am writing to voice my strong objection to your recent action of removing Ms. Zahra Kazemi's photography exhibit from the library. Given the documentary nature of Ms. Kazemi's work and that your decision was based on the inclusion of photographs from Israel, I find your action inexcusable and nothing short of censorship. If her photographs from Afghanistan and Iran are "admissible" by your standards, then why are the ones from Israel problematic? By your action you have clearly manifested your lack of moral courage and your inability to create in your library a space for gaining knowledge and learning the truth. I find it appalling that while the government of Canada has taken official steps to uncover the truth about Ms Kazemi's murder in Iran for nothing more than taking pictures outside a prison, her photographs exposing the prison-like conditions for millions of Palestinians and the atrocities of Israeli occupiers are being subject to censorship in her Canadian home. Is this the democracy you preach to the rest of the world? As an Iranian-Canadian, an artist and a university teacher I demand your immediate apology to Ms. Kazemi's family and, further, the re-mounting of the original collection of photographs that were on display in your library. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Michael Neumann SUBJECT: Re the exhibition supporting Madame Kazemi. As a Jew whose family was decimated by the Nazis I am outraged that you should purge an exhibit of photographs which puts Israel in an unfavorable light. My parents did not escape Hitler and fight the Nazis so that a state which brings disgrace on the Jewish people might be defended through censorship of the arts. On numerous occasions respected international agencies have found Israel guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Given these judgments, I would say that to compare Israel to other states that violate human rights expresses an objective, not a biased point of view. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Stuart Brown SUBJECT: **Censorship**. Like many others, I am appalled at your decision to censor the work of Kazemi. I agree heartily with those who have told you that this sort of bureaucratic bullying and discrimination against art and freedom of expression is a disgrace. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Double standards and bias feed

fear and a wish to efface the "other". These subjects were obviously the artist's initial choices to photograph, and they ought to be shown and respected. Cultural hegemony, censorship and racist exclusions, are unworthy of Canadian society and especially of a city with the diversity of Côte St Luc. As a voter in the city, I will have to draw my own conclusions in November. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Asif Devji SUBJECT: **Kazemi Photo exhibition**. Dear Madam or Sir, I was disturbed to read a CBC report that the CSL library would be removing images of Palestinians from its exhibition featuring the work of photojournalist Zahra Kazemi. Presumably, Ms. Kazemi's work is being featured at the library to highlight the injustice that was done to this woman; her detention, torture and murder in Iran following her attempts to photograph a student demonstration outside a prison there. The journalist was put through these horrors to silence her reporting, to keep certain images from the public eye. How unfortunate and ironic, then, that the CSL library, in exposing this journalist's work posthumously as a means of acclaiming her courage to document the truth, would itself act to suppress those of her documentary images which it may find to be politically unpalatable. In doing so, the CSL library associates itself with the kind of censorship that the Iranian authorities exhibited in punishing Ms. Kazemi for showing a view of the world which they found uncomfortable. I do hope that the library will reconsider this decision and maintain its neutrality as a site for the fair display and discussion of all perspectives, political or otherwise. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Jocelyne Doray SUBJECT: **Censorship**. Mr. Libman, As Gideon Levy (Jewish Israeli citizen) once said, in an interview with Jon Elmer, in September 2003: "Just as you cannot be half-pregnant – you are either pregnant or you are not – you cannot be half-democratic. You cannot draw a line and say, I'm a democracy on a certain territorial line, and on the other side of this line I'm not democratic; or, I'm democratic only to one people and I'm not democratic to the other people who live in the same land. It is a myth today (that Israel is a democracy). Israel is a democracy – a real and liberal and full democracy – only to its Jewish citizens, only within the old Israel, within the 1967 borders. The rest (of Israel), on the other side of the line, is the farthest thing from a democracy. It is one of the most brutal, cruel regimes in the world today." Were Kazemi's pictures staged? Of course not. They were real people in these photographs? Yes indeed. Perhaps some members of the Jewish community do not want the rest of the world to see, and understand, what is happening in Palestine-Israel? But the rest of the world already knows what is happening there. Maybe some members of the Jewish community themselves do not want to see what is happening there? Maybe they want their dream of a democratic Israel to remain intact? And so, perhaps, they prefer to keep their eyes shut. Nothing else can explain that Kazemi's exhibition was cancelled. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Magdonia Gombos SUBJECT: **Protesting an Appalling Decision**. The decision to remove Zahra Kazemi's photos from an exhibition at the CSL Library is appalling and is against everything a library should stand for. Even more alarming is Mr. Libman's response: "It's a very complicated conflict, and to create an impression where the Palestinian cause is being martyred by oppression by the Israeli government, we don't consider that to be a fair portrait," Libman said. He added that, in the future, such politically charged work won't be displayed at the library. There are two issues here: 1- If libraries are not free to invite debate in a democratic society, where can debate take place? Thinking that the solution is to avoid such "controversial" issues in the future is saying that it is better to bury our heads in the sand and not acknowledge the world around us when it is not convenient. 2- Unfortunately, it is not a question of impressions but of facts that the Palestinian cause is martyred by oppression by the Israeli government. Stating otherwise is simply not facing the truth. Palestinians suffer the longest standing occupations in modern history, against numerous UN resolutions, against common sense and common human decency. The closing down of the exhibition is adding insult upon injury. The only way to mend this situation, to invite open discussions, to practice democracy is to reinstall the exhibition fully without any political censorship. Let there be open debate, let there be freedom of expression. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Maya Khankhoje SUBJECT: **Freedom of expression**. Dear Mayor Libman, Zahra Kazemi had her own vision of the world, as is the right and duty of any artist, thinker or humanist. That her vision did not sit well with some is no reason for a public library to censor her work. Public Libraries are just that, libraries that belong to the public. Nobody in a free society has the right to muzzle the freedom of expression of anybody else, provided that other people's rights are not being trampled on. Kazemi's very life was trampled on because she recorded the truth exactly as she saw it. Please do not let the library in your borough muzzle the truth. Years ago you held an exhibition of photographs by Tina Modotti. Modotti herself paid with her life for defending the truth her camera recorded during the Mexican Revolution, the Spanish Civil War and other struggles for peace and equity. I am glad you did not cancel that exhibition for fear of offending some of your patrons. [+]06/09/05 FROM: Charlotte Kates SUBJECT: **Zahra Kazemi**. Dear Mayor Libman and the Côte St. Luc Library, I was deeply distressed to hear of the removal of five photographs from the exhibition of the work of the late photographer Zahra Kazemi at the Côte St. Luc library because of their content and their view toward Palestine. The Pales-

tinian and Arab perspective and community are also members of the community whose views, opinions, feelings and emotions should also matter, be represented and be seen without fear that images of Palestine and Palestinians may offend someone somewhere. "Offense" at the existence and visibility of a Palestinian perspective – or a truthful perspective (Kazemi was hardly a critic solely of the Zionist state) – is itself political, and is itself controlled. Why should those who want to ensure that images of Palestine are silenced and censored be appeased while those who create those images be deprived of a voice? The disposability of the Palestinian perspective smacks of racism. The entirety of the exhibition should be restored. [+]06/11/05 FROM: Maire Noonan SUBJECT: **Stop Censorship!** Mr. Libman: I am shocked and concerned to hear that some of Ms. Kazemi's photos have been censored and taken out of the exhibition. This is a direct violation of the freedom of expression. The State of Israel has been engaged in severe human rights violations for decades; the occupied territories are illegal under international law. The wall that Israel is building into Palestinian territory is illegal under international law. Palestinians are suffering under Israeli oppression on a daily basis and are denied any chance of a decent human life. With any ounce of honesty, you will know that this is true. How can a photo exhibit that portrays and comments this suffering be censored? Where is your conscience? What country do you live in? The only decent thing you can do at this point is apologize and put the photos back in the exhibition immediately. [+]06/14/05 FROM: Janelle Hassan SUBJECT: **Censorship: Côte St-Luc Library Removes Kazemi Photos** after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Libraries such as Côte Saint-Luc do not belong to a single community. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is indeed painful for all who cherish freedom of expression that you have made this decision as Mayor. This is yet one more example of discriminatory action against the representation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in our public spaces – spaces which are meant as forums for debate and also for dialogue. All Canadians contribute to public institutions in Canada such as libraries through our taxes. Libraries are and should always be an open forum for all communities. Your decision to remove photos of Zahra Kazemi and then to dismantle the exhibition – for whatever reason – demonstrates a lack of respect for this courageous photojournalist whose tragic and brutal death in 2003 continues to be of national and international concern. This is a blatant act of censorship and, as Stephan Hachemi has publicly stated, is a violation of the spirit of his mother's work. Enclosed is press release on film project "Sister Speak to me – a tribute to Zahra Kazemi" which also includes images of Kazemi's photos. ARTICLE TRUNCATED [+]06/17/05 FROM: Rahat Kurd SUBJECT: **Restore the Zahra Kazemi Exhibit**. Mayor Robert Libman, By now it has been over a week since you shut down the Zahra Kazemi photo exhibit. I am writing from Vancouver in the hope that you will have had time to reflect on your decision. You are an elected official in a Canadian city, and your job does not give you the right to control the public's perception of any conflict, anywhere in the world. It may be painful to behold images that depict the reality of people's lives under military occupation in a place that you would like to believe upholds ideals that you cherish personally. But declaring thLuc Library Removes Kazemi Photos after Complaint. Dear Mayor Robert Libman, Regarding Report of Censorship for Zahra Kazemi's Photography Exhibit. I am writing to add my voice to the many who are appalled and outraged at the news of your decision to censor the work of Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi and to cause the closing of this very important exhibition of her photography at the Library of Côte Saint-Luc. It is

mi's son's quest for justice. **We were unaware** however that the exhibition, once organized with the accompanying text, sought to portray the **State of Israel** as an oppressive regime. Whether you agree or not, **Israel is a democratic country** and the exhibition clearly equates and compares **Israel** to the **Taliban regime** in Afghanistan and the **Mullahs in Iran**. That is an **unbalanced and offensive portrait of Israel** and extremely **sensitive** in our community. We received **complaints** from numerous residents and tried to reason with her **son** to understand some of the **sensitivity of a few of the photos**. **He was unwilling to discuss** striking a compromise, even though the **removal** of a few of the photos **would not undermine the essence** of the exhibition. **Hopefully you could understand this very difficult and unfortunate decision.** [++]06/9/2005_TO: Stuart Brown_Dear Stuart_Unfortunately, you are unaware of some of the circumstances surrounding what happened. We solicited the exhibition in order to support Madame Kazemi's son's quest for justice. **We were unaware** however that the exhibition, once organized with the accompanying text, sought to portray the **State of Israel** as an oppressive regime. **Israel is a modern, democratic country** and the exhibition clearly equates and compares **Israel** to the **Taliban regime** in Afghanistan and the **Mullahs in Iran**. That is an **unbalanced and offensive portrait of Israel** and extremely **sensitive** in this community. **We were hoodwinked** by her **son** whom we wanted to support. **His** refusal to give details about the content of the exhibition in advance exposes that he wanted to promote a secondary **agenda**, the demonization of **Israel**. We received **complaints** from numerous residents and tried to reason with her **son** to understand some of the **sensitivity of a few of the photos**. **He was unwilling to discuss** striking a compromise, even though the **removal** of a few of the photos **would not undermine the essence** of the exhibition. **Hopefully you could understand this very difficult and unfortunate decision.** [++]06/09/05_TO: Freda Guttman_Hello_Your remarks are bizarre, as usual. We sought to support her family's fight for justice. **We were hoodwinked** by another **hidden agenda**, part of an exhibition that falsely portrays **Israel**. **Israel is under attack** by its neighbors. **Defending herself** against aggressors is her right. [++]06/10/05_TO: Gita Hashemi_Dear Gita_ Equating the **modern, democratic State of Israel** with the **Taliban of Afghanistan** or the **Mullahs in Iran** is offensive, inaccurate and political **propaganda**. **This was not our intention** when we sought to display Madame Khazemi's work. [++]06/10/05_FROM: Anthony Housefather_TO: Mireille Astore_Thank you very much for the email which you sent to the Eleanor London Library. I have asked staff to forward me all emails so I can respond directly. **I fully understand your concerns** based on what the media has reported. However there is **quite a bit more to the story** than perhaps you have heard to date and therefore I attach an op-ed piece that more fully sets out what occurred in regard to the Kazemi Exhibit. **I remain hopeful** that we will be able to come to **some arrangement** with Stephen Hashemi to remount the exhibit absent the text that **he** insisted be inserted together with **his mother's work**.ARTICLE TRUNCATED [++]06/10/05_FROM: Dida Berku_TO: Mireille Astore_ I understand your concern, unfortunately there was a **breakdown in communication**. I am sending you my personal comments. At this point, Mr. Hashemi has taken back **his mother's photos** and we will not have any exhibition in the near future. However we **may be able to do so at a later date**. I have come to realise that while yes we did in fact **err in tampering** with the exhibit we also challenged a mindset which is very seldom questioned. A perspective which sees the suffering of the Palestinians as the sole fault of the Israelis. A view of the world that equates the **State of Israel, a democratic state with protected rights and freedoms** with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the **thuggery** of the **Taliban** in Afghanistan. Of course **we erred** in not previewing the exhibit and from a very cursory list of titles our staff could have known the subject and powerful impact of the photos. What was not divulged prior to the mounting of the exhibit was the narrative which would equate and place Israel on a footing with these oppressive regimes. And yes perhaps this is not so much the **personal agenda** of Mr. Hashemi but rather the **pervasive mindset** which has become the **common currency** in the world today. Due to the **unfortunate** course of events which saw us mount an exhibit in a library which is never used as a political venue, we have been drawn into an exhibition which promotes the view of **Israel** as the only one responsible for the refugee problem and the violence and suffering in the Palestinian territories. **This is not a view we would have consented to portray in our library**. In order to **avoid a controversy in our local community** we created a **controversy** in the wider community. [++]06/10/05_FROM: Anthony Housefather_TO: Mireille Astore_Dear Ms. Astore, thank you for taking the time to write to us and spend as much time as you did outlining your position. Two small comments. Just because someone has greatly suffered as Mr. Hashemi has, does not make him a **reasonable person** to deal with, I have great compassion for what he has gone through and greatly support the effort to force Iran to bring his mother's killers to justice. That does not translate into a requirement to allow **him** to do anything **he** wants. Secondly, **we remain hopeful** that he will agree to **reasonably discuss the matter** and find a **proper accommodation** so that **his mother's photos** are exhibited without the inflammatory text he submitted. [++]06/13/05_TO: Magdolna Gombos_Dear Magdolna_You need to review your history if you believe that the Israeli government can be equated with the **Taliban** of Afghanistan or

Mullahs in Iran. Israel struggles to protect itself against suicide bombers every day. Do you condone the actions of these **suicide bombers** whose sole purpose is to blow up innocent people? [++]06/14/05_TO: Jamelie Hassan_Dear Jamelie_ I **fully understand your concerns** based on what the media has reported. However **there is quite a bit more to the story** than perhaps you have heard to date and therefore I attach an op-ed piece that more fully sets out what occurred in regard to the Kazemi Exhibit. **I remain hopeful** that we will be able to come to some arrangement with Stephen Hashemi to **properly** pay homage and support **his mother's work**.ARTICLE TRUNCATED [++]06/14/05_TO: Jamelie Hassan_Dear Jamelie_There is **no doubt** that we had a **very difficult decision** to make. The bottom line however, was that our small exhibition space, next to our children's library was never meant to be the forum for a political **propaganda** war, regardless of which side of the debate one favors. Images depicting the horror on the faces of Israelis after a bus explosion would never be put up there either. It was **inappropriate** to leave the exhibition there in its entirety, and regardless of **our best initial intentions, we had no choice** but to take it down. [++]06/14/05_TO: Maire Noonan_Dear Maire_ I **fully understand your concerns** based on what the media has reported. However **there is quite a bit more to the story** than perhaps you have heard to date and therefore I attach an op-ed piece that more fully sets out what occurred in regard to the Kazemi Exhibit. **I remain hopeful** that we will be able to come to some arrangement with Stephen Hashemi to **properly** pay homage and support his mother's work. Let me also mention that you are somewhat unfamiliar with the Charter guarantees for freedom of expression. **Free speech** is not absolute if it **goes beyond reasonable limits** in a free and democratic society. This is explicitly recognized in Article 1 of the Charter. The **removal** of part of the exhibit **does not contravene free speech** as the exhibition, with its accompanying text incites hatred [++]06/17/05_TO: Rahat Kurd_Dear Rahat_Unfortunately, you are **unaware** of some of the circumstances surrounding what happened. We solicited the exhibition in order to support Madame Kazemi's son's quest for justice. **We were unaware** however that the exhibition, once organized with the accompanying text, sought to portray the **State of Israel** as an oppressive regime. **Israel is a modern, democratic country** and the exhibition clearly equates and compares **Israel** to the **Taliban regime** in Afghanistan and the **Mullahs in Iran**. That is an **unbalanced and offensive portrait of Israel** and extremely **sensitive** in this community. **We were hoodwinked** by her **son** whom we wanted to support. His refusal to give details about the content of the exhibition in advance exposes that he wanted to promote a secondary **agenda**, the **demonization** of Israel. We received **complaints** from numerous residents and **tried to reason** with her **son** to understand some of the **sensitivity of a few of the photos**. **He was unwilling to discuss** striking a **compromise**, even though the **removal** of a few of the photos **would not undermine** the essence of the exhibition. **Hopefully** this will help **you understand this very difficult and unfortunate decision.** [++]

Re: Action: Subject

To Robert Libman. [++]06/08/05_FROM: Rawi Hage_SUBJECT: Re: **Censorship: Côte St-Luc Library!**_Sir, **Three million people caged in a wall that can be seen from the moon**, living as second class citizens, with classroom interruptions, **apartheid**, malnutrition, political oppression, and poverty is it not enough to be considered an injustice? Are there hierarchies to injustices? You say democracy? **Israel is a theocratic state (not much different from Iran) in a perpetual denial of its dark existence**. I urge you to get out of Côte St-Luc and see beyond that other wall of yours that is veiling your humane vision. Your response is insulting, apologetic and if I may add either **complacent, evil or naive.** [++]06/08/05_FROM: Jayce Salloum_SUBJECT: **Repressing the difficult instead of encouraging debate**_Dear Robert_ I hope you can understand the **anger and frustrations** your actions of **censorship** have created. A **library** is an **open public resource** for learning and studying, not for 'politically cleansing' **views** that you and some of your **public** do not agree with. It is not up to you or the librarians to decide if the Israeli government and policies are worse or better than the Taliban. You should and must defend **freedom of expression** and **freedom of speech**. Why do you cower in the face of any criticism? A **healthy debate** is the basis of a **functioning democracy**. Even in so-called 'democratic' Israel there is more **debate** that you are permitting to take place here in your town. Why don't you take a stand and support the right to **diverse opinions** and **views**? You could show whatever Zionist propaganda you want in a following exhibition to 'balance' what you find so difficult in the photographs you have **censored**. I plead for you to be strong and encourage **debate**, not act repressively and oppress those **views** you disagree with. The world is becoming more narrow-minded and repressing art and information is another action the narrows it even more. [++]06/09/05_FROM: Mary Ellen Davis_SUBJECT: Re: your email related to the **Kazemi** exhibit_To Anthony Housefather, Dida Berku, Robert Libman_Concerning "Your Side of the Story" I wish the children of Palestine would be as well protected as the children of Côte-St-Luc, and not exposed to **views** of heavily-armed, abusive Israeli soldiers all over the West Bank and Gaza, humiliating their families at **checkpoints all day long, all week long, all year long**, except in Hebron where

sometimes they have to protect the Palestinian kids from the rock-throwing settler kids. And I wish the children of Palestinian villages did not have to hear frightening **true** stories of their families' sheep, lambs, goats, kid goats poisoned to death by settlers who remain unpunished by your modern, democratic state of Israel (see text below).ARTICLE TRUNCATED [++]06/09/05_FROM: Mireille Astore_SUBJECT: Re: **Kazemi** exhibit – a very concerned librarian_Dear Mr Housefather, Ms Berku, Mr Libman,_Thank you very much for responding to my email regarding the premature dismantling of Ms **Zahra Kazemi's** courageous exhibition. I have to admit being more alarmed by your justifications and would like to point out the following: 1- With regard to Mr Hashemi's attitude I am breathless at the lack of compassion you show for his circumstances. To know that his mother has been horribly tortured and killed for taking photographs and yet continue to uphold **her name, her work and her courage** while risking his own safety has driven me here in Australia to honour his courage and strength by asking you to reconsider remounting the exhibition. I expect any decent human being who has suffered in the mildest of forms to be understanding of the incredible amount of strength it takes to keep functioning let alone to place yourself in situations that remind you of the horror your mother has endured in the name of **freedom – a virtue much admired in Canada, I hear**. As an ex-library manager, I have had to endure in the name of politeness patrons' aggressive behaviour over some **library** fines so you can understand my impatience in this regard. 2- As an ex-library manager who has worked in **libraries** in Australia and France I am appalled by the need to remind The Côte Saint-Luc/Hamstead/Montral West Council and **Library** of the fact that when the **Library** Manager is absent, the delegated staff acting in her position is fully **responsible** for the decisions taken during her absence. In Australia and France, it is common practice for the Manager to uphold these decisions upon her return firstly as a form of **respect** for the staff member the **Library** Manager has chosen to delegate this role to, and secondly to avoid mishandling of tax payers' money upon her return by having to correct alleged misinformation such as in this case. My **library** colleagues here referred to this justification as poor management skills. 3- As a parent of two young children, I am fully aware of the **violence** that appears around them even in the most benign cartoon shows aimed for them. If some parents wish to over-react and are concerned by what they saw in **Kazemi's** photographs this could be remedied with a sign alerting hyper-sensitive parents of the content of the exhibition at the entrance of the **library** with a sign. 4- Text accompanying exhibitions is a common practice in Australia and in overseas museums and galleries I visited. It promotes accessibility for those who are not able to understand the meaning of photographs and artworks. Explanations through text, particularly by those who worked closely with the photographer is a generous act that should be acknowledged as such. Further, **all**, and I stress **all**, **exhibitions** carry with them a **message** whether stated or not, to claim **ignorance** of such a fact after the exhibition is mounted demonstrates naivety of the first order. Again, if the **library** sees a conflict expressed in the exhibition, a sign to the effect "The **views** expressed in this exhibition are not necessarily those held by the x, y, z" at the entrance should be sufficient. A **library** should not under any circumstances **cancel access to knowledge**. Any **library** that does is not worthy of its name. Again, I hope you are able to remount the exhibition, honour Ms **Zahra Kazemi's** memory in her fight for universal **freedom** and show Mr Stephen Hashemi the highest form of **respect** he deserves for enduring the following.ARTICLE TRUNCATED [++]06/09/05_FROM: Charlotte Kates_SUBJECT: Re.: **Zahra Kazemi**_Dear Mayor Libman,_In **reality**, for the nearly six million **Palestinian refugees** denied their right to return home after being forced from their land simply for being Palestinians in their homeland, for the three million **Palestinians suffering under military occupation** in the West Bank and Gaza, and for the over one million **Palestinians inside the Israeli state suffering from continued dispossession and institutional discrimination and oppression**, Israel is neither a modern nor a democratic state. **Racist, apartheid states will be criticized** and when their behavior and the protests against it are memorialized in words and images, the **reality** of those states will come to light – and those who are offended and find the subject sensitive might best direct their efforts to attempting to ensure that this state is no longer racist and undemocratic, thus removing the need to expose the **reality** of the Israeli state. It appears to me that **Ms. Kazemi** – and her son – had a strong belief in opposing oppression wherever it takes place without confining that criticism to "acceptable" subjects. And any "compromise" that pretends that one oppressive state is "democratic" while another's crimes should be **open to public** view is **no compromise** at all, **it is censorship.** [++]06/14/05_FROM: Jamelie Hassan_SUBJECT: Re: **Censorship: Côte St-Luc library**_Dear Mayor Libman_After reading your "Our Side of the Story" by Dida Berku, Anthony Housefather and Robert Libman, I still maintain my unconditional support of Stephan Hashemi in this situation and know from my own extensive experience of presenting **art work in public spaces** – including **public libraries in Canada** as well as the UNESCO project – Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt, that the **library space** has a **responsibility** to be engaged in the issues of our time. It is a very sad situation that you think children in **Canada** should be protected from "images" of the world where children are the victims of **violence** and states of war. I hope that the **library** will learn from this and not close the door,

as stated, on controversial issues. [++]06/14/05_FROM: Magdolna Gombos_SUBJECT: Re: **Protesting an Appalling Decision**_Sir, **It would be helpful in any correspondence to read what the other party writes before making a reply. Otherwise one runs the risk of being irrelevant.**_PS: Please refrain from using my first name to address me. I only included it to be **open and honest** not to be patronized. [++]

PostScript

[++]06/09/05_FROM: Freda Guttman_TO: Gita Hashemi_SUBJECT: **Libman** response to me_These are Libman's answers to me. The accusation of "hoodwinking" is familiar to me – he accused Rawi and I of "hoodwinking" the city of Montreal and the MAI into sponsoring an anti-Israeli exhibit – **Artists Against the Occupation**. We sure hoodwinked them – they were so dumb, maybe they thought we meant the title referred to the Palestinian occupation of Israel! **Libman** also asked the Canada Council to rescind our grant. [++]06/09/05_FROM: Mireille Astore_TO: Rawi Hage_SUBJECT: Your letter to **Libman**. It sounds as if **he agreed to have the show in the first place to actually promote Zionism via the anti-Islamic photos of Kazemi.** [++]06/14/05_FROM: Gita Hashemi_TO: Multiple recipients_SUBJECT: Piece on **Kazemi** exhibit for Fuse_I'm putting together a short piece as artist project for Fuse about the **Kazemi** exhibit. More specifically, I want to highlight the exchanges with the surprisingly responsive **Mayor Robert Libman** whose exceedingly prompt **replies** have been



Photo by Marcos Townsend / The Gazette [++]06/11/05_FROM: Freda Guttman_Did you hear on the news about our political theatre in front of the library? We 'decontaminated' the library of all 'subversive' books – the Saids, Chomskies, those on Human Rights, etc. These people believe in human rights for everyone except Palestinians who in their minds are not even human! The Jewish Alliance Against the Occupation, a group that started up shortly after the 2nd Intifada began, did the action. [++]

most illuminating about politics, public spaces, exercise of power and censorship in Canada. At the moment my thought is to frame the piece as a spontaneously collective response while maintaining the individual identities and voices. Please forward to me your e-mail exchanges with **Libman** if you'd like to take part in this. Forward this to anybody else you know who's had an exchange with **Libman** specifically about the **Kazemi** exhibit. All suggestions and ideas are welcome. [++]06/15/05_FROM: Jamelie Hassan_TO: Gita Hashemi_SUBJECT: FWD: **Censorship: Côte St-Luc library**_Check out G&M for excellent article in today's paper – Naomi Klein & Aaron Maté on **Kazemi** photos **censorship** with photos published [++]06/15/05_FROM: Rawi Hage_We have just been made aware that the Globe and Mail edited Klein and Maté's article on **Kazemi** and the **censorship** of her photographs at the Côte St Luc library, including the **omission of references to CanWest.** [++]06/15/05_From the uncensored article by Klein and Maté: *(added by Globe and Mail)* Criticizing a community library may seem like an extreme measure, but the decision to take down photographs thought to be "too sympathetic" to the Palestinian cause is also part of a disturbing pattern to silence opposition to the **expansionist** Israeli occupation of the **Occupied Territories** *(replaced by Globe and Mail)* Gaza and the West Bank now in its 38th year. **Two summers ago, CanWest Global, Canada's largest media conglomerate, went so far as to produce a heavily-promoted full-length documentary that compared pro-Palestinian students at Montreal's Concordia University to Nazis. In September, the company's newspaper chain was admonished by the Reuters news agency for running its stories with ideological alterations to the original text.** And rarely in the media do we hear the many anti-occupation voices that challenge the **delusional consensus** *(replaced by Globe and Mail)* delusion that Palestinians are to blame for their own misery. [++]07/07/05_FROM: Gita Hashemi_Is it true that Libman was the former head of B'nai B'rith? [++]07/07/05_TO: Gita Hashemi_ **Mr Libman was indeed Executive Director of B'nai B'rith from 1995 to the end of 2001.** Bon courage. Wassalaam. [++]

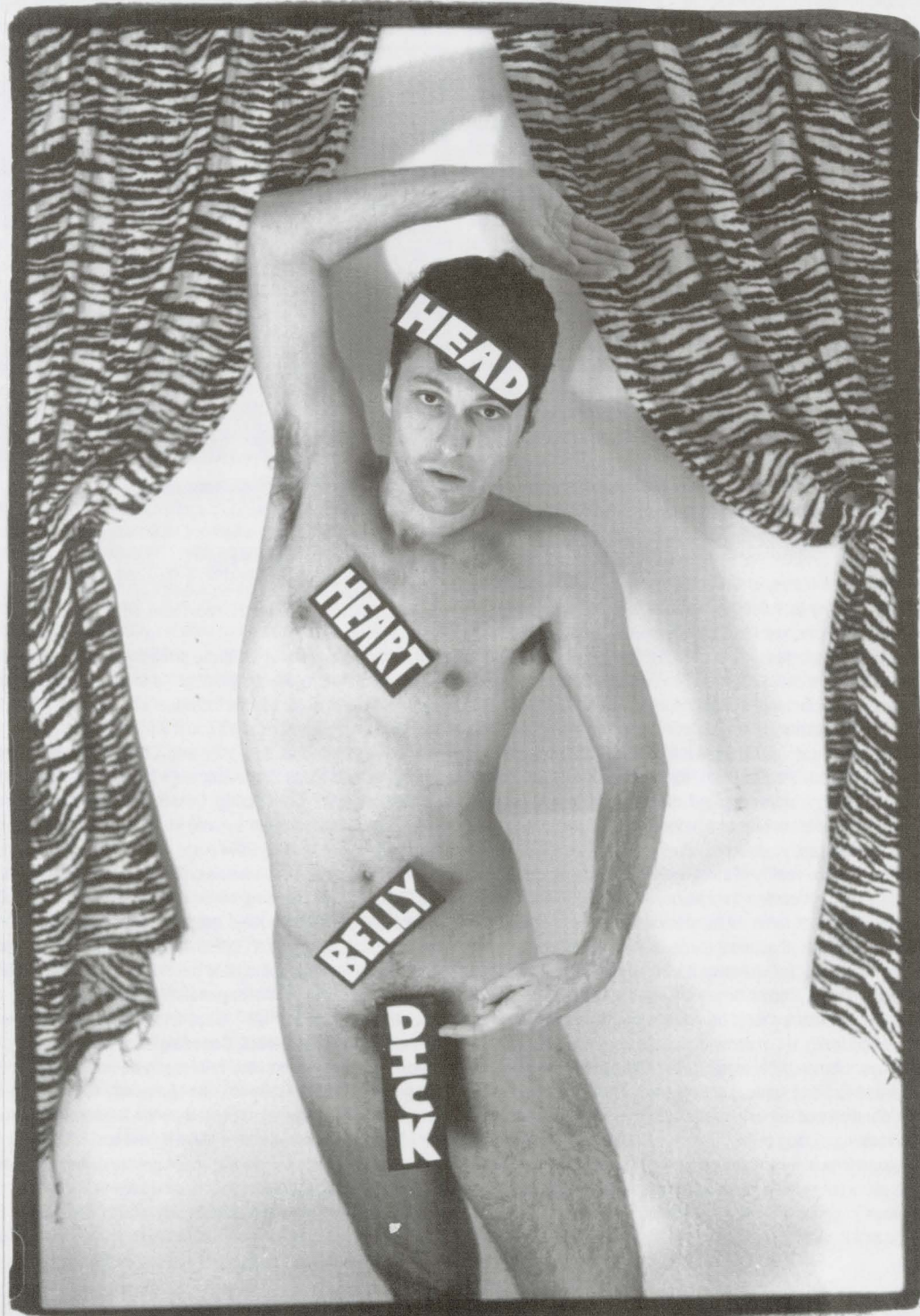
Concept, sampling and remix: OpinionWare <http://opinionware.net> [++] Design: Daniel Ellis

expression a email which ment to t [++]06/10/05_FROM: Anthony Housefather_TO: Mireille Astore_Thank you very much for the email which you sent to the Eleanor London Library. I have asked staff to forward me all emails so I can respond directly. **I fully understand your concerns** based on what the media has reported. However there is **quite a bit more to the story** than perhaps you have heard to date and therefore I attach an op-ed piece that more fully sets out what occurred in regard to the Kazemi Exhibit. **I remain hopeful** that we will be able to come to **some arrangement** with Stephen Hashemi to remount the exhibit absent the text that **he** insisted be inserted together with **his mother's work**.ARTICLE TRUNCATED [++]06/10/05_FROM: Dida Berku_TO: Mireille Astore_ I understand your concern, unfortunately there was a **breakdown in communication**. I am sending you my personal comments. At this point, Mr. Hashemi has taken back **his mother's photos** and we will not have any exhibition in the near future. However we **may be able to do so at a later date**. I have come to realise that while yes we did in fact **err in tampering** with the exhibit we also challenged a mindset which is very seldom questioned. A perspective which sees the suffering of the Palestinians as the sole fault of the Israelis. A view of the world that equates the **State of Israel, a democratic state with protected rights and freedoms** with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the **thuggery** of the **Taliban** in Afghanistan. Of course **we erred** in not previewing the exhibit and from a very cursory list of titles our staff could have known the subject and powerful impact of the photos. What was not divulged prior to the mounting of the exhibit was the narrative which would equate and place Israel on a footing with these oppressive regimes. And yes perhaps this is not so much the **personal agenda** of Mr. Hashemi but rather the **pervasive mindset** which has become the **common currency** in the world today. Due to the **unfortunate** course of events which saw us mount an exhibit in a library which is never used as a political venue, we have been drawn into an exhibition which promotes the view of **Israel** as the only one responsible for the refugee problem and the violence and suffering in the Palestinian territories. **This is not a view we would have consented to portray in our library**. In order to **avoid a controversy in our local community** we created a **controversy** in the wider community. [++]06/10/05_FROM: Anthony Housefather_TO: Mireille Astore_Dear Ms. Astore, thank you for taking the time to write to us and spend as much time as you did outlining your position. Two small comments. Just because someone has greatly suffered as Mr. Hashemi has, does not make him a **reasonable person** to deal with, I have great compassion for what he has gone through and greatly support the effort to force Iran to bring his mother's killers to justice. That does not translate into a requirement to allow **him** to do anything **he** wants. Secondly, **we remain hopeful** that he will agree to **reasonably discuss the matter** and find a **proper accommodation** so that **his mother's photos** are exhibited without the inflammatory text he submitted. [++]06/13/05_TO: Magdolna Gombos_Dear Magdolna_You need to review your history if you believe that the Israeli government can be equated with the **Taliban** of Afghanistan or

Acts of Being: Kazemi vs. Libman: Act of Bein

Leaves of ass: a conversation with Tim Miller

Interview by John Greyson



Tim Miller, *My Queer Body*, 1994, Photo: Chuck Stallard, Courtesy: Tim Miller

Try this with queer friends: say the name Tim Miller and ask them what image springs to mind. Five'll get ya ten that it's a nudie. Tim reclining sur l'herbe in front of the Hollywood sign. Tim cheerfully fucking the dirt of his So Cal back garden. Tim butt-naked on my lap at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, chucking my chin as he diatribes about Jesse Helms.

I just googled "nude Tim Miller" and got 838,000 hits. (Admittedly, a fair proportion belonged to a chunky yoga guru of the same name, wrapping his knees around his glottis).

In honour of such ubiquitous clothing optionality, playwright Tony Kushner, when asked to pen an intro to Tim's new book *Body Blows*, wrote it naked, and developed bruises on his butt from sitting too long on a hard chair. I've likewise dropped trou to transcribe this e-terview (though by nature cautious, I've opted for a padded foam seat). And you, dear reader? Won't you join us in a naturistic shucking of vestments for the duration of this e-versation?

JOHN GREYSON: Your new piece, *Us*, is partly about re-reading the American musical through radical queer nude eyes. Clearly, *Hair* must hold a formative place in your performative heart.

TIM MILLER: Other than the show having a stage filled with naked performers (which fascinated me as a little boy), *Hair* was for me mostly about its radical protest politics, disrupting the American apple-cart — and the fabulous tribute to sex in the song "Sodomy." I listened

to it as a ten-year-old boy with a friend who lived down the block, and it gave us ideas about things to try out during our sleepovers in the family camper!

JG: I always thought our shared *Hairy* fascination was unique to our particular generation of fag artistes, so imagine my shock in *Tarnation* when a teeny Jonathan Caouette — a good 15 years younger than us, goddamn him! — starts warbling that great Hair anthem "Frank Mills" to his home-video camera. That's *my* song, I shrieked to the near-empty theatre.

TM: I think these musical cultural materials are so strong that they really ooze over beyond any single generational position. You go see *WICKED* on Broadway right now and the line is full of all these little queer boys and girls who have poured massive amounts of dyke-faggot identification into the sympathetic portrayal of the green-skinned witch! I was at a queer literary conference two weeks ago in New Orleans and this queer Puerto Rican def-poetry guy in his mid-20s and his friend in their hotel room next door were suddenly singing their hearts out to Tony Kushner's "Caroline or Change."



Tim Miller, *Glory Box*, 1999, Photo: Darrell Taylor, Courtesy: Tim Miller

For over two decades, Timmy has thrust his friendly bod into a panoply of intercontinental venues, purposely transgressing private and public boundaries: theatrical, ideological, legislative, social, therapeutic. His “thrust” has been the performance of an ongoing autobiography of his times (with an id-filled nod to Gertrude Stein’s uber-modernist method). Strident, vernacular, saucy — I admit, at times we friends of Tim would wail: “Is there any minute of your life that hasn’t yet been regurgitated?” And yet we’d be consistently transgressed and bemused by each new piece, performed in spaces grand and humble: by the topicality, the populism, the flagrant cheerful honesty that cut through our layers of know-it-all sophistication. Cheerful is a word that reverberates through Tim’s practice: dwell on it, savour it, as you revisit his two decades in the trenches of the American culture wars, in all their bodily-fluid-soaked splendour. Cheerfulness as civil disobedience.

JG: I recently attended a South Park queer sing-a-long of *Bigger Longer Uncut* and was mesmerized by the spectacle of a sold-out-theatre of 20-something fags and dykes, belting out word-perfect renditions of “Blame Canada,” (our new national anthem), to say nothing of “Uncle Fucker,” (clearly the “Sodomy” of the nineties).

TM: Every country should be lucky enough to have an

anthem as good as “Blame Canada” [composed by showtune meister Marc Shaiman, who also wrote the fabulous *Hairspray!*]

JG: You sang for the first time in your new performance *Us* last November. What was the song?

TM: I confess! I do sing a bit of “The Impossible Dream” from *Man of La Mancha*. When I was creating this show I thought it would be mostly about the political trouble I’m in with my Aussie-Scottish partner of 11 years, Alistair. Since we can’t get married we can’t get him immigration status in the US. I suddenly discovered that I’ve never felt safe growing up in America. I remembered being a boy planning to seek political asylum in Canada during the worst of the Vietnam war. In the show, I sing “The Impossible Dream” as I cross over the border at the Peace Arch into British Columbia as a nine-year-old asylum seeker.

JG: Both *Glory Box* [a previous performance] and *Us* turn dramatically on the urgency of Alistair being denied legal status to live with you in the US — the recreated scene at Immigration when he’s refused entry is riveting. What’s his current legal status?

TM: Currently Alistair is in the US on a quickly-running-out work visa to teach creative writing at Antioch University. His visa expires in February 2006 and then we are at yet another nail-biting moment. There is the possibility for one final short-term work visa, but then the jig is up. We have been through so many separations, close calls, Perils of Pauline-type dramas over the years. Alistair was refused a student visa for his MFA in 1997 while still in Australia — the source for the scary narrative in *Glory Box* — and it kept us apart for months. We finally got him in the country later that year, but he hasn’t left the US for eight years to see his family in Perth because there is no guarantee he can get back in even with his visa. We are endlessly liminal here in the US. We may be here next year and we may not. It keeps us from ever buying things in bulk, that’s for sure!

I first met Tim in 1981 at PS122 in New York, when he was curating dance/performance artists for this fledgling space he’d co-founded as well as creating ground-breaking pieces with then-boyfriend John Bernd. We bonded over a misunderstanding: on learning I was Canadian, he claimed a childhood erotic fixation on our very own Alexander Mackenzie. Not the rabbit-faced stone-mason Prime Minister, I exclaimed in utter horror?

No No No, he rebounded, the dashing Byronesque cross-continental explorer — and proved it with the flourishing of an illustrated kiddie book, featuring Macky in all his voyageur chic!

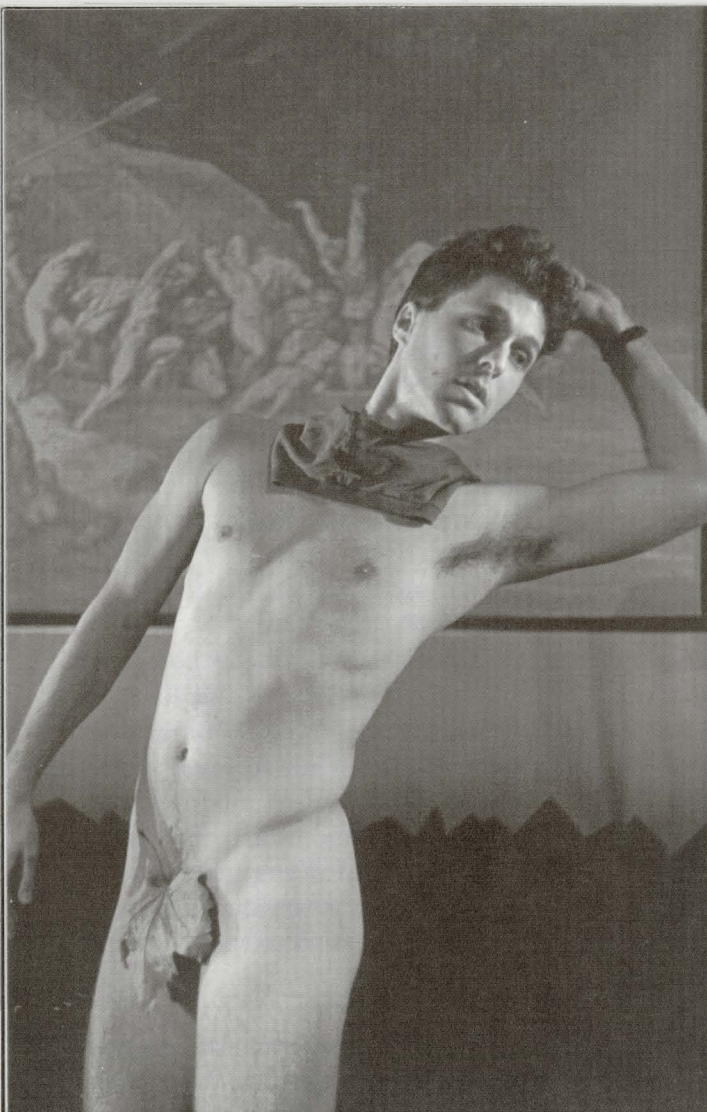
JG: You’ve always been fearless about incorporating a broad swath of pop cult into your work, from old saws like Ravel’s Bolero and Handel’s Messiah to “Climb Every Mountain” and “The Impossible Dream.” How do you weigh the tipping point of a quotation — can a sample ever be *too* pop, or not pop enough?

TM: I like playing with pop, or not-so-pop, cultural references as a way of keeping our cultural muscles working and able to look critically/playfully at these giant canonical cultural materials. In my performance *My Queer Body*, I imagine being Performance Art Laureate of the US. I perform a homoerotic cantata set to Bolero for the inaugural gala of the first black lesbian president of the United States. I’m using my own kinky cultural and political fantasies to reimagine our current condition and put a subversive queer spin on that uber-hetero music of Bolero. Besides, it gave people boners and got lots of people dates. Mission accomplished.

JG: Your two decades of work chart like an anthology of queer struggle: from fighting violence and hate to fighting AIDS and government to fighting discrimination at the border and on the altar. While so many queer artists in various media (Van Sant, Almodovar and Haynes, Leavitt, Hollinghurst and Toibin, Bleckner, Evergon and Gober) have avoided an engagement with explicit activist issues, you’ve always insisted on it: performance art as town hall meeting, a spoken word update of *Leaves of Grass*-roots.

TM: I am definitely in that Whitman-Ginsberg town crier lineage of claiming space, agency, and sexuality through the public act, my public art as a performer. I have not been above wanting to challenge other gay artists to do the same. One of my first street actions as a 19-year-old performer in NYC was to put up posters in lower Manhattan accusing discreetly closeted, apolitical, aestheticized artists like Robert Wilson or Merce

Our friendship followed him through his self-described “bloated mega big-budget flop” *Democracy in America* (of which I still have fond memories) at Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1984; to his long-term relationship with writer/raconteur Doug Sadownick; through their move to LA and the foundation of the legendary performance space Highways in 1989, where the best of multi-cult/body/ bawdy/cuerpo arts continue to find their (un)natural home; through shared adventures with ACT UP LA and the plague wars, including musical interludes with the divine falsettist Michael Callen; and most of all, through the emergence of Tim’s signature solo-style, scanty of props (and clothes), lush with the insistence that his own life was worth recounting, tumescent with a cheerfulness which has sustained him through seven full-length works and any number of arrests: *Some Golden States*, *Stretch Marks*, *My Queer Body* (my personal fave), *Naked Breath*, *Fruit Cocktail*, *Glory Box*, *Us*.



Tim Miller, *Some Golden States*, 1987.
Photo: Dona McAdams, Courtesy: Tim Miller

Cunningham of being colonized, lapdog slaves of the ruling class. Naughty me — what a nasty little commissar I might have made! I've mellowed over the years — I think every queer artist needs to be true to themselves as their first responsibility, and everyone finds their politics in their own way. Gus Van Sant gave us River and Keanu kissing. That will be enough to get Gus into Queer Heaven. Colm Toibin wrote the best book about the closet in his Henry James bio-novel *The Master*. I am a bit annoyed with David Leavitt right now for his huge essay in the NY Times where he petulantly (and pointlessly) bashes lesbian and gay bookstores, so I guess the battles still burn.

When I am performing for 400 students at some conservative Baptist College in North Carolina, I can not help but see my wild, queer self as politicized and community contexted. I think the sweaty reality of live performing is a great place to shine my creative highbeams on the tasty pleasures and nasty injustices that queer folk face in these *Still* troubled times. I do not need to italicize the word community. I feel it tangibly when I perform in the rural Midwest, or Scotland, or Winnipeg, or Tokyo.

Smack in the middle of this groovy trajectory came his legendary 1990 showdown with the National Endowment for the Arts: along with fellow performance artiste co-defendants Karen Finley, John Fleck and Holly Hughes, his Fellowship was snatched back by the first Bush Admin for reasons of 'decency.' The NEA four fought back with the ACLU — and won! — though the 'decency' clause was later chillingly upheld by none other than Miss Sandra Day herself (penning the majority opinion). As he's since noted, this was a mere patty-cake rehearsal for the brutal decade-long battle he and Alistair have waged with the immigration authorities.

JG: Along with many performance artists from the eighties who likewise use monologue (everyone from Richard Elovich and Daniel MacIvor to Vaginal Cream Davis and Margaret Cho come to mind), your work seems to insist on expanding definitions of who such work might engage, building an accessible bridge across the avant-garde divide for those audiences who perceive performance art as exclusionary or elitist! Groovy! But ... does such a commitment to accessibility ever come into conflict with your interest in formal experimentation or the exploration of less "popular" content?

TM: Happily my artistic mission (chock-full of that Forsterian "only connect" human goal) overlaps pretty compatibly with my communitarian politics.

On the other hand, part of me does long for an art-life where I wasn't always such a political football being kicked around by one Bush — *pere ou fils* — or another. Every now and then, I do get sick of banging my head against the endless fucked-up-edness of America and wonder what life and art would be like if I didn't have to put so much energy into fighting these endless repetitive battles with the freaky right-wing Christian Republican hegemony. There is that bittersweet poem by Mayakovsky (that sexy Bolshevik was a huge inspiration and the subject of my first performance in NYC when I was twenty) where he talks about being willing to beat his words into a form that will allow him to praise the oil-fields of Baku.

At each river's outlet, steamers
with an aching hole in their side,
howl through the docks: "Give us oil from Baku!"
While we dawdle and quarrel
in search of fundamental answers,
all things yell:
"give us new forms!"
(from "Order No.2 to the Army of the Arts," 1921)

I understand that impulse, but it didn't work out too well for Mayakovsky because he ended up sucking down a gun and blowing his own brains out before

Stalin got the chance. This one is from not long before his death. Much darker and to the point:

Agitprop sticks in my teeth too,
and I'd rather compose romances for you—
more profit in it and more charm.
But I subdued myself, setting my heel
on the throat of my own song.
(from "At the Top of my Voice," 1930)

With that in mind, I always try to keep the pleasure and joy and kinky corners of my erotics and obsessions at the core of my work. All the social utility has to squirt out from that place.

Michael Cunningham's 2005 novel *Specimen Wars*, a triptych in three stories, is an aching meditation on the past, present and sci-fictive-future of Walt Whitman's inspirational capacity. Cunningham subtly explores the ambiguous contradictions of the Walt cult, acknowledging the sensual lure of his utopian faux-socialism (all that proletarian pulchritude!) while fondly describing its naïve limits. Tim shares Walt's optimism but mediates it with Cunningham's knowing critique of our digitally proscribed global village. Think of the good, grey poet as a lithe forty-something town crier, whose great joy is to transgress the byways of the red states where no fag activist has gone before, whose body becomes extra-electric when he doffs his leiderhosen at the Claremont School of Theology.

JG: Did you notice, when humans are zapped by the tripods in the new deeply-dumb *War of the Worlds*, all that remains is their clothes, floating down through the air, like paper scraps from the twin towers, or equally, “a cloud of trousers,” to quote Mayakovsky’s most famous poem? [but no, Tim hasn’t seen it, so I continue.] As an artist who has been consistently productive, combative and optimistic thru the Reagan/Bush/Clinton/Bush eras, what has kept you from such Mayakovskian despair?

TM: I credit sodomy and musicals. I think I have always been able to leaven my life, art and politics with regular zaps of pleasure, joy, love and an ability to take the long view. I am also deeply contexted as a community-based artist within the trenches of queer/progressive Whitmanic grass-roots America. This has not been a constricting identity for me, but has given me a strong sense of purpose and mission and keeps my batteries charged. While these are deeply scary times in the US — tiptoeing toward the cusp of fascism, I fear — so far there are still avenues for opposition, creativity and small bits of progress. I can imagine that scary red-state blue-state binary of North America divided into Jesus

Land and the United States of Canada shifting in the near future toward something less fucked up.

But then I — like the character Nellie Forbush in *South Pacific* — am clearly a “cock-eyed optimist!” Emphasis on the “cock,” for sure.

JG: Your new piece *Us* is a full-on confrontation with the United States of Canada: C as mythic north; C as mythic land of freedom; C as enogenous zone.

TM: Alistair and I were at a dinner in Venice Beach recently where the hors d’oeuvres were served on a gorgeous kitsch Expo 67 platter. When I was a little kid, Expo seemed to be a mondo hip-utopian Disneyland on the St. Lawrence. Canada was all over the US press in the sixties: the new flag — which my little inner gay boy innately knew was a triumph of design ...

[Extended digression. John goes “Yuck!” Tim goes “Do you really find the Maple Leaf flag yucky? Is this internalized Canada-phobia? I have such positive associations when I see the Canadian flag, ‘Oh thank god — we are entering the free world at last!’ I am such a



Tim Miller, *Paint Yourself Red/Me & Mayakovsky*, 1980. Photo: Kirk Winslow, Courtesy: Tim Miller

sucker for flags with leafy-treey things. Canada, Lebanon *und so weiter!* The California State flag too. That cute bear! If only California had remained a separate country...”]

TM: ... Expo, the Confederation centennial, Trudeau becoming PM the next year. (I remember Trudeau seeming sexy to me in Third Grade! Those side burns!)

Canada was very alive in my little boy imagination as the “through the looking glass world,” in contrast to the monstrosity of that time in the states. A good chunk of my show *Us* is set in 1968–69 in the stew of my child’s perceptions of Vietnam, musicals and Canada as my escape route for my otherness, and how it eventually collides with Alistair and my current situation as likely future exiles to Canada.

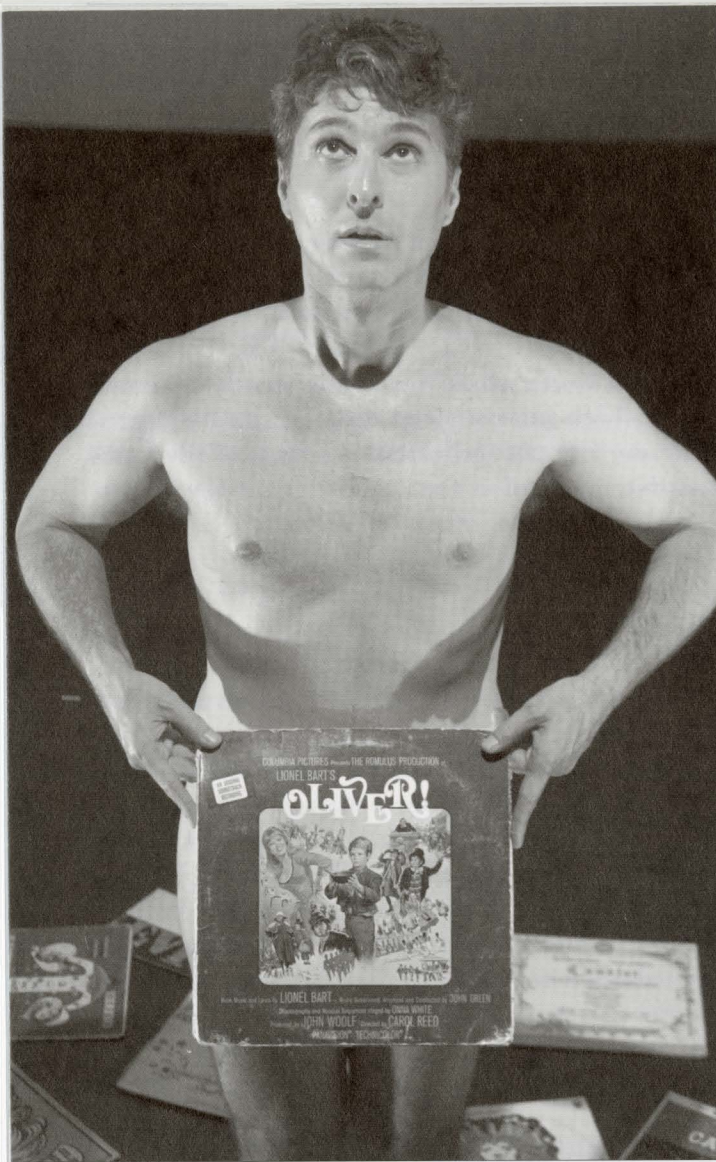
That we’re talking about all this today, as the civil marriage law is signed in Canada, carries a lot of resonance for me. That gay people can access civil marriage rights in Canada has become a huge marker for queer Americans. I know there are plenty of lesbian and gay Canadians that find this a big yawn or even reactionary, but that Canada has led the entire world in this struggle seems to me to be something to be really proud of, if nothing else for how bad it makes the States look! The enormity of what Canada has done — as bold as Trudeau’s sideburns — offers a giant, sexy, Canadian crotch to my psyche and creativity, fuelling this performance right down to its climax at the annual Victoria Day tug-of-war between the US and Canada on the Rainbow Bridge at Niagara Falls, the orgasmic crotch of North America!

JG: In quintessentially self-deprecating Canadian fashion, we’re probably incapable of imagining our national culture as worthy of anyone’s erotic fetishization (Pierre went through brief motions as a pop culture sex-symbol, but for most of his Prime Ministerial tenure, his uncool persona as grumpy elder statesman dominated). The examples you cite — PET, Expo, the Vicky Day cops tug-a-war — seem to tease us with

their kitschiness, yet your tone is fearlessly sincere. Indeed, when I think of your work over the years, I’m struck by many similar reclamations of tacky pop cult (Ken dolls, speedos, Nixon, Jif peanut butter, Michael York, Jesus, Worf), which you’ve consistently presented in terms both hilarious and heartfelt. Are you proposing a practice of anti-camp — instead of the traditional bitchy derision that characterizes the stance, camp as the sincerest form of sincerity?

TM: Well, I did grow up in LA about ten miles from Disneyland, so my camp-sniff-detection settings may need some adjusting! On the other hand — apropos Disneyland, the Vatican of Camp — the first time I had sex with another boy in high school was practically in the shadow of the Matterhorn Bobsled ride! A real fruit cocktail of corporate camp as well as a deeply felt space of a faggot’s coming of age. Seems like a good mix, and is in a way a kind of anti-camp. I like scratching underneath the Formica surface of these totemic cultural materials — problematize and fuck with them for sure — but also retain and honor their heart, chi, and even potential transgression.

This is very American, of course. On one level, wanting to have our cake and eat it too, but also, a kind of genial optimism reserved for imperial cultures that is both a blessing and curse for us. It is that blithe US optimism — as I refer to it in my previous show *Glory Box* — what makes Americans seem like “pampered, retarded children to the rest of the fucked-over world.” Living with Alistair (an Aussie product of another colonized-by-Britain, self-deprecating, far-flung, diasporic post imperial dominion that occupies some kind of similar ball park as Canada) has widened my palette of response. For Australians (like Canadians too, I believe) there is a national self-deprecating pastime of taking the piss out of things that seem pompous or too self-serious. This is a great critical tool, of course, but it can also have a downside where everything can get drained of heat and meaning — I am going all California essentialist here — like not imagining Canada to be a repository of erotic projection!



Tim Miller, *Us*, 2004. Photo: John Aigner, Courtesy: Tim Miller

JG: Since you practice praxis, as it were, what yardsticks do you use to calibrate the question of efficacy?

TM: I spend about 25–30 weeks a year on the road performing, probably two-thirds of those gigs in the US I move my butt all over small town “red-state” America (from Winston-Salem to Salt Lake City to Chattanooga!) When I go into a community to do my performances *Glory Box* or *Us*, it’s an opportunity to be a ruckus-raising, change agent, lighting rod cheerleader — I always bring my pom-poms — for the local brew of queer activists and progressive citizens. This is something that solo performance, the ever lean-and-mean culture tool, is especially good at.

There is currently a bill in the US Congress called the “Uniting America’s Families Act” which would change immigration law in the States to allow couples like Alistair and I to remain in the US and not need to immigrate to Canada, the main destination for bi-national queer couples from America. In the last congress there were about 130 congressional sponsors of the bill, and a whole bunch of them signed onto the bill after audiences who had come to my show responded to my call to action and phoned up their Congressperson to harangue them. I freely admit this bill doesn’t have a chance of passing anytime soon with our current hideous government, but it gives people a chance to call their Congressperson, usually for the very first time, and create a small micro performance on the telephone of claiming power.

There is a deeper human goal to all this performance work though. I am asking the straight folks in the audience to do some heavy lifting and acknowledge their heterosexual privilege and begin to extend their empathy to lesbian and gay relationships. I am also using the show to ask lesbian and gay people to wake up the fact that we are second-class citizens in the US and to begin sifting through the millions of signs, signals and laws our culture delivers that tells us our relationships are worthless.

I also teach performance-making and artist-as-citizen workshops a lot. I do all these university residencies at small conservative colleges, and I’ve seen how this can help some queer undergrads to come out, and get active, and maybe two years later I get an e-mail and they tell me they are organizing a queer culture festival themselves or running for political office.

JG: Your commitment to keeping up those contacts, to ‘just connecting,’ has always been mind-boggling — in the days before email, I’d look forward to your regular Xerox-art missives, with a trademark personalized Miller witticism/exhortation scrawled in big fat magic marker, and I knew you were extending the same effort to a massive mailing list that spanned states and conti-

nents. This engagement, with the live, the personal, and the ongoing, speaks volumes about your political priorities. Does this also get at why you’ve never ventured into the realm of the pre-recorded?

TM: In fact, the largest audience I ever reached at any one time was my episode of *The Larry Sanders Show*. HBO built an episode around me called — what else — “The Performance Artist,” where I come on Larry’s show, do this wild performance which includes a loving tribute to butt plugs, and then they pull me off the network. It was a great experience and a really smart script. Since the show is in such intense syndication in the US and UK, people are always coming up to me and saying, ‘I saw you on TV last night.’

I’ve always had my shows available on video, and they’re in zillions of college and library collections. However, I’ve put my energies mostly toward live performing and book projects — my memoir *Shirts & Skins*, the collection of my shows called *Body Blows*, and my forthcoming book *1001 Beds: Essays, Performances & Travels*.

Now, I’m not abandoning future fantasies of a Jonathan Demme-helmed feature (*Swimming to Queer Cambodia!*), but a huge part of me has always loved the specificity, immediacy and ephemeral nature of the live performing moment. I have a lot of faith in what happens in these dark theaters and performance spaces where humans gather sweatily together. Though I make full use of my website, electronic media, e-mail communities etc., for

me there just is no replacement for that hand-to-hand engagement of bodies in proximity.

JG: Perhaps the utterly contingent nature of the digital makes your insistence on the live all the more understandable — the certitude of actual flesh.

TM: My performances have always been digital in the most anthropological sense. They’re literally about hands & fingers, digits as it were, being able to touch the breathing sweating, singing, shouting, dancing moment. Maybe this is why I am always wandering around the audience in my shows pawing people! The actual 98.6 degrees of touch — human, spiritual and psychic heat.

I think my biggest “digital” duty is to keep our fingers warm and reaching, to keep the possibility of people being in the same place and time, breathing the same air, being dazzled or disgusted, changed or challenged, energized and emboldened.

Tim Miller performed Us at the The Vancouver East Cultural Centre on Oct 18–22 (<http://www.vecc.bc.ca/index.html>). He is also performing in Peterborough Nov. 11–12, presented by Public Energy at the Market Hall Performing Arts Centre (<http://www.publicenergy.ca>).

John Greyson is a Toronto film/video artist whose recent works include Fig Trees (2003), Proteus (2003), His Instructors have described him as an Innattentive Student (2004), and Motet for Amplified Voices (2005).

Last week, for an unrelated project, I image-googled the subject “fig leaf.” The very first picture to come up was of Tim. It’s the fetching, iconic shot from his 1987 *Some Golden States*, his pose vaguely Grecian, undies improvising as a dickie, his dick uncharacteristically covered by said foliage.

This week, I image-googled “fig leaf,” and found he’d been inexplicably demoted to pic #2. What can we learn from the arbitrary vagaries of such search engine hierarchies? What position will Tim occupy several months from now, when this is printed? (Readers, participate: image-google “fig leaf” yourself and report back with your findings!)

Making Books the Hard Way

Off Printing: Situating Publishing Practices in Artist-run Centres (Tiré à part: situer les pratiques d'édition des centres d'artistes)

Regroupement des Centres d'Artistes Autogérés du Québec: 2005.
review by Sally McKay

"We need more resources!" Sometimes the cry is invoked as a passionate plea in board meetings, sometimes it is formed as a careful request in grant applications, sometimes it is sighed in lonely late-night desperation when the byzantine piles of work on your desk are mounting as high as an elephant's eye.

You are the director, managing editor, board-member, intern, author, designer, copy editor or volunteer proof reader. You have too much work to do, too many people who have also put in endless unpaid hours relying on you to do that work well and you have no clear guidelines as to how to proceed or prioritize your overwhelming tasks. You are making it up as you go along. You are also fully engaged, gratified and absorbed by the job. Your colleagues are brilliant, sometimes challenging, always interesting. And once in a while, a beautiful, unique, thought provoking book miraculously appears ... the fruit of your labour. And you stare at this treasure, proud, exhausted and blinking in disbelief, "I can't believe we did it ... again." This is independent publishing, and it is a process most artist-run centres are familiar with.

In October of 2003, Regroupement des

Centres d'Artistes Autogérés du Québec (RAAQ) held a conference on publishing in artist-run centres. The proceedings are a fascinating read for anyone interested in indie-culture and are telling of the structural challenges facing Canada's network of ARCS. The book also provides a sense of solidarity in the world of art publishing.

The problems? Consistency is lacking. The audience is a conundrum. Staff are overburdened. Paying for projects is a constant struggle, marketing is virtually nonexistent and distribution is a perennial source of frustration and woe. Dusty boxes of books pile up in basements, breaking the hearts of those who laboured to create them.

But *Off Printing* is also inspiring. Despite constant struggle and confusion, the value of publishing art books is never doubted and the books themselves are revered. "As the history of contemporary art in Canada is being written," Lesley

Johnstone notes, "this body of material will become more and more valuable as it presents practices and ideas that are not found in other kinds of publications ... I think that some larger museums could learn from the polyvalent quality and flexibility of the publications produced in artist-run centres and smaller art institutions that are done with great care, with a true respect for the art and artist, with an awareness of the relationship between the content and the design."

And, with many voices and experiences represented, *Off Printing* also provides some clues as to just why this cherished activity is always so damn hard.

Publishing consultant Nathalie Parent argues that it is imperative for ARCS to "establish their publishing mandate in line with their mission, creating a form of relative autonomy for their publishing departments." Why are mandates in short supply? "Publishing activity presently fails to represent the identity of artist-run centres who produce publications which are often done in a 'circumstantial' manner, according to available resources at a given moment" (Lisanne Nadeau of La Chambre Blanche).

Publishing experience may be in short supply among board members, and as Nathalie Parent notes, there is rarely a system in place for passing on expertise.

Small staff must carry the ball. Lesley Johnstone describes her experience at Artex: "... I learned how to make books, because like many working in artist-run centres I did everything — from the writing and editing to obtaining rights and reproductions, to managing the production budgets and schedules, as well as fundraising. And then I had to deal with marketing and distribution. An amazing experience, but not without its drawbacks ..."

Keith Wallace, formerly of the Contemporary Art Gallery, suggests the expectations on artist-run publishers may be unrealistic. "Artist-run centres are on the bottom rung of the art gallery hierarchy and produce strong, dynamic programs with relatively few resources — they don't have marketing and education departments — so why would one expect them to have a varied readership?" The expectation that a one-person staff with a volunteer board consisting primarily of artists should be able to

produce, distribute and ultimately sell books at the rate of a fully staffed trade publisher comes first and foremost from the funding structure. Those galleries that operate within the publishing program at the Canada Council find themselves on a track toward block funding that requires a minimum average of four books per year. Since books are usually in the works for a minimum of two years, any one publisher may have eight or more active projects to manage at any given moment. Co-publishing is a possible solution, but the Council has made it clear that if two publishers under block funding collaborate, their book may only count for half a credit each. This is unworkable as a system, tacitly institutionalising unreasonable levels of personal sacrifice from the individuals who do the work. Not only that, but it is hard enough to scrounge adequate funding for one book per year, let alone four.

What about sales, you ask? Well, sales do account for some important revenue, but

they will rarely come close to paying back the cost of production. Is there something wrong with this financial picture? Well, yes and no. Indie art book publishing is like a macrocosm of the contradictory forces that play out in Canada's complicated art funding system. We value cultural expression that is not dampened by catering to the demands of market. Therefore we have government funding for the arts. Yet our government increasingly expects us to use the funding as seed money for garnering future market success. It's a catch 22. Are we in business or aren't we? On top of that, we live under the pervasive economic paradigm that success is measured by expansion. Andrew Forster of Burning Editions, explains, "the claim that the arts form a valid philosophical alternative to a commercial or professional career path has suffered a blow to its credibility. The effect of this credibility gap pulls students in two directions. The first is to 'drop out' in favour of a search for a true alternative in activism, music, etc., or by



Illustration by
Sally McKay, 2005

looking for a viable profession in economic terms. The second direction is a kind of hyper-professionalism within the art field with a focus on promotion, packaging and producing artwork that has the right 'look' to succeed."

The dichotomy between market and state-funded strategies is a structural problem and it is reflected in confusion at all levels of non-profit publishing, from the funder, through the institution to the distributor and ultimately, the individual book buyer. I suggest, however, that the problem can be ameliorated when the polarity is diffused. Printed Matter (an internationally renowned art book retail outlet and notably, in this context, *not* a Canadian institution) seems to accept that while art books will not make *much* money for anyone — as former Executive Director David Platzker says, "actually paying artists and publishers has never been easy" — marketing and sales are still integral aspects of the project. There is no shame in promoting good work. At the same time there is no shame in acknowledging that niche culture needs a financial helping hand. I would venture that all indie-art endeavours require money from somewhere other than sales, whether it be government grants, private donations or founders eking out their personal nest-eggs. For its initial years (as many as ten, according to Platzker), board members of Printed Matter floated the institution out of their own pockets.

But marketing is fraught for ARCS. "For the most part, artist-run centres haven't marketed themselves to the wider public, but have instead tended to maintain a somewhat insular community. And I would say that this is in part an effort to protect the integrity of artistic practice and avoid the

pressure to become more populist and revenue producing, especially from some funding agencies which have to demonstrate that through numbers the public money is well spent, many artist-run centres remain suspicious of the impact that might have on the idea of offering what they consider an alternative to the rest of the art system" (Keith Wallace).

These fears are in many respects valid, yet they belie a deep insecurity. While the readership for art books may be small, its limits are currently untested. Perhaps, with the resources to market properly, a publisher such as YVZ could find 300 per cent more readers than they currently have for their books, without sacrificing one iota of editorial integrity! An increase such as this would not make anyone rich, nor would it even pay for the publishing program, but it would bring in *some* more money, and more importantly it would bring greater numbers and diversity of people to the institution.

This brings us to the comments made by Ahasiw Maskegon-Iskwew, who points out in no uncertain terms that artist-run centres are not representing aboriginal cultures. "The greatest challenge facing arts professionals in Canada and Quebec is becoming aware of the colonial enterprise that shaped their education and insidiously refused to deliver on its promise of liberal democracy and human rights." Are artist-run centres resistant to change? John Murchie says he is "disappointed by the publishing we undertake. The *old ways* live on stronger than ever. There is little piracy, little imaginative intelligence." It is possible that ARCS are frightened, and with good reasons. But fear breeds insularity. The only way past such a stalemate is to actively welcome new people — with

potentially challenging perspectives— into the mandate of the institution.

In terms of publishing, effective outreach and publicity requires resources the ARCS don't currently have. It would be great to see the Canada Council (and other funders) recognise the financial realities of non-profit publishing and re-jig their demands to accommodate a system of vibrant, responsive niche marketing rather than constant economic growth. Still, I believe readership could improve if institutions articulate inspired publishing goals, attract active members with publishing experience and find ways to provide genuine support for their staff.

While the issues raised by the conference are somewhat daunting, the texts themselves are a very good read. AA Bronson's keynote speech gives excellent historical perspective to art publishing in Canada. Esther Vincent, president of Marginal Distribution, dishes out a mild wrist-slap and some nuts'n'bolts marketing advice to all those publishers who complain that their distributors aren't doing enough. Christopher Keller, a self-described "angry 70-year old publishing veteran," is hilarious as he lists the virtues of books: that they don't take up space, that they don't need explanations, that they don't cost very much money, that they don't require apparatus, machinery or context; all with the repeated caveat, "unless you are a publisher."

Sally McKay was co-owner/operator of Lola magazine, co-editor of the YVZ publication Money Value Art: State Funding, Free Market, Big Pictures, and she served a brief stint in 2004 as interim managing editor at YVZ Books.

Owning Something: The Interventionists

Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art

Curated by Nato Thompson

30 May 2004 – 15 April 2006

review by Marc Herbst

It's yellow, with an LED monitor on top. Or it looks like denim and has lots of pockets.

In fact it could have been any number of combinations of form, text, colour and image; tactical media or post-conceptual art projects. When the goal is social transformation, questions of aesthetics are less relevant than those of affectivity.

At first, I didn't even know what the works of artists in Mass MoCA's "The Interventionists" were doing in a museum. Those of us who make similar work were wondering about both art world micro-politics and how a major institution deemed it sexy to show this sort of work. This show had a budget. It seemed to happen suddenly and several of us acted with surprise that "The Interventionists" was not a result of lobbying but of individual institutional machinations. Think about the Guerrilla Girls in the late 80s or the countless complaints the NAACP has filed against the entertainment industry — politicized representation so often comes about in the nexus between protest and civic dialogue.

These days, we don't collectively talk fulcrums and pressure points. Nor do we collectively focus on identifying and working around the sites of effective intervention

for tactical media or post-conceptual art. Instead we find or occasionally stumble into these places as individuals.

Nevertheless, I use the word *we* purposefully. Since this show consists of, is for or by participants in grassroots movements, let us not see the work as genius objects but as tools that anyone could make or adapt to their particular situation. In *The Interventionists* catalogue, subtitled *Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life*, Nato Thompson conceptualizes each work as a "means for building and deconstructing a given situation..."

They are a motley assemblage of methods for bringing political issues to an audience outside of the insular art world's doors." We who are partisan in global struggles for justice — meeting at mobilizations, group exhibitions, DIY conferences, info shops, we make and use these tools to invent and expand upon a living and radical culture.

Were we Communist Party members or were this the time of the Popular Front, we'd have had a collective vision. As contemporary anti-authoritarian aestheticians, however, we drift like Guy Debord, locating productive spaces, interesting



The Interventionists, installation view, 2004, Courtesy: Mass MoCA

God Bless Graffiti Coalition, *On the 8th Day*, 2004, Courtesy: Mass MoCA

niches and possibilities wherever we can see them.

Reflecting this Situationist tendency, the exhibition was broken down into non-programmatic, exploratory sections: Nomads, the Experimental University, Ready to Wear, Reclaim the Street. The work of Nomads runs the range from N55's *Snail Shell System* mobile home to the mental trip of William Pope L's *Black Factory*. The Ready to Wear section is a wide exploration of the artistic, fashion-oriented, camouflage and pragmatic affects of clothes. Reclaim the Streets are projects that either publicly populate or covertly insert political messages into the media and public sphere. The Experimental University represents aesthetic projects done in non-traditional contexts.

The result is an ecumenical collection of approaches, audiences and rhetorical modes. Targeted CEO's crumble on impact with flying pies in Whispered Media's documentary of the *Biotic Baking Brigade*. The African American object-associations of self-selecting folks in parking lots' are ground and beaten to a pulp with William Pope L's and Spurse's deeply psychological *Black Factory*. Consumers swear off Starbucks as a result of Reverend Billy's frontal assault sermons. Alex Villar liberates the art-video audience mind when his *Temporary Occupations* and *Other Spaces* video show him squeezing into a broad



array of sidewalk level urban niches. All these strategies of reclaiming public space and public culture open a dialogue at the Museum and also demonstrate some of the acts many cultural workers engage in.

The 16 Beaver group, whose "Interventionist" project was a New York City-based discussion series, has proposed a unifying website for our international conversation. From within the confines of the exhibition, the Chicago-based God Bless Graffiti Coalition manifested a little of this larger collective possibility by jamming half a gallery's towering hallway with street posters collected from artists worldwide.

It is notable that there were so few traditional representations of social change in the show. One near exception was Oliver Ressler and Dante Azzellini's *Disobedienti*, a protest video. Yet even this piece does neither describes nor displays the protester's

social ideal. Instead we have non-systemic descriptions of other possible worlds; the world where Ruben Ortiz-Torres' funk-up day labourers exist, the place where Dré Wapenaar's future-perfect birthing and dieing tents are common. Though I am constantly thinking that cultural change is a simple thing that everyone participates in, the overturned car and the surrounding crowd, I am not surprised that we have no systemic vision of it. Mostly we all just share the same story of under-funded local institutions that nevertheless continue supporting abstract aspirations of "justice," "peace" and such. As holders of this abstract dream, it is our individual investigations that unite us.

Along with Nato Thomson, assistant curator at Mass MoCA, I walked the exhibition with my mother. It was the summer of 2004, when everyone hated Bush. It was the summer the Republican National Convention was hosted four hours to the

south in New York City. It was a treat to visit my family in the New York suburbs and find them a group of raging activists, angry about George W. Bush though my mom is a lifelong liberal Democrat, and Aunt Phyllis and Uncle David local Democratic Party operatives, we rarely agree on politics and share only basic values. Theirs is an old liberal culture whose foundations were laid by a strong union movement that won good living standards from the ruling class. Their reality is a fantasy to a younger progressive America that has not experienced the time before market forces atomized a broad progressive culture.

To understand how my mom engaged the exhibition would be to poll a random mall shopper with the question, "show me how we are going to win." Not enough of the terms of the conversation have been set; there is no context to the question. Win what? In what arena? Can I buy that?

Most interestingly, the public face of this exhibition offered us a chance to see what we might look like to our mothers, neighbours and more traditional fellow artists.

I got to know Nato through the *Counterproductive Industries* folks he used to run with in Chicago. There is a brilliant scene in a video of a Chicago Reclaim the Streets action where after wreaking havoc on the house of the MTV reality show "Real World Chicago," he and others succinctly critique the way in which capitalist media exploits the culture of the hip Wicker Park community. Concurrent to collective practices, Nato became a curator within a system governed by personal motivation, not political consensus.

He has begun a deeper analysis of what the role of an institution might be in a renewed radical tradition:

I would like to propose that the art rads out there (if you are reading this, then this probably means you) develop a more cohesive radical infrastructure. ... What a real infrastructure could do is provide a cohesive, real-world system to assist radical projects. It could allow some autonomy from the ever-so-common problem of interpreting work in the mixed field of power. This could be

as simple as venues circulating exhibitions, writers providing critical analysis of contemporary radical aesthetics and communities participating in radical politics for social justice. It is something that is desperately needed and would have real material consequences.¹

This is a tall order but a worthy direction. In our current context, institutional exhibitions can bring out the worst in artists. The focus on artists as singular gnostic geniuses emerging without context can alter the motivation and trajectory of practices. The bizarre and irrational selection process creates a destabilizing affect on everyone's creativity that can also spawn counterproductive jealousies. Can we deal with professionalism and the reality of the privatized art world so that our ideals can be better expressed throughout culture? Can we figure out our individual needs for personal economic and emotional security while working in greater concert? How can we collaborate so as to maximize each other's productivity?

"The Interventionists" did a wonderful job of conceptualizing what we do; let us continue on by figuring out how we do it.

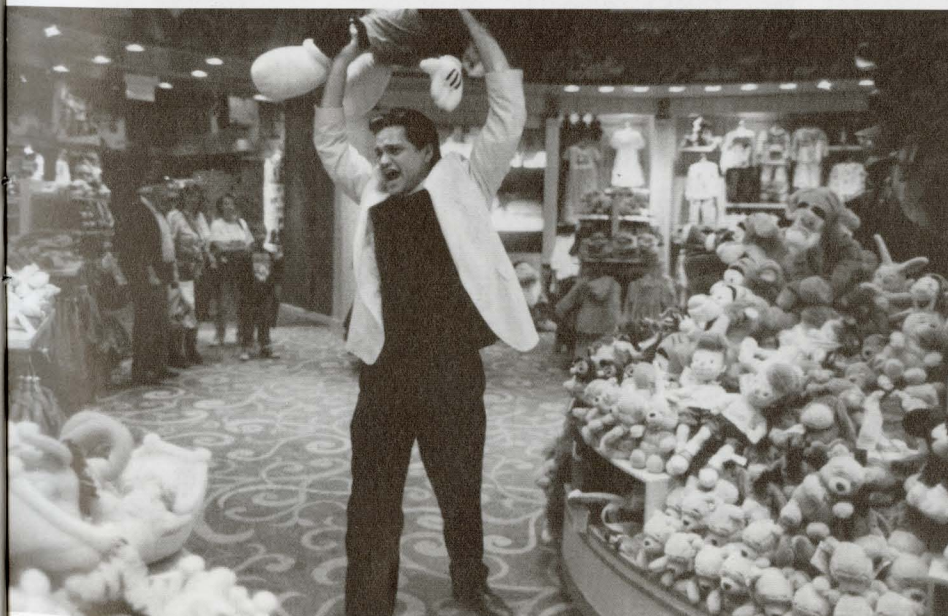
Marc Herbst is a founder/co-editor of the Los Angeles-based *Journal of Aesthetics and Protest*. Fig trees are growing outside his window. Concurrently, he is looking for a residency program in other climes to travel to with his partner and newborn child Anselm. He also spends time as an artist (sculpture/performance/print) and teacher.

Note:

1. From *Contributions to a Resistant Visual Culture Glossary* in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Protest* issue #3



Alex Villar, *Temporary Occupations*, film still, 2001, Courtesy: Mass MoCA



Reverend Billy, *First Disney Intervention*, 1997, Courtesy: Mass MoCA

Cri de Coeur? The 59th Avignon Theatre Festival

8 July – 27 July 2005
review by Barry Edwards

Founded in 1947 by Jean Vilar, the Avignon Theatre Festival is still the main theatre, performance and dance event on the French-speaking calendar. Having always cherished its radical identity, the current directors and this year's associate artist Jan Fabre continue to embrace the tradition of provocation. There are actually two festivals that happen during Avignon, the *IN* and the *OFF*. Both are completely separate entities, the *IN* representing the main official festival and the *OFF* representing more than 150 theatre spaces hosting companies and shows.

The Festival is inextricably entwined with philosophy and philosophers — Baudrillard was there this year leading a debate on the subversive. It is also aspirational, utopian almost, in its belief in the communities of practitioners the town hosts. It reinforced for me the ability that theatre has, more so now than ever, to respond to the need people have to feel connected, human and not alone.

Avignon is a puzzle of medieval narrow streets where, appropriately enough, there are no straight lines to one's destination. In this winding maze are the theatres and venues where the Festival programme happens. Many are amazing spaces, fabulously equipped with the latest in sound and lighting technology. Spaces like the Chapelle des Penitents

Blancs or the Salle Benoit XII, both fourteenth-century buildings of awesome aesthetic beauty and history.

It feels quite appropriate to the spirit of the Festival that a building of such tradition should house the latest work of iconic performer Marina Abramovic, a major artist of the *IN* programme. Having established her reputation in the 70s and 80s, she won a Golden Lion award at the Venice Biennale in 2002 and her *Biography Remix* is an extraordinary contemporary evocation of her life's work and

practice. Ten minutes into the performance, with Abramovic perched on a small balcony twenty feet up and clutching a pair of live snakes, two large fighting dogs pad onto the stage and start eating raw chunks of meat. Later she re-creates the performance in which an arrow is aimed at her heart as the bow is stretched between her and another. One slip and the arrow would pierce her heart and no doubt kill her. In the original performance the man holding the bow was her lover Ulay. In this performance at Avignon, it is Ulay's son, who at thirty is the age his



Images of Avignon Theatre Festival courtesy of Barry Edwards

father was when the performance was first conceived and performed. A real moment of witness and people-centred presence.

The most stunning space in the Festival programme is undoubtedly the Palais des Papes, built as the official residence of Popes Benoit XII and Clement XI in 1335. Along with the famous bridge Saint Bénézet, it is the jewel in the crown of Avignon's heritage. For the Festival, the Cour d'Honneur is converted into a 1600 seat auditorium for performance, the latest electronic technology mingling with the artifice of medieval stonemasons. It was here that my nine-day visit to the Festival began and ended — with the work of Jan Fabre.

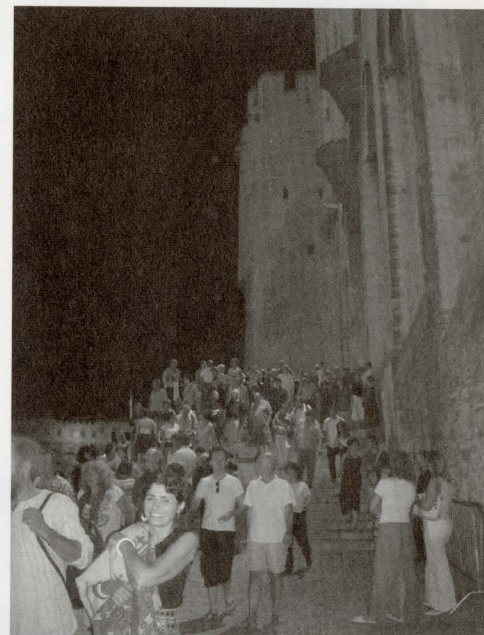
Fabre's work dominates the Festival, as does his image. On all Festival literature he is seen sitting astride a giant turtle, a photograph of a real sculpture installed beside the sea. Evidence of Fabre's egotistical leanings sure enough, but there is another message, more important: the artist, looking out to sea, is above all a visionary. The public pay to see what the artist sees, though we are not necessarily expected to like it (always a matter of taste after all). *Le Monde*, for instance, called this year's Festival opening "a dark, dark event." But you are expected to be moved by it, to be provoked by it, to think about it. Sounds simple enough, but it is the profound basis for the French relationship to culture, and so to theatre and performance.

This year's Festival opened with Fabre's *Histoire des Larmes* (History of Tears). I saw its prototype, *The Crying Body*, back in September 2004 when it opened at Fabre's home theatre de Singel in Antwerp. I thought then that it would not transfer easily from the intimate, rather genteel

atmosphere of provincial Antwerp to the lighthouse glare of Avignon Festival.

As it happened, and in typical French fashion, there was a demonstration on opening night. As performers were entering in the presence of France's Minister of Culture, Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, scores of theatre artists heckled and shouted from the audience, protesting the new "protocoles" that limit the rights of theatre artists to out-of-work benefits. Since its beginnings, Avignon has been seen as the key touchstone arena for protest. In 1968, when theatre workers from Paris descended on the Festival and called on all artists to join the revolution, the Living Theatre famously left their venue and went onto the streets (Festival founder Jean Vilar kept most of the Festival going). This year's Festival director Vincent Baudriller went on stage to say "you have had your say, now let the artists have theirs." Ironically, *Histoire des Larmes* opens with sustained crying, yelling and shouting from the twenty or so performers.

The stage area is sculpted with thirty or more wooden ladders, six huge kettle drums and an assortment of glass bottles, bowls and other containers, which white-suited performers are cleaning with strips of cloth. In his public press conference, Fabre defended his new piece saying he was trying to show the beauty of the human body in moments of extreme and often intimate vulnerability. A good example of this, one of the most vivid images in the performance, is a moment when a dozen completely naked performers are laid out on top of fragile glass containers that fill the entire stage space. Material and human form mix in a play of refracted light and twisted, sweating limbs. In Fabre's second piece, a revival of



Je Suis Sang (I Am Blood) that followed *Histoire des Larmes* later that first week, he is at his best. No narrator here, the work speaks for itself: naked performers slip and slide across the wine-soaked stage in a masterful tapestry of chaos, adrenalin and super-charged sensuality.

In an inversion of the set-up of a Festival like Edinburgh, here the IN performances are seen as the cutting edge, the experimental vanguard. The OFF by comparison is a panorama of French theatre traditions that include Racine, dance, commedia and cabaret as well as the contemporary. All are professional, many extremely successful, like the cabaret duo Noteprod performing *Duel* at the packed Théâtre du Balcon, a hilarious performance about to be in residence in the Champs Elysées Paris, involving a grand piano, cello, various spanners and a chain saw.

An interesting feature of the OFF is the way in which different French regions take over a performance space for the Festival in order to promote their own artists' work. Pays de Loire, for example, based them-

selves at the 15th century Grenier à Sel (salt mill). The day after seeing Fabre's performance in the Cour d'Honneur, I am watching the Nathalie Béasse dance-theatre company in a studio holding 80 people. *Landscape* is made up of three separate performance pieces, each exploring the tensions, memories, aspirations between a man and a woman. Perhaps in contrast to the enormity of the Palais des Papes, *Landscape* felt intensely intimate, managing to link the personal physicalities of each couple to a wider context of war and conflict without this ever becoming too obvious or banal. In the final sequence of the trilogy, an unassuming young woman is folding her man's jacket, she stands dutifully behind him for a while, but finally falls into uncontrollable laughter. Not at him, but at something, perhaps the absurdity, the inconsequence of their relationship in the unstoppable (and sometimes cruel) scheme of things. Yet she yearns to feel more, more of what she's not sure. In an impulsive personal "happening" she hurls herself at her partner's head and finds herself suspended full length in the air above him. It is a magical moment of

human vulnerability and resistant response to what life has thrown at you demonstrated by the act, literally, of throwing yourself.

Strasbourg-based company Magic Electro, promoted by the Bas-Rhin region at the Présence Pasteur, are a much rougher edged kind of company, mixing aerial work, hip-hop and rap. *Mon Songe* punches out a coarse mix of poetry and body percussion. One line from the performance stands out: "je crée, je crie, je crois" (I create, I cry, I believe). Cameroon-born Cheikh Sall who plays the central role of the "slameur," somehow manages to make the words sound powerful rather than banal. Strange to say that this simple phrase, rapped out to crude drum and bass, managed to achieve what Fabre did not — a direct resonance with the audience about fear, pain and the human spirit. At the end of *Histoire des Larmes*, the small white cloths that the performers have been using to wipe sweat off each other's bodies are hung out to dry on the huge wall of the Cour d'Honneur. When all are hanging there they spell Save Our Soul. Unlike the rapper's unpolished words, this elegantly produced mosaic said not much, by trying to say too much.

Barry Edwards directs the performance company and theatre lab Optik which he founded in 1981 [www.optik.tv]. Recent productions include "space" (London 2004), "xstasis" (Montreal 2003), "stream" (ICA London 2002), "takingbreath" (Belgrade 2001), and "in the presence of people" (Sao Paulo 2000). He leads the performance research team, Body, Space and Technology, at Brunel University, West London. He designed and directs Performance Initiative Network, a new UK Government funded project to develop innovation in the theatre industry.



Cancer: A Metaphoric Re/Vision: Aiko Suzuki's Bombard/Invade/Radiate

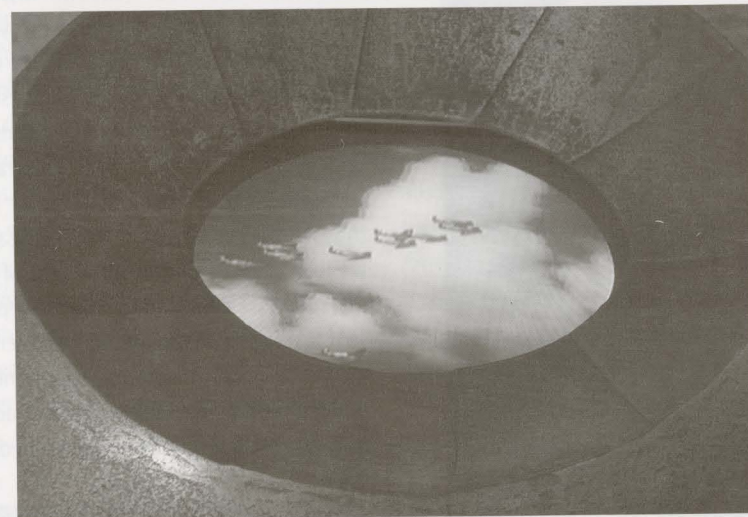
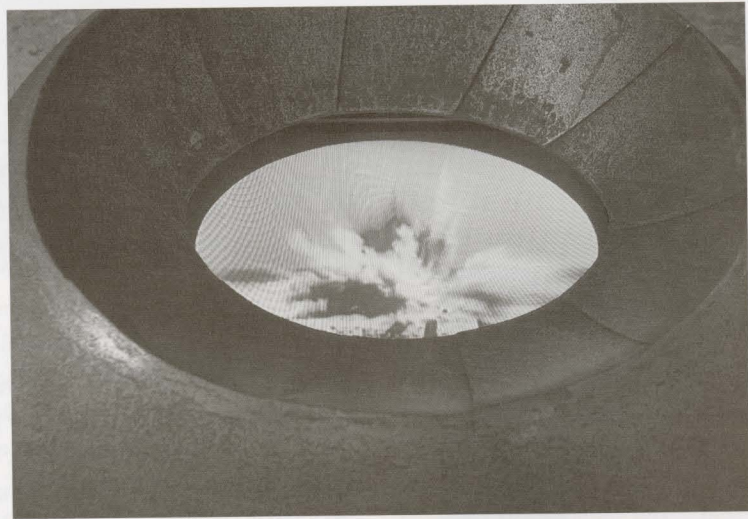
A Space Gallery
7 May — 11 June, 2005
review by Pam Patterson



Aiko Suzuki, *Signings*, video installation, 2005, photo: Midi Onodera and Yosh Inouye, Courtesy: A Space

Cancer, an illness experienced as a ruthless secret invasion, is the most radical of disease metaphors,¹ argues Susan Sontag. The "interest in the metaphor is precisely that it refers to a disease so overlaid with mystification, so charged with the fantasy of inescapable fatality."² In treatment, the war metaphor becomes active. As Sontag suggests, radiotherapy is as aerial warfare as patients are "bombarded" with toxic rays; chemotherapy is chemical warfare.³ For those of us who engage with the disease, we live, crushed under the weight of its metaphor. We hear "cancer" used to represent a culture run amuck. We experience our bodies undergoing cancer treatment as under attack. We are metaphorically traced as we are slashed, burned and poisoned.

Aiko Suzuki was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in 2002. I was diagnosed in 2004 with Stage 2 breast cancer. She has had two more years of negotiating "cancer" in all of its opacity and the stigma inherent in its classification. And Suzuki, unlike me, lives truly on the edge: the disease is systemic, its presence and progression marked, assessed, judged, barely checked. As a breast cancer patient, she resists naming herself a "survivor"; as an artist, she challenges the limitations of language to adequately express her experience.



Aiko Suzuki, *Witness*, video installation, 2005, photo: Midi Onodera and Yosh Inouye, Courtesy: A Space

In the medicalized, militarized language of cancer, meaning is distorted and reduced. Suzuki, like others, has been incised in surgery, bombarded with radiation, her cells subjected to toxic chemicals. As treatment, aimed to kill the cancer cells without killing (it is hoped) the patient, it employs the strategic hit.

Suzuki walks this battleground, gathering her experiences with cancer, in hospitals, within her community. She uses her aesthetic skills as an artist to answer Sontag's call to elucidate the cancer metaphor, moving us toward a liberation from its weight and meaning.

Bombard/Invade/Radiate is a multi-layered intimate exhibition in which whispers draw us in, invite us to come inside the cancer metaphor to where it is lived. Suzuki gives the stuff of dreams — in this case, nightmares — an earthly substance, rooting images in video installation and projection, sculpture, sound, and through the manipulation of light, dark and moving colour. Each element blends, not to give a generalized impression but to cross and connect, forming moments of startling clarity. Each in its particularity deflates the cancer metaphor, reforming the language, subverting it from militaristic caricature to (in)tense reality.

Composed of three elements — wall-mounted listening posts, a video/sound sculpture and hanging panels that act as a surface for video projections — the exhibit builds an intimacy that is both shocking and seductive.

On entering the exhibition, we approach the listening posts as though they are the locked patient examination room doors at the Princess Margaret Hospital Breast

Clinic. In the hospital, these doors all look the same. When we leave the room for a moment to return, we are momentarily confused as to which door is which. So, we listen at the cracks knowing the silent one is ours.

Behind these doors, as at these posts, the doctor speaks. Here we are told how advanced our disease is, explained our treatment choices. In the exhibit, we press our faces to the cracks, set at different levels of each post, and strain to hear. The tape is of the calm, authoritative voice of the oncologist, speaking, we assume, to Aiko. He describes his chemotherapeutic weapon of choice and its action — its efficacy as the bomb, the hit, the kill. It is unnerving. His description is lyrical; images are framed eloquently. Its intent, while clear, is enveloped and softened by a language of symbol. In this softening, the reality of “treatment” is diffused and distorted.

But Suzuki does not let that rest. In making the text barely audible and disembodied, she encourages us to move even closer. We listen and see others listen with great intensity. We are caught and mesmerized by what we hear.

A video monitor set face-up sits encased in a rusted bomb shell, WWII footage of bombs being released from American fighter planes soundlessly plays in a loop.⁴ Every few seconds, a droplet of water falls onto the screen's surface, causing ripples that momentarily diffuse the images. The surface bends but does not break and the planes continue their mission: bombs drop and explode. The text, “witness,” flashes on the screen, hovers and then disappears. As someone who grew up in the 50s and 60s, I cannot help but recall

Hiroshima, the past as haunting. The ghosts of nuclear war were irrevocably stamped as images on our psyche. Tears, mutability, timelessness — together these elements make the installation so compelling. It is as oracle recalling the past, foretelling the future, calling us to make an account.

In three large-scale video projections, Suzuki stands mute at the edge of a distant seashore waving yellow and red coloured flags, signaling in semaphore the words: bombard, invade, radiate. In different stages of undress, she both adds and peels away the layers of obfuscation revealing the woman beneath, the scarred chest — silent and eloquent. We experience this as in bits of broken message. As at the listening posts, we need to strain, to see and to understand. Semaphore language is not commonly known. We catch visual snatches on the edge of our imagination: a dove flutters past, the waves brush the shore. We experience the futility and frustration. She speaks, but for many of us her words are indecipherable.

Suzuki clearly excels at manipulating symbolic language. She uses it to reframe, recontextualize and rearticulate, to disabuse us of its original intent. Nowhere is she didactic. The invitation to rethink is posed through the waiting, present stillness.

She names us as witnesses and makes us implicated and complicit within the metaphoric space. But, we do not wander forlorn. Like Bosch's garden, this one's delights are sensual and seductive, and on closer examination, brutal and mutilating. But there is intent here, and the closer we move, the more we listen and wait, the clearer it becomes.

The energy of Suzuki's work is found in her determination to force changes to occur and thus confront choices. In *Bombard/Invade/Radiate* she does just that. Suzuki takes us deep into the contemplation of both her life and death, and our own. For those of us who live with cancer, such a consideration is not unusual. But what of those who say, “Not me!” Her installation seems to speak, quietly with power and resonance, “You are not uninvolved. Go beyond complacency or fear. Look beyond the metaphor. Diffuse its potency.”

Pam Patterson (PhD) has been active in various arts communities for thirty years. Her research is energized by her personal politics and focused on embodiment in art practice and disability issues with publications Studies in Art Education, Resources for Feminist Research, Parachute and Matriarts. She is visiting scholar at the Centre for Women's Studies, OISE/UT and performs/lectures for various colleges and universities. As a performance and visual artist, she has exhibited and performed solo, and with Leena Raudvee in ARTIFACTS.

Notes:

1. Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors* (New York: Picador, 1977/78 and 1988/89).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
4. Videos were made in collaboration with Midi Onodera. The soundwork that reverberates through the space was composed by Chiyoko Szlavnic, co-artistic director of the experimental ensemble Berlin Swischentone.

All the makings of a stereotype

by Nadia Kurd

Any controversy is good controversy. This is especially true when the controversy tests the waters of multiculturalism in a city like Toronto. Such was the case with Fashion Cares' recent *Bollywood Cowboy* HIV/AIDS fundraiser. With its seductive images of hennaed cowboys and Indian goddesses and chances to "enter the Sultan's Tent to schmooze over cocktails and admire the parade of bindis and boots, turbans and tight jeans," *Bollywood Cowboy* was not short on controversy. By using colonial themes of cowboys and Indians, harems and flying carpets, this "East meets the Wild West" themed event did more than raise a few eyebrows. Those who thought that identity politics and cultural appropriation had long left the discourse of visual culture would have been amazed to hear the reaction of organizations such as South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAP) who voiced their anger over the eroticized and simplistic characters presented by the fundraiser and the absence of consultation with the South Asian community. The arguments from ASAP made explicit that under the façade of multiculturalism the sultry harem girl stereotype often overrides many of the realities of South Asian experience in Canada. (Here I am specifically thinking of how the arrest and detainment of twenty-one Pakistani men in 2003 has quickly vanished from local consciousness).

My own feeling is somewhat complicated. While I am weary of contemporary Bollywood films and the problematic notions they disseminate, I am glad Fashion Cares and ACT decided to use

Bollywood and Cowboys for their fundraiser. This is mainly because reactions to the event highlighted how discussions of ethical representation seem to have lost their importance in some areas of activism. *Bollywood Cowboy* served as a reminder of the work that still needs to be done.

The event offered an important insight into the current situation in anti-racism and human rights work as well as the fine lines and tensions over cultural appropriation. In response to the South Asian community, *eye Weekly's* editorial stated the entire outcry over the event was "blatantly blathering nonsense." Along similar lines, the response from some of my first-year students to seeing an interview with bell hooks on popular culture and racism was that "racism was a problem long ago, but it's much better now and not that bad." The denial of the effects of stereotypical images is a reminder that racism pervades contemporary culture by subtly becoming the norm. Images, after all, can give enough information to a passer-by to form immediate and lasting impressions.

While intentions are tough to gauge, especially without a strong statement or retraction from Fashion Cares, ultimately the dialogue between the groups failed to achieve the paramount importance of HIV/AIDS awareness. Having said that, I believe all is not lost. Though no South Asian group was consulted for the fundraiser, a lesson to be learned is one of strategic planning. For South Asian organizations, it is important not only to acknowledge the wide appeal of Bollywood imagery, but to use it in our

own advertising as a cheeky nod to the growing fascination with South Asian culture and aesthetics.

My hope is that imagery that uses cultural tropes as a thematic will continue to be contested. We all need to be more vocal and critical in debates about cultural appropriation and the use of identity. Strong reactions to the *Bollywood Cowboy* fundraiser demonstrate that there is much to be learned from the writings of the likes of Stuart Hall. Hall has argued that identity is a long process of becoming and not naturally inherent to any one culture — instead cultures are interconnected. In other words, societal attitudes have a direct impact not only on the ways in which we see images, but also speak about how we use them to control the identity of others. The *Bollywood Cowboy* images show how stereotypes are used and persist in both imaginations and daily lived experiences by way of popular culture. The decision to use the *Bollywood Cowboy* as a theme reveals how Fashion Cares organizers felt within their power to use eroticized South Asian culture because it is the accepted norm.

Perhaps lines need to be drawn more clearly and light shed on those moments when sharing culture becomes taking. But change is also possible, especially when ideas can be discussed and negotiated. Otherwise, community reactions to events like *Bollywood Cowboy* could outweigh the good intentions of the groups involved, fracturing communities that are ultimately aligned in their support of HIV/AIDS activism and awareness.

Notes:

1. Fashion Cares Website.

<http://www.fashioncares.com/event/index.html>, 2005.

TAAFI

Toronto Alternative Art Fair International

CANADA'S ONLY ALTERNATIVE ART FAIR
IN THE HEART OF TORONTO'S
WEST QUEEN WEST ART & DESIGN DISTRICT

25+ ROOMS
INSTALLATIONS
PERFORMANCE ART
NEW MEDIA
PANEL DISCUSSIONS

NOV 3-7, 2005
FRI NOV 4 - SUN NOV 6, 12 - 8PM
MON NOV 7, 12 - 5PM
\$6 GENERAL ADMISSION

BACK TO THE RACK GALA RECEPTION
with Stink Mitt, Leslie and the Lys, and DJ Will Munro
Thursday, November 3, 9pm
the Gladstone Hotel
\$25 Admission

BONER ALTERNATIVE ROCK PARTY
with Peaches, MC Texass, and Big Primpin'
Saturday, November 5, 10pm
the Drake Hotel
\$25 Admission

THE DRAKE HOTEL
1150 QUEEN ST W

THE GLADSTONE HOTEL
1214 QUEEN ST W

WWW.TAAFI.ORG
416 846 6230

GLADSTONE HOTEL DRAKE HOTEL ROGERS NOW

arit agYU akimbo Gallery TPW



Images Festival 2006

Images is now accepting film, video,
new media and performance
submissions for the 2006 festival



festival dates:
April 13 - 22, 2006

www.imagesfestival.com

Call for Submissions

deadline: november 18, 2005

Images is possible thanks to our gracious funders: The Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, Canadian Heritage, the Toronto Arts Council, Telefilm Canada, The Ontario Trillium Foundation and Foreign Affairs Canada.

WE ARE ONLINE

www.eciad.ca/onlinecourses
tel 604.844.3897



EMILY CARR INSTITUTE
ART • DESIGN • MEDIA

Study with renowned artists and designers
Transfer credit possible

Hanksville

Art Gallery of Windsor
November 5, 2005 to January 8, 2006


Curated by Andrew T. Hunter
Organized by the Mendel Art Gallery
Presented by the Art Gallery of Windsor

Organized and circulated by the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Canada. This project has been made possible in part through a contribution from the Museums Assistance Program, Department of Canadian Heritage.

Exposition organisée et circulée par la Galerie d'Art Mendel de Saskatoon, au Canada et ce projet a été rendu possible en partie grâce à une contribution du Programme d'aide aux musées du ministère du Patrimoine Canadien.


Mendel**Art**Gallery


AGW
Art Gallery of Windsor

 Canadian Patrimoine
Heritage Canadien



Hanksville