

INFINITY'S KITCHEN

no. 2

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The image on the previous page was created by digitalpharoh, whose work is featured at <http://digitalpharaoh.com/>.

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Design

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Transcription

e.e. cummings had a typewriter and some strong feelings about how his words should appear on the page – about how to *write* them there. Now, we have sophisticated tools for layout and typography, professional graphic designers, etc. Why, then, should we be limited to the things that a typewriter can do? What other ideas can we explore, given the tools that have become available?

The concrete poetry movement took a similar approach to the presentation of words on the page. In the sixties, poets started experimenting with the shape of the poem on the page, the size

and arrangements of the words, and the typography. That too, was before the development of tools that are very useful for manipulating words on the page. Unfortunately, much of the special effects used by concrete poetry are at the expense of the text’s meaning.

Illegibility

This issue of Infinity’s Kitchen experiments with various attempts to write nonsense, to write illegibly, to write out the sense of things or to write sense into things.

You will not be able to read anything that is scribbled. Some of it scribbled.





Impossible Time-Scape: A Preface to “Rash”

By James Ryan

Most fiction takes the reader to an impossible landscape. What follows is a first effort toward creating fiction within *an impossible time-scape*.

In this story, each scene causes and is caused by the other scenes; each scene takes place before and after the others.

If the experiment is really successful, it will give the impression that time is moving forward and backward at once.

At the very least, I hope readers will find themselves unable to create a sensible order from the events that follow and will enjoy exploring new interpretive modes.

Rash

By James Ryan

He splashed water over his neck to cool the rash that only spread when he scratched it like the dog now scratching at his bathroom door. Just a minute Max! Cool water on an itch.

Veterinarian's office packed with cats, wretched things, and one had the audacity to leap off its owner's lap onto Nick's shoulder to prickle against his delicate skin. Nearly ended in a fistfight when the old hag suggested he had tried to steal off with her "precious".

Cool water did nothing but spread the contagion. Cat down his chest and arms, running red bumps. Had to grind his teeth to keep from scratching and the dog at the door wouldn't quit. Maybe some lotion, but the cupboard was bare.

Max the black husky foaming on the floor near the bathroom door, having

spasms, and eyes rolled up into his head, his long clawed paws flailing now against the cold tile floor, now against the bathroom door. No light in the hall but that from the threshold crack. A little breeze blowing through it for Max to put his nose on when his seizures put him near enough carried the muffled sound of water and his master's voice: Time to go to the store, buddy!

Cat lady got right up in Nick's face, their voices escalating as her Cat dug its claws deeper into his shoulder and all the little kitties in the room meowed and hissed and barfed up fur when, just as he was shoving up his shirt cuffs, they called his name. On a steel table in sharp light, his tremors finally stilled but eyes still glossed over, foam building over his snout with deep, heaving, raspy, lay his dog,

Max. We're going to have to put him down. It looks like a poisoning. Vet gave him a hard stare when she asked him: Do you have any idea how this might have happened?

He opened the bathroom door in a hurry, raced out looking for his keys and fell over poor, flopping, fish-out-of-water Max who whined desperately at the presence of his man. But his man, absorbed as he was in his need to quell the fire creeping down his torso like ants advancing their trails under his skin, did not notice his admittedly dark but obviously present and rather unhealthy pet.

Max's bowl was overturned in the kitchen, food spread across the floor. Open on the counter next to his keys: a half-empty red box clearly labeled: Dr. Ox's Remedy for Household Pests. Then the gentle sounds of his dog in the hallway, still scratching at the door, made their closing arguments

in their case against Nick's negligence. When he finally saw his "buddy" on the floor, he nearly lost his knees.

Of course. They would put him down. It was the humane thing to do. Nick felt an itch growing on the side of his neck and began to caress it with his hand. No, he had no idea what Max might have eaten that would make him so sick. All his household chemicals were safely concealed under the kitchen sink. Poor Max.

He left his dog in their care and exited, now scratching at an irritation crawling its way up behind his ear and down over his shoulder. Out past the venomous look of an old woman and the longing eyes of her feline, out he went through glass doors and into the bright sun and peace of his own car where he



bent the rearview to get a look at the shiny red bumps popping out all over his neck.

At the store he paced aisles in a frenzy, waiting for the pharmacy to call his name, rubbing with his thumb the folded doctor's orders like a lucky rock as the burn burrowed deeper into him, now in waves, now like fire, with each new smoldering crest forcing shut his eyes, teeth into his fist until it passed again. Here and there, a wave took him so completely that he all but soiled his pants.

Doctor rushed him in immediately and gave him a shot no questions asked so the lava cooled over his skin hardening into tarry crust. It will be a few days, the doctor said, before you feel normal again, the doctor said, you'll need to pick up some pills.

Shelves upon shelves of lotions and this one looked good, but his eyes watered so heavily, wetting themselves before another fistful burst of pain, that he couldn't read the box. Hey there, Tiger! How's the young lady? And who should it be but Polo-Shirt Freddie from the club. Hey, are you... but heat crushed over him, bending light and form. Freddie and everything he represented faded to white with the sound of waves breaking shores of human flesh.

While you're here, the doctor said, we might as well take a look at you, the doctor said, take off your shirt. He protested. Doctor insisted. It happened every time: shirt comes off over his head and: *Where did you get these scars?*

Nick waited outside the store for Freddie. Threw him against the chain link, but the bastard sprang back like a cat, claws out, and inside his eyes he was scared.

Doctor gave him his shirt back, told him to stay out of trouble, that he was lucky those cuts glanced off his ribs.

Sure, Doc, but you should see the other guy.

Freddie made good use of his knife, holding Nick off and lunging every time he got within reach. Even managed to get a few in around the sides of Nick's ribs. Nick was bleeding through his shirt now, but his mind was tight: take this sucker down. Came in with a left and stepped on Freddie's knee until it bent backwards, and Freddie came crashing down like one bad rat to the asphalt where he belonged. Knife kicked under a car so he started to beg. Please, why are you doing this to me?

Doctor handed him a prescription and held it back just a moment too

long. The two of them, standing there, holding onto the same slip of paper. The doctor met his eyes.

I shouldn't tell you this, I suppose, but since we're good friends and all, I guess you should know that Elisha's been seeing someone else. You know him, I think. From the club.

Battered Freddie's face like it was chicken set for the fryer and left him there blubbering, wondering what had happened to his life. Took his wallet and his grocery bag. What was Freddie up to? Five bananas, a pint of milk, and a big red box of Dr. Ox.

Thanks, Doc, I'll keep that in mind.

He found her pacing in the local pet store, rubbing her ripe-as-a-melon belly and stretching her back. Kept his distance, carefully, just out of her periph-

eral, holding his sides but still bleeding enough to be conspicuous, leaking little drops on the white tile floor.

She was young. She was legal. She was begging for it, and she pressed him down into her bed and made him promise to be good. It was her first time and she wanted it special. Desire spread over him like an itchy wool blanket and then a faint whine and scratching at the bedroom door.

He stayed just a moment too long in the open when she turned — he wanted to see her eyes — and she caught him standing there, watching her, holding in his sides. She approached him with steady strides, her eyes making him feel naked and squirmy as a newborn mink. You're in violation of your restraining order.

When Freddie finds out he's going to lose his shit.

Nick tried to make light conversation: How's the baby? Will he look like me? Do you miss me? What are you doing here anyway? She was buying a puppy.

That all-black husky pup was scratching at the door as she rolled over to put him on top. Nick pulled away from her, but she caught him by the back of the neck and pulled him back in. It was just her little doggie, sweet little thing. He could wait. She slid under him so soft and ready and Nick couldn't help himself even though that scratch-scratch-scratch never once faded from his mind.

It's not yours — she just came out and said it. She was that kind of girl. The pet store kid, all zits and metal-mouthed,

brought her a little cage with a little doggie, soft black fur and full of life. Elsie paid and left without even turning back to say goodbye.

When they were done and laid out over the bed sweating and spent, he felt something break inside him like “I love you,” but no way in hell was he going to say it. He just rolled to his side and stared at her, brushing over her form with his hands. God, it was enough to make a man cry for joy. Then she said it: She was going out of town for a few weeks with this guy from the club. Sweet little puppy was going to miss mommy, did he think he could look after little Max?

Well, Nick came home bleeding from the sides and covered in horrid, pulsing red

bumps with a puppy in a box; bananas, milk, and poison in a bag; and his lovely, lovely orange bottle full of pills from the Doc. Nick washed up in the bathroom. Deep cuts. They were going to scar.

Little Max was a ball of life running to put his nose and mouth on everything in the house. He bumped into the kitchen table and a bright-red box fell out on the floor. Max treated it like a chew toy. No, no, little Max, this is not your food.

What an animal! But then, it was only for a couple of weeks. This fuzzy creature was his insurance. Elsie had to come back to him now, right? He had her “precious.”

Nick took a pill and lay out over his couch with Max running up and down, yipping and nipping as he pleased. Pills took effect just like that, and the rash crept backward up his body, fading slowly to white at the nape of his delicate neck.

Daughters and Sons

By Janna Tanner

Tick tick tick tick . . .

There is a clock inside all of us

For some, it's nesting inside your stomach, sending vibrations, marking the moment of butterflies

It ticks

For others, it's hiding behind the aorta, ticking down to your heart attack, just to pass away in your sleep, or at the mall, or on your last drive home

Either way, time just stops . . .

Our clocks are always ticking, complete, wound upon conception with the best limited warranty you can get: a lifetime

And lately, mine has changed its tune, counting down until . . .

I. Get. Pregnant.

That's right, future boyfriends, beware, my clock has begun to tick . . . in my uterus

I know my clock had moved there when I started hearing my uterus start talking to me, like this:

“Sweetheart, why haven't you impregnated me yet?

I have all these lovely, scrumptious eggs going to waste and . . .

you know, screw you, young lady!

Seven days of the worst cramping you can imagine,

as a warning.

You have a month, a month, to bloody hell put a baby in here or it's nine days next time.”

Now I know that medieval scholars considered hysteria in women to be caused by disturbances in the uterus, or even that the uterus got up and left her body, went on a trip, but this shit is ridiculous.

So before I start talking back to my uterus in public,
thus certifying me for total batshitcraziness,
I'm going to write three letters instead.

Dear Uterus That Won't Shut Up

I know that I'm 26 years old and I know what you want of me. I do want to pass on what I've inherited, no history of addiction or alcoholism or severe mental illness, so yes, be patient. I will pass on more than a dead-end job and a LiveJournal full of poems.

Dear Son I Hope to Have

(because I've always gotten along with boys better),
When you're young, we will spend afternoons crashing Tonka trucks and destroying cities of vintage Lincoln Logs. I will teach you to love gelato more than ice cream and how not to kill the caterpillars you allow to crawl on your fingers. I'll be happy and ignorant (for your sake) when you discover girl, or boys, and begin masturbating to catalogs.

Dear Daughter I Know I Will Have Instead of a Son

(because I can't fight genetics),
I will love you. Always. I will show you how to extract honeysuckle with efficiency and to scream at the top of your lungs at the playground, for you should never be silent. You will learn to bandage your own bloody scrapes with silent tears and continue the heritage of your grandmothers: strong and supportive for the ones we love in dark times, and hellfire to the ones that do our family wrong.

My children,
until you come to me,
growing inside me,
and months later, sleeping in my arms,
I will be listening for you
in the tick tick tick
inside my heart,
inside my center,
while my body aches for your arrival.



Bull City Blues

By J Utah Taylor

“Well, I guess that’s that. **Five minutes and gone!** We gotta roll! **Don’t dally, get that shit up and let’s GO!**” Hank is excited. We’ve just hit three jobs in less than an hour, with one more to go before calling it a day; the daylight has only just begun. We hop in the big red truck. Hank turns the key, and the CD player comes back to life with loud bagpipe music.

driveway the of out back We
and then head into Bull City.

southern **oppressive,**
We’re working hard to beat the **SUN.** It has only been out for an hour but it is bringing a heat with it to set sweat pouring free from my brow. Hank talks about the latest vandalism on one of his properties and they just broke out the window of one of my properties and took the new doors that I was getting ready to put up. What does a crackhead do with stolen doors anyway?” “You can’t pawn a door...can you?” His words sound empty and sad.

I am light-headed from our last job. I roll down the window of the truck and let the currents catch my hair and cool my face. Hank is

talking
and I’m talking
and it’s a lot of talking
talking talking talking
talking talking talking

it’s always words seeking to fill space in an empty void.

myself

in some whimsical memory of summers dead — only a few years past and lifetimes between — and how much can a man change in a span

of some hours and days — and I'm back in my rolling hills of Eastern Tennessee Smiling and Laughing and Running free among the immortal mountains — how much world and people and culture have those mountains seen come and RISE and THRIVE and DIE and be reborn in the infinite span of a moment — maybe time banter is best left for the dead.

I am drawn back from my reverie by a steady drone of words with **emphasis** and **laughing** and, turning my head towards ole' Hank — **animated now and driving and connecting and confiding and all with-crazed eyes and crazed speech and crazed mind** and he's tough and strong, but not mean like you'd think by just LOOKin' — and I know that, really, he's just some sort of wayward angel-woodsman and ex-crabber and refugee from the great Northwest.

I tune into

and out of his stories and catch the highlights

and we could take one down just the two of us and
I'll an I to prison and got beat near to death by the Mexican mafia and the warden asked if he
US and the cowboy will off
in the great northwest

— I piece in the rest because I've already heard these **things a number of times** — I guess it's like any other job: people talking. I hop right in and relate with some recounting of fights and drugs and booze and sex, **and**

all we're

really trying to do is live kind in a world of hurt

and not hurt anyone,

and even really wanting to try and help people — it's with a sad kindness that we roll into the day with the low, powerful rumble of the diesel engine.

Dumpster Dive

By Nicole Elizabeth

The fish people come out on Tuesdays.

They're the fish people because from five stories up in this window they look like minnows, or tadpoles, huddling and scattered on the warming sidewalk, which smells like baked rotting eggs, city summer.

The King Fish points.

Delegating who picks through what, he points at everyone's hands and passes out gloves. Was there an ad in the paper for this?

Does he make money?

I saw him in person once.

I knew it was him because I recognized the safari hat.

One of his eyes was sky blue where there should be white and was leaking some kind of mucous.

He was in the apple aisle.

There were herb garden plants in his shopping cart.

I'm sipping coffee and watching this morning.

The crowd seems to be huddling around a plastic yellow recycling bin, while he holds something to the air.

An empty, crushed, half-and-half quart is what has everyone excited.

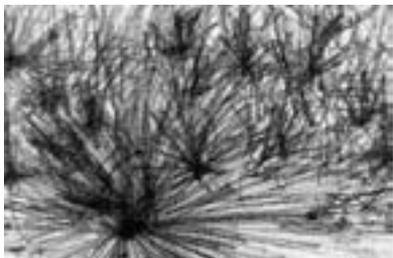
I lean on the windowsill and think,

The world is fucked up

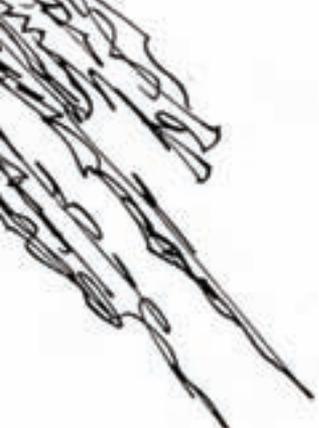
Orange juice from a cardboard box is fucked up.

From Cord

Video By Phil Davis



You can see the video created by Phil Davis online at <http://phildavis.net>



Infixing

By Chris August

Infixing.
That's what it was. That's how I knew.
It wasn't his hair,
Died green spikes held up with model airplane glue
Like all the punks have,
Or his apathetic posture
Or lack of eye contact,
A prerequisite among disaffected youth worldwide,
No. I knew when he opened his mouth:
"It's ri-*fuckin'*-dicolous, man."

Infixing.
The same thing tipped me off to his friend,
Seated across the coffee shop table from him,
Her calves crossed at the tops of her combat boots
As she exhaled a puff of smoke and stylish ennui,
"Ek-*fuckin'*-zactly. The whole thing's ab-*goddamn-surd*."
It didn't matter what they were saying
Or what they thought it represented,
There was something bigger than their words
Encoded in the way they were saying them.

Chris August performed this slam poem at the release party for Infinity's Kitchen no. 1. The crowd roared.

Infixing.
Most of us learned in elementary school
That a prefix goes at the beginning of a word,
A suffix goes at the end of a word.
These are indisputable, irrefutable locations.
But when we want to add things — *Usually cusses* —
To the middles of words,
We rely on something less concrete.
There's no one middle that works for every word,
Yet still, we say “inde-*fuckin'*-sputable”,
And it's “ire-*cocksuckin'*-futable”.
And it is. Every time.
And it all comes down to linguistics.
Ling-*mothfuckin'*-guistics.
You wouldn't know why you were doing it,
You'd barely even realize that were,
but when you put a word — *an infix*,
inside another word,
you're breaking that word into syllables.
And so is everybody else.
My twelfth grade English teacher taught us
That in order to find the stressed syllable in a word,
You call that word to dinner,

Yell its name out nice and long:
“Dis-*PYYYYEEWWWWWW*-ta-ble”
And whatever you hold the longest
Is the stressed syllable.
When we put an infix in a word,
We put it in front of the stressed syllable.
All of us. All of the time
In Nicaragua a language called Ulwa
Infixes pronouns into its verbs
Always in front of the stressed syllable,
So it happens regardless of geography.
The dude who invented Klingon
Did his the exact same way,
So it works regardless of amount of friends or personal hygiene.
Infixing knows no political affiliation:
You will cuss the same way
Whether you’re Re-*evilbastard*-publican
Or Demo-*douchebag*-cratic.
Infixing knows no religions:
If a Catholic school nun were to cuss you out,
She’d called you an abomi- *fucking*-nation
Of the Ten Co-*lickmy pious ass*-cammandments,
After which she’d high tail it to the nearest con- *fucking*-fessional

And say ten Hail-*Goddamn*-Marys.
And what this means
Is that at the kitchen door of our collective unconscious
There is one lexiconic mother calling her children home
And it is always dinner time.
Within the very words we use to separate each other
We are reminded that we are connected.
On a level more specific than our need for oxygen,
More personal than the blood in our veins:
It connects us intellectually.
So, if I returned to that coffee shop
And complimented that punk on his hair,
He and I would be going through the same process
As I called him mis-*fucking*-guided
And he called me self-*goddamn*-righteous.
And it makes us united.
If we were German,
We'd say, "ver-*fucking*-gleich".
If we were Japanese,
We'd say, "uni-*fucking*-tedo"
But now matter how we say it,
Infusing is yet another reminder that underneath it all
We are u-*fucking*-nited.

Projecting onto the Page Like Keith Boadwee Shoots Paint out of His Ass

Heather Momyer

I consider the pace of my words at the moment. Words creep from me. There is no spewing, no uncontrollable ejaculation, no orgasm. Words are pushed, shoved, squeezed into unnatural forms for the sole purpose of release. I am suffering from constipation and grunt forth emissions, noting that I have yet to be fully convinced of the art of excrement.

We are then left with the semiotics of shit and cum, the process and flow of substance and sustenance in a constant evolution.

It is through the borders of the body that we begin to express ourselves and place ourselves onto the literary and artistic landscape that shapes our identities and records our presence.

I am quick to realize that the notion of writing from the body is a trope that has been done before. The metaphor

of writing as conception and birth or ejaculation has already been discussed. But writing as excrement has often been neglected.

**In a dream, I sit in
a bathroom stall,
constipated only
when no one else
is there.**

As soon as another person walks in, as soon as I see feet from underneath the stall's door, my bowels loosen uncontrollably.

What is interesting is that during the course of the dream, my sense of panic due to pooing in public lessens. I become comfortable. A dog comes into the stall

with me. It is a boxer and it isn't so bad to take a dump in front of him. Another man with another dog goes to another stall and I strike up a conversation, something about dogs, pooing through the discussion. Next, there are two police investigators who come into the stall with me. They are there for questioning. I can't remember the specifics of the questions, but one takes my picture. I smile widely, listening to the plops in the toilet.

A friend interprets. Clearly, you are becoming comfortable with sex. You thought your body was dirty. But look, you are becoming a regular performer.

No, I argue, you sound like Freud. You only think about sex. Next you'll tell me that by becoming comfortable with sex, I'll desire to give birth, as represented by the poo. See *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Freud claims children perceive all babies

as excrement. Babies are born as feces. Is this what you think?

Another friend offers another analysis. It isn't sexual. It's creative.

You are becoming comfortable with what comes from your body.

It isn't about sex and exhibitionism. It is about writing and art. You just need a little help with getting it out.

Dreaming, pooing, it is all the same. It is all interpreted by an audience but I notice that no one says that what comes from my body is "just shit."

We use our bodies to create art (birth/ejaculation/excrement) and by creating

Inspired by the work of Keith Boadwee, an artist who expels paint from his anus, Heather Momyer has written an essay exploring the bodily aspects of writing and creativity in general. This is excerpted from a longer work.

art, we are trying to expose ourselves in a way that is similar to being naked. It is intended to be as intimate as the recognition of our own bodily functions is a sign of intimacy. Of course, one can never completely expose oneself through art/ words/etc, but nudity, orgasm, or the bit of shit left on the tip of the dildo cannot bring about complete intimacy either.

The body and this text then enter into the carnival of the grotesque. The body is the site of the text; the site of art. I am the space of the project, but who is speaking and whose body is placed on the stage?

A new communication of simultaneous opposites (mind and body? pleasure and anxiety? creative and critical?) calls for new forms of language.

The writer is disembodied and disemboweled for the sake of pleasure and

laughter and the text is the threshold (the limen) that sets the stage of the performance, the non-empirical script. The hand of the writer is severed for the sake of the text and for the sake of transcendence. It is no longer my hand that writes once the word is on the page. Now, there is only and always only the word. The process is sacred and grotesque.

Here, everything is true.

Contradiction:

I can never be naked. There is no stable sense of "I." There is no stable space of "I." It is all performed and it is only the remaining shit from my body, never me.

I am always naked in the textual and corporeal body. I am what I ingest and digest. I am exposed. It is all me and I



feel that I must hide. My shit is always private.

The stage is a space of contradiction. None of this is true.

For my birthday last year, I spent a day in Houston visiting several art galleries and museums. I went to The Menil. While in the Surrealist section, I stepped into a room called “*Witnesses*” where there was a sign that claimed that all of the objects in the room were owned by the surrealists, or, the surrealists owned objects similar to those found in the witness room.

The only thing I remember is a body suit with protruding nails.

These objects were not interesting to me and I found myself thinking that I did not care to see what the surrealists owned. I wanted to go back to the paintings, the text. And yet, I felt guilty. I am writing and telling you to pay attention to me and to my personal self, see the shit that comes from my body, but I have no interest in anything else other than the paintings of Max Ernst, René Magritte, or Giorgio de Chirico. If they had painted their personal lives, made them clearly textual, would my interest be gained? Then, in another room, I saw a piece by Jasper Johns titled *Painting Bitten by a Man*. It is made of encaustic on canvas mounted on a type plate and was completed in 1961. In the indentation left by the bite are teeth marks that may or may not have been left by Jasper Johns. I don't know. Perhaps he bit the painting. Perhaps the bite was from another. But it is the bite and the teeth and



the man who draw me to this painting. I wanted to taste it as well, consume the painting as the artist/biter had. In this case, I was interested in the body and self of the artist and his relationship to the work that he produced.

Perhaps an object that is owned doesn't contain enough of the self. Our paintings and our texts are more of "us" than any object we could ever own.

But, in Peter Greenaway's film *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover*, a man of infinite wisdom (the thief) claims while torturing the lover by stuffing the pages of his (the lover's) favorite book (*The French Revolution*) down the man's throat: it doesn't matter what goes in. It all comes out as shit, anyway. But what about here, when my words go through the eyes, consumed and into the body of the reader? What nutritional element

has been digested? Perhaps what occurs is the forced digestion of another's shit and the toxic effect of *E. coli* is a dangerous possibility.

I consider the consumption of objects. The surrealists did not consume their objects. They did not love them. They did not eroticize them. But reading has always been erotic. The object eaten by the lover, *The French Revolution*, is a sign of the erotics of reading. To eroticize is the desire to eat. Go back to the beginning. Go back to the genesis of all stories, the site of the first characters and the first dramatic conflict, the Garden of Eden and the original sin. The original sin is to eat, to ingest, to consume. Only Jasper Johns and Keith Boadwee, to my knowledge, have let the paint flow through the body, consumed the process of the art itself.

More of the "Broken Muzzle" comics by Bryan Prindiville are online at <http://infinityskitchen.com/comics/>

My earliest sexual dreams were about vampires. Even now, the majority of erotic dreams/nightmares involve running from men with fangs, hiding in coffins. The men are attractive, but they cannot be trusted. They are not interested in recruitment. Becoming another vampire is not an option they are willing to bestow. What they are interested in is murder. They are interested in sucking the meat off of my bones. On the occasion when I am caught, I attempt seduction, a “Why don’t we do it first?” in hopes of achieving a few more moments in life. I am fearful, but aroused. I alleviate my guilt. After all, it is self-defense. But my desire is there, the desire for someone to want my body served upon a dish, the desire to be ravished.

The head of John the Baptist was served on a silver charger, a royal platter for dining, his lips to be sucked by the lustful and loving Salome.

But we are back in the realm of the heterosexual and I must stay on topic — ingestion, digestion, homosexual anal expulsion. Where is my authority to speak? Art historian and theorist Amelia Jones argues that Boadwee homo-eroticizes action painting through the process of emitting paint through the anus, the site of homosexual activity and desire. I’ve kissed girls. I could say I’m bi-curious. Is this enough? In terms of anal sex, I’ve been told that I “give it up like a fag.” Can I talk yet? Can I write yet?

Rebuttal

By Keri Anne Griffith

your air of confidence (vener)
exudes high gloss
just enough sanded down
to be fashionably
smooth and worn in like
multi-pre-washed denim
packaged comfort —
was it dug up with purpose to seem like a warrior
of the unconscious
battlefield ...
to yourself?

for i gather that whether — true or false —
you value outsiders
very little
or at least most of us just aren't deep, wide, worn enough
to see clearly inside your dark caverns &
the cave drawings speak to you
in ways that i obviously will
never understand.

so now your arctic circle
part of your cycle of — push
&
shove —
(pull me in to))lock me out
is turning me into the ice princess

& me — the demoness (of *The Inferno* & -
Styx) & stones may b r e a k my bones but

WORDS will never /hurt me

is being transformed
as you continue to mis(calculate)
evaluate

this program will
de(con)struct in 30 seconds

did i miss something
dis[missing] [you] as you presume me to be
what i consider & see
as an underestimation
of my ability to
think, feel, hear,
and give to other.

how am i to (re)act

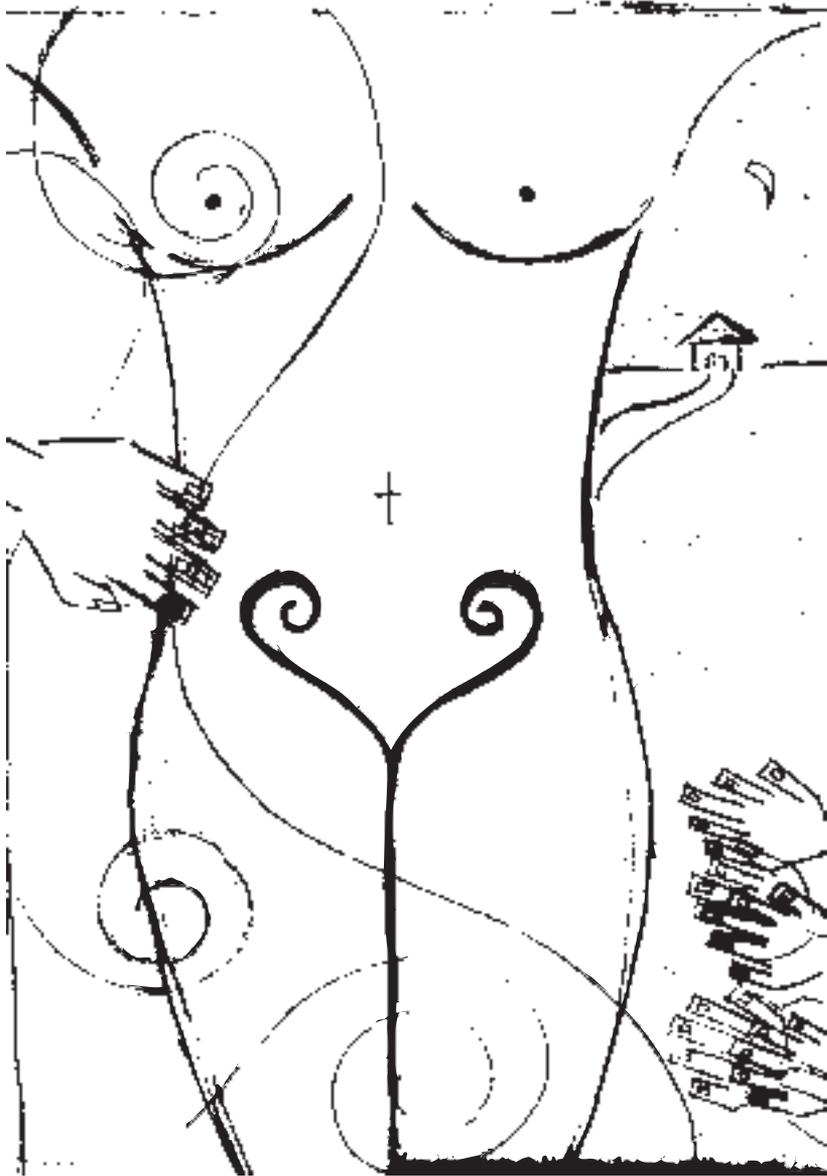
to your shifts & swinging self-analytical hoop jumping when you won't
share without assuming disinterest or lack of comprehension from my
attempt to ***genuinely listen*** & when i share your listening is still talk,
talk, attacking me as another means of analytically tearing down yourself
as you see you in me.

STOP.

*listen to your criticisms of me and know that these are your self-criticisms.
and. if you listen to me without judgment veiled in the illusion of helping*

me see (for i will only see when i am ready) then maybe i will
show you the

ways i know that (i/we) [as (a)
— ((flow)-er)s —]
can grow.



Untitled: By Kimberly Hopkins