

# Karen 5.0

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## illuminating the Text and Disciplined Spontaneity at Zone: Contemporary Art



*Village Voice* art critic R.C. Baker spoke at [Zone:Contemporary Art](#) Saturday afternoon about the historic collaboration between writers and artists. *illuminating the Text* was featured as part of the gallery's larger group show, *Disciplined Spontaneity*, an exhibition of collaborations between artists such as John Cage and Joseph Beuys (*Good Morning, Mr Orwell*).

Mr. Baker talked about how art and text converge. Artists, like writers, he said, have a vocabulary all their own. He noted the relationship between Robert Crumb and Phillip Guston as well as Frank O'Hara's work with the Abstract Expressionists. These artists believed that words were only an eye-twitch away from the real thing and that reality is only a confirmation of people's expectations. Mr. Baker said that art is collaborative by nature, that is, the artist intends the work to be viewed by an audience.

*illuminating the Text*: Long Island City-based painter [Laura Bell](#) and New Haven-based percussionist and poet Ian Ganassi met each other at the [Millay Colony for the Arts](#), a retreat for writers and artists. Their approach to collage is a collaborative interdisciplinary process, in a variation of the Surrealist game of [Exquisite Corpse](#). According to the Zone Gallery's website, "...their ongoing series, *The Corpses*, now numbering around two hundred pieces, began when Ganassi mailed Bell a stained piece of paper with scrawled phrases, to which she added her own images. Exchanges and additions continue until one collaborator declares a work finished." Ms Bell said that Kurt Schwitters was the father of collage and commented on the extent to which Robert Rauschenberg was influenced by Schwitters. She added that collage was a turning point in art and talked briefly about Picasso and Braque in this regard. Ms Bell and Mr. Ganassi both reflected on the nature of found objects, describing how they enjoyed fusing these elements into their work. Mr. Ganassi then read from his wonderful "Review" series of poems - [Dance Review](#), [Art Review](#), and [Book Review](#), among others.