

AE



with Cream
Fall 2005

new magazine, new writing, new illustration,
new fashion, new thought

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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

We are interested in anyone with an idea. If you have any that you feel would fit in *Æ*, don't hesitate to contact us at editor@ae-magazine.com or visit our website at www.ae-magazine.com. Our primary areas of interest are creative writing, fashion design and experimentation, cultural essays and articles, illustration, photography, cartoons and food. We are looking for an original approach, reckless execution and ruthless experimentation.

Cover: *The City Suits You*, Marshall Weber, 1998

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www.ae-magazine.com

While it is tempting to perceive a corollary between the traces of ink across a blank page and notions of unprecedented discovery, ideas of pioneering and even dreams of a god-like genesis, there does lie an arrogance in this fantasy.

The bricks we use to construct our world are the crumbled remnants of past efforts. So while the creative moment is a beautiful, exhilarating thing, it may be painful to realize that it is but a footnote, for our contemporaries, to an age-old, perpetuating corpus which we have no choice but to eventually become part of, subsumed by our own mortality and its immortality.

While Æ (Aspire and Emerge) does not theme its issues, several of the contributions in this, its second issue, published in partnership with *Cream* magazine, acknowledge creative precedence through a sort of palimpsest consciousness. Tattoos and stencils are used to inflect existing biological and sartorial sentences respectively in a fashion feature from Brazil. “Brother & Sister of the Page” redresses mainstream fashion by physically and visually attacking its photographic exponents. A pair of lovers traverse an ancient Mediterranean city, inscribing their love across its centuries of human achievement in “Flowers Bloom in Barren Places”, while “Several Modes of Seduction” presents transcriptions of canonical literary works into a language of courtship and love-making. This issue also contains a comic strip from Buenos Aires and poems from the US.

So while there may be nothing new under the sun, what perhaps is new – where the originality lies – is in the synapse between the now and the then on the palimpsest. What we have on our side is the present moment, the time we are creating in - right now. It is our perpetual striving to grasp our now and crystallize it that is noble and significant, perhaps only to us, now, as we add another layer to the continual, evolving text.

I hope you enjoy this issue,
Don.

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Several Modes of Seduction

by Veronica D

Illustrated by Michaël David André

1) The Ayn Rand Seduction

Successful when both parties have read "The Fountainhead" or "Atlas Shrugged." Since to those that have read them, these were often formative books, this fosters an immediate elitist bond. Plus, all that talk about granite quarries, and those phallic trains going into those tunnels, and the whole ideology of self-actualization. Sexy.

2) The e. e. cummings Seduction

That's when someone recites e.e. poetry at you, starting with the light ones, and moving towards the more risqué ones, while simultaneously moving their hand up your leg. The poetic equivalent of a "home run" in this progression is e.e. cummings' poem called "may i feel said he" in which the 'may i feel' of the title becomes "may i touch" and subsequently "may i stay" and "may i move." This culminates in the rather suggestive lines: "cccome? said he... ummm said she... you're divine! said he... you are mine said she."

If performed in real time, the poem can progress from being metaphorical (i.e. "I am reading you this sexy poem because I want to fuck you AND I want you to think I am literary and witty, the he/she in the poem are the metaphor for you/me and what we should be doing!") to being acted out literally (i.e. "you are fucking me because I am literary and witty and you are proving it in the moment and the he/she in the poem become, metonymically, you and me").

3) The Leonard Cohen Seduction

That's when a boy plays Leonard Cohen songs for you, tells you how the lyrics in one of them are really about sex, then says "wait, wait, I want to play you this song, it makes me think of you..." Followed by a *meaningful gaze* through the long eyelashes.

4) The 'Seduce-Me' Seduction

That's when a boy reclines on a piece of furniture somewhere in your house/apart-



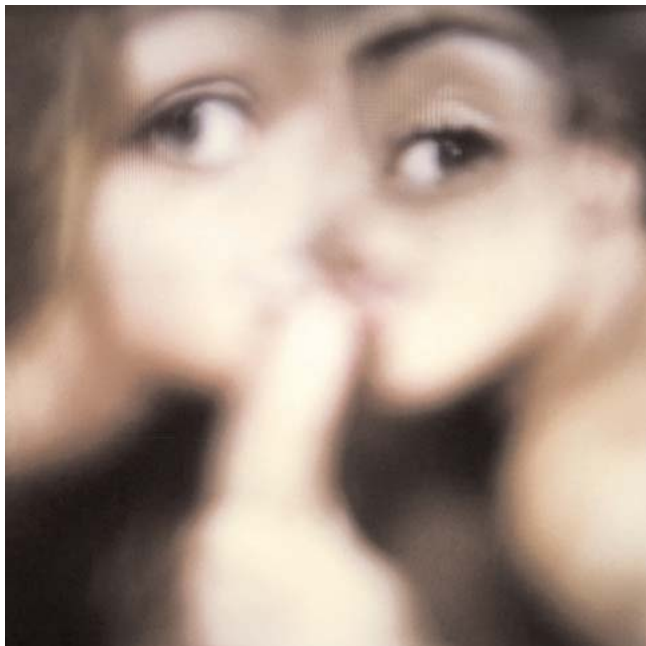
ment with his hand vaguely in the vicinity of his crotch. While this sounds pro-active, it is definitely not. The Seduce-Me method involves the boy making absolutely no advances towards you at all, and showing no sign of leaving, thus provoking you into doing anything to resolve this weird and uncomfortable impasse.

5) **The Peace Corps Seduction**

The vaguely existential, "I've been in these places/we are so privileged/yet there is joy and human spirit in the midst of poverty/this stone that I have around my neck on a hemp rope matches the color of your eyes/this powder is a powerful indigenous aphrodisiac, they say that if you take it with your soul mate, you will see stars... No, those are not glow-in-the-dark constellations on my ceiling," seduction.

6) The Hemingway Seduction

Drink a lot of cognac, talk abstractly about impotence, and also about bullfighting and toreadors in curt, concise, sentences. An analogy can be drawn with the Peace Corps seduction in the sense that there may be a Proppian adventure narrative in place, featuring travelling to exotic locales (like Barcelona or Morocco), but there is no homology, because the subtext of the Peace Corps seduction is "the world is interconnected, let's be interconnected too," while the Hemingway corollary is, "the world is alienating, life is a tale told by an idiot with the sound and the fury and the nothingness, we are all emotionally impotent, let's highlight the ironic state of affairs by engaging in some fleeting physical intimacy."



7) The Nabokovian Seduction

"Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin. My soul. Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta. "

Value-Added:

Some seductions can be hybrids that feature permutations of different elements endemic to different seductions. For example, the Leonard Cohen seduction can be alternately deployed together with the Peace Corps seduction, or the Hemingway seduction; The Ayn Rand seduction and the Hemingway seduction may target some overlapping demographic; The 'Seduce-Me' Seduction can occasionally flavor the Peace Corps seduction, either enhancing the sensitivity tip, or, depending on how it's played, conversely, adding mystery to an earnest hippie-type approach.

by Hernán Bermúdez
Translated by María Aguilar Calero

Qwerty

I scour the underground corridors as I do every night, expecting the unexpected...



I am a Nightwalker,
a Gino Vanelli poetry
fan.

I am a voyeur,
aroused by watching
and not taking
part in things.



I've got a mission...
and it is to discover
who is...



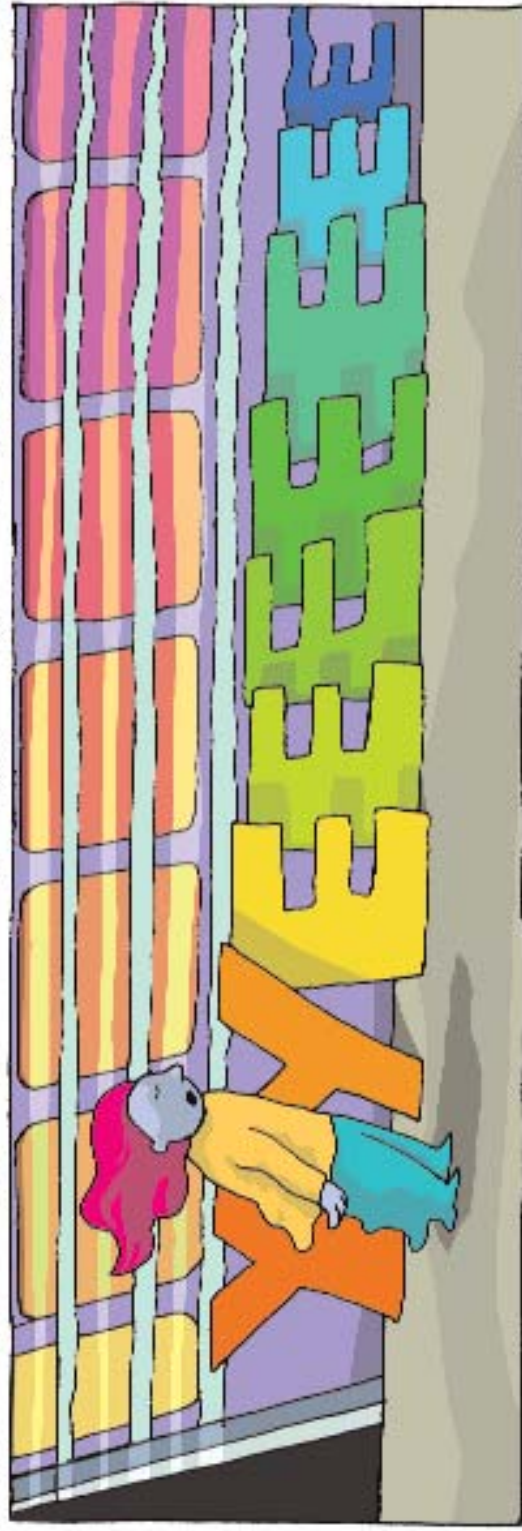
It's Friday night. The platform is
crammed with people who want to
go home and with people
who are getting ready to go out
to be reckless.



But, isn't that Jackanapes Crackpot,
that erstwhile Super Villain?







He ran away again.



Sitting in the wagon I watch the stations go past...

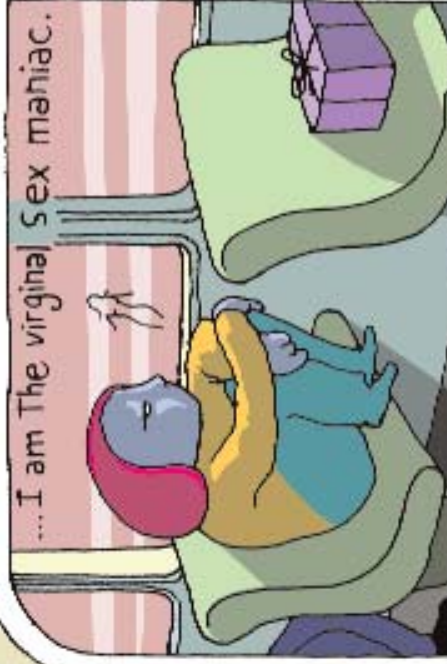


For The umpteent Time,
I draw your silhouette
in the steamy window.
I am like a Palaeolithic
shaman who paints its
prey on the wall of the cave,
foretelling a successful hunt.



The Underground is my cave.
I'd like to hunt you and
devour you.
So far, I have lots of
drawings and little prey...

... I am The virginal Sex maniac.



IMPRINT

You left behind
one woolen hip
thrust toward the ceiling,
& a pair of cotton fists
tucked under an airy chin
that hold fast to a dream.

My longing curls
into the hills & vales
of your textured silhouette,
& I inhale your scent
before the morning breeze
absconds this last memento.

Marie Lécivain

...we will write where we will...

Styled by: Adriano Paulino

Featured Designer: Ronaldo Fraga

Stencils by: Adriano Paulino

Models: Daniel, Getúlia, Greg, Kadol & Loh

Photographer: Daniela Goulart

...a bunch of Brazilian kids...

...one afternoon in late summer/early fall...

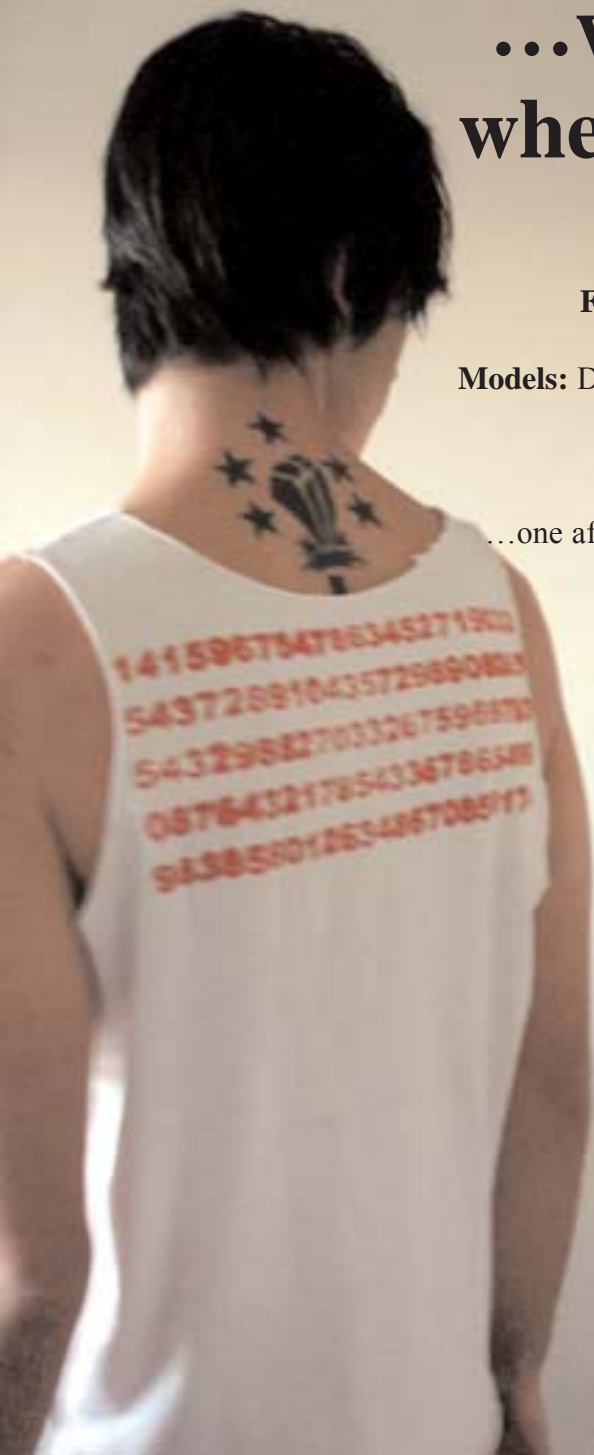
...their own t-shirts...

...some garb by a local designer...

...beer...

...stencils, tattoos, music...

...time was spent...





Kadol wears a 'dove-
dress' by Ronaldo
Fraga stenciled by
Adriano Paulino.









Loh wears a Levis
dressing gown with
comb stencil by
Adriano Paulino.
Metal 'buginganga'
necklace by Adriano
Paulino.





Greg (right) wears a white cotton shirt by Ronaldo Fraga, stenciled by Adriano Paulino.

I TASTE THE SALT

in a dream
it seems
i jumped ship
to fight crashing waves
swam with transatlantic
slaves
for days
above
watery
graves
swimming for freedom
and
a brighter day

but me?
i am lucky
because when i awoke
except for the sweat sittin' upon my head
the dream was broke
i was dry lying
in my bed

but sometimes at night
i taste the salt
and think about
the dead
still
swimming
for
a
freedom
that
never
manifested.

Brother and Sister of the Page

Texts and images by Marshall Weber
and Felice E. Lau

The Brother

After I relocated from San Francisco to Madison, Wisconsin in 1992, I was unemployed and had no gallery or institutional connections. I was adrift and didn't even have enough money to buy paper or other art supplies. Last time I had been in this sort of situation I had started collaging dollar bills (in a closet studio space under a stairway in the S.F. Mission District). The resulting collages re-established my art career and ironically (or maybe not) made for one of my most successful series financially. But those funds were long spent and here I was in the middle of a Wisconsin winter sitting at home while my girlfriend went to school and work, wondering what would come next.

So, there I was, watching the shopping catalogs drop through the mail slot - sheer boredom, outrage at the vast amounts of trees and money thrown out by the catalog industry and a jealous desire to disrupt the flow of crass objectification of both the female and male body prompted me to start painting on, smearing and ripping the catalogs apart - and then reconstructing them as a critique of themselves.

Through doing this, I learned quite a lot about the fashion industry, how shopping catalogs are designed, who the designers were, and who the models were. You can see Stephanie Seymour alter in quite a few of my pieces. She's famous for her Victoria's Secret ads and for turning in and pressing charges for aggravated assault against a former boyfriend - Axl Rose of the trash-rock band Guns N' Roses - thus proving that nothing is quite as simple as we would like to believe and that a woman can have a job modeling underwear and still have fortitude and integrity. Stephanie, ALTERED, became a sort of muse for me...

Again fate would swing in my favor and the brilliant artist, book historian and proprietor of Artichoke Yink Press (AYP), Christopher Wilde, looked at my collages and asked if AYP could publish them in a simulacrum shopping catalog form that would

completely mimic the shopping catalog. Initially I had actually just snuck copies of "The Catalog" onto newsstands just to see people's reactions, then after relocating to New York City, I started selling them at Printed Matter for \$50.00 a pop - they quickly sold out at Printed Matter and also at AYP. Then the newly formed Booklyn Artists Alliance strategically distributed "The Catalog" to museums and libraries, the going price soared to \$750.00 a copy and an art star, the catalog, was born.

Other true Magazine Excavations paralleled the simulacra magazines, by gluing and nailing the edges of various magazines together, I realized that magazine structure was so consistent that I could intuitively design collage just by cutting into the magazine - the structure and content so tightly wound together that the magazine would practically deconstruct itself on the studio 'operating' table.

Soon followed the pieces that Felice Lau discusses in her essay (page 27). As my interest in the fashion world and the world of magazine publishing peaked, the final projects were born. "The Passion" (2001) was the ultimate. Dedicated to anorexic, drug addicted supermodel catastrophe Gia, it was a transubstantiation of the fashion model into the Messiah who bears the burdens of our consumerist sin. Then, finally, on to DKNYFDO3 (2003), where Felice and I obliquely say goodbye to the world of fashion magazines, with their mechanisms of sexism, comodification, gender stratification and their brilliant and often beautiful evocations of the human body and the apparel we choose to drape it with.

I believe that this project is an exploration of the resources and power of women (and men) in the face of the vast corporate machine of desire. A machine which continuously attempts to dismantle women's self esteem in the hope that a purchase or two will restore it and which also attempts to define who we all are in terms of our desire. Art often creatively confronts these dehumanizing systems with revealing critiques and hopeful visions of better possibilities and realities. I hope that the Magazine Excavations add to this dialog, and I hope we all find and trust our self esteem, our desires and our identities where they all truly exist - inside ourselves.

Marshall Weber

Page 24: *Santa Nordstrom/Santa Botticelli*, Marshall Weber, 1998

Page 25: **Clockwise from top left:**

Queen Byotch, Marshall Weber & Felice E. Lau, 2002

Maim, Marshall Weber & Felice E. Lau, 2002

Glory, Glory, Marshall Weber & Felice E. Lau, 2002

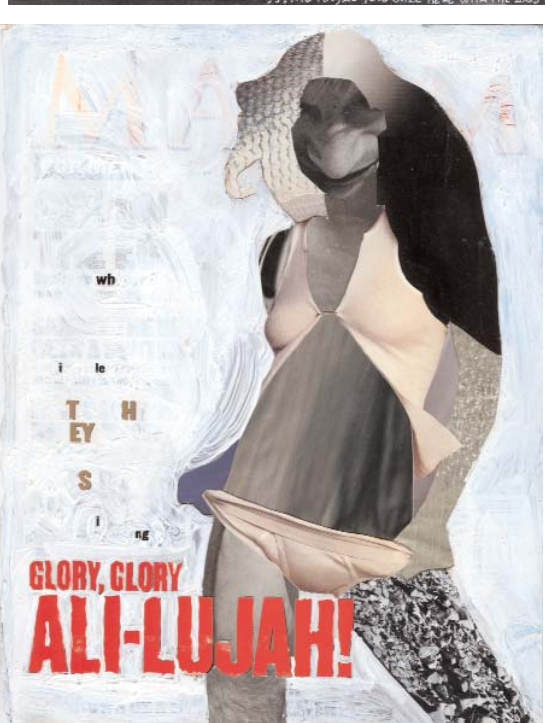
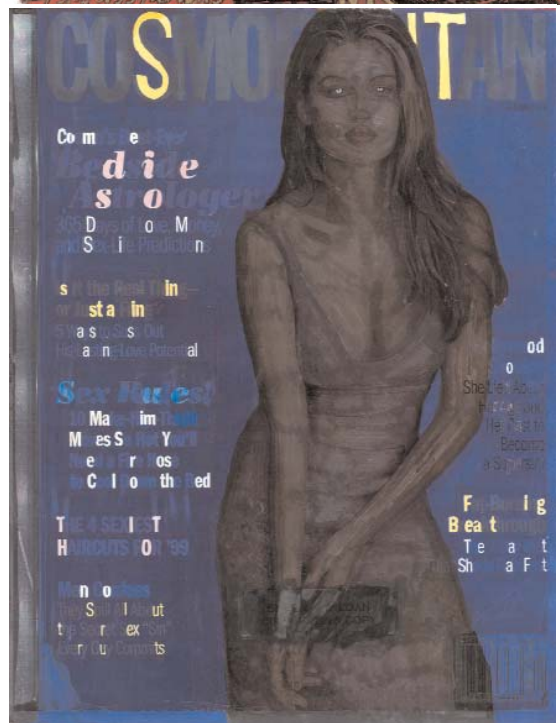
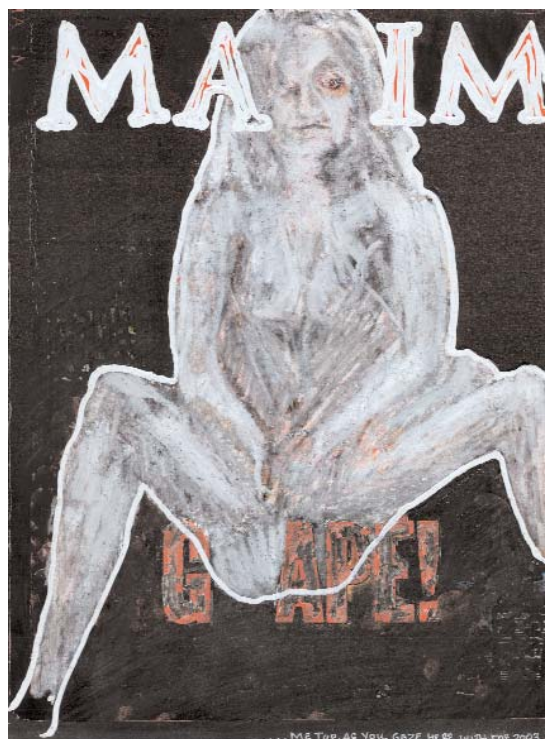
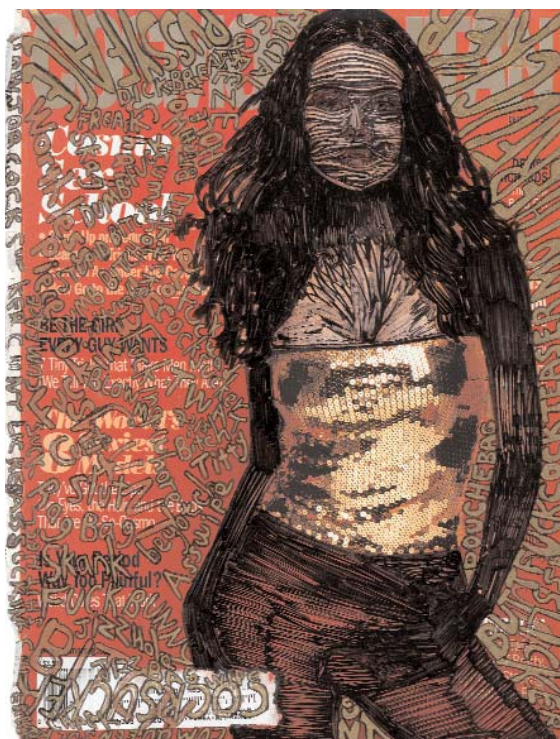
Sit, Marshall Weber & Felice E. Lau, 2002

Page 26: *Portrait of Calvin Klein*, Marshall Weber, 1998

Page 27: *Crowned with Thorns*, Marshall Weber, 2001

Scanning and formatting: Amy Mess, Brooklyn, New York.







Calvin Klein



The Sister

Just before I started the magazine collaboration with Marshall Weber, I was actually subscribed to *Cosmopolitan*. I should just be embarrassed, I'm not. I am fascinated by it. I was looking for some information on how to be a sexual woman in this country. The limited awareness in which I was engaged still amazes me.

One day, it smacked me: the model on the cover really appeared for the first time. It really appeared to me as a drawing, a fabrication. I have looked at/touched my own body as a beautiful thing; its shapely hips, curves, and softness. I have always been an expert in watching and seeing beauty's swift flickers. I perceived this model as being plastic. However, she is also the image of woman in our culture. I had to act.

These women are built like boys and yet are what men and women both want to look like and perceive as desirable. This shocked me. I spontaneously wanted to void, negate

the image immediately. At the time, I was working within twenty feet of a collection of African Art. I brought my knowledge of the face and body from a drawing boot camp I once participated in in Wisconsin. I grabbed my sharpie and went to it.

Masks and a coat of tar ensued. I cannot clearly define why this was how I rendered the figures. I had a hard time looking at the drawings and accepting them as valid artwork. The politically correct police were in my mind, hounding me: "This isn't art," they said. But I did a bunch of covers and I sent them to Marshall. I think I had met him once in passing at the time. Thankfully, he was floored and so we got to work. The series bounced between us for about a year and then we had a book. I remember making the cover image from the back of one of the drawings.

I showed them, in Iowa, to a group of painters for critique. I remember two things from that conversation: one was the position of the professor's body in relation to mine during the conversation and the other was a response from a girl: "Do you hate women?" In my mind, beneath my reaction of shock, I thought these representations aren't of women, they're fabrications. Sometimes I wish I had had my current confidence then. I would have spoken right up. But, sometimes silence is a good answer.

I started the MAIM series (2003) with the thought that we should do a male magazine partner to *Your Eyes Make Me Panic* (2000). Right from its launch, I've hated that magazine (*Maxim*). The collages in MAIM are extracting an element from that month's edition and building the figure from those contents. There are phallic symbols and suggestions: an actor's eyes gazing, fabric, skin, et al. It was my first true stab at collage. I started in January. By September, continuing until the end of the year, the beauty of the figures as forms in themselves began to dominate the content. In commenting on Marshall's additions and finishing off of these covers, I have a mental skip trying to interpret my reaction to them verbally. It's visceral. He took the work smoothly and finished them with a powerful push. I couldn't be more pleased.

I can add up the time we spent in each other's company during our collaboration on one hand. The time would probably amount to less than an hour and twenty minutes. But I cherish his production. I drink his work in now. It's essential. It secretly brought me back to my own words and invited them onto my canvases. They were always supposed to be there. And I honestly had no idea. We are brother and sister of the page.

Felice E. Lau

Flowers Bloom in Barren Places

Written by Andrew Skinner
Illustrated by Michael Silber

(Fragment 1)

He has found my secret place and is caressing it slowly up and down. My inner thighs. (That is how you seduce the distrusting spirit out of its lair. Hasty kisses and violent zipper-tearing gropes beat it back into coldness.) He is kissing now, up and down – long, dragging kisses that, I imagine in the half light, leave glistening snail trails of saliva along my legs – testaments – sentences of his attention.

(Fragment 2)

We are sitting, cross-legged, facing each other – kissing each other's faces – dissecting the visage with kisses – attributing kisses to parts at random, hastily adjusting any unfair bias – discovering patterns in each others attributions.

(Fragment 3)

Having no common past, being of different cultures – our discourse developed, over the course of the night, through a language of caresses, movements. Movements. Lovemaking, when it is like this, concentrated and overshadowed by an imminent departure, unfurls in grand movements, as in musical movements.

(Fragment 4)

And there he was, planting flowers – one by one – on this body I thought barren, that had recently knelt down between the legs of a stranger in a darkened laundrette and that had let pass the futile gropes of an impotent advertising executive in his after hours office – his satyr tongue between my toes – saliva dripping on the pristine glass of the boardroom table. These scars were dug for the kisses he plants and for the flowers that are to sprout here and there, blooming randomly, at moments in the future, now.

(Fragment 5)

He is small boned, he said. His hands are the proof of it. He said that he was a fat teenager. His flesh has a loose, fluid, almost hanging quality and I imagine that until



very recently, he was incredibly obese and that some terrible trauma had occurred and knocked all the weight off of him making him loose-skinned. We both have atrocities of the flesh to bring to the table – to this bed – this horizontal feast.

(Fragment 6)

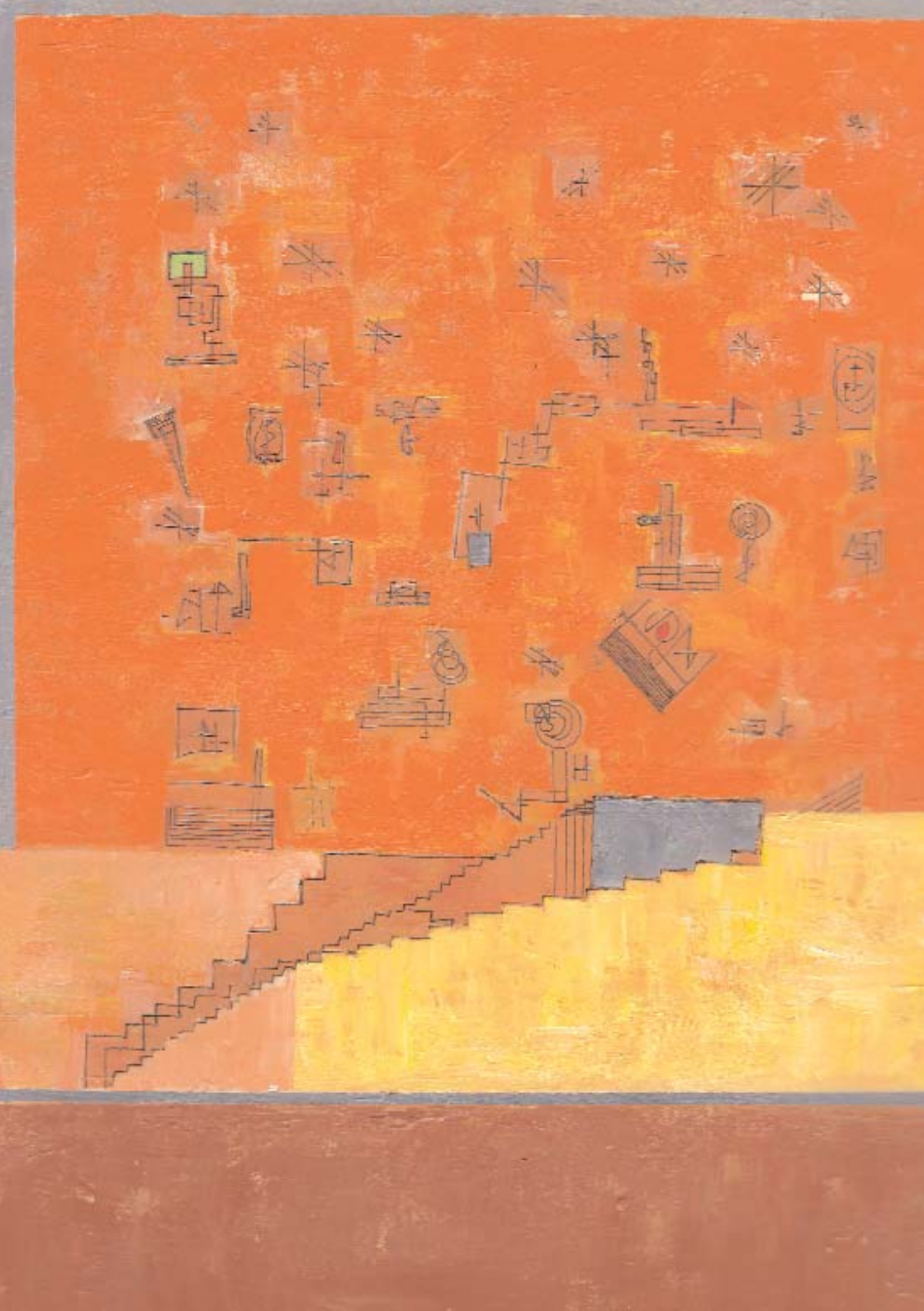
In a foreign city, on the steps of a railway station. Standing. Waiting. The sun is setting and hot still. I am smiling to myself in disbelief as to what I am doing – where I am. I turn my head. There, he walks towards me along the curved steps. He walks like James Dean. I smile again, nervously. He looks down to the ground momentarily. His walking is beautiful – especially now that it contains a hint of nervous rigidity. He is actively remaining cool under fire. I can see that I won't struggle resolving him with my fantasy.

(Fragment 7)

One particular upside of a homosexual affair on the bigoted streets of a Mediterranean city is the wait. The delectation. The eyes feed on each other, the mind spins, yet the physical pleasure is almost completely denied (save, perhaps, the odd stolen kiss in darkened doorways or the brief brush of a hot palm on the small of his back as we turn onto another square) until you find yourself behind closed doors – safe from the moral majority. Although innately unjust, this deprivation which lasted some six hours was indeed exquisite and laid the bedrock for the corporeal navigations of the night.

(Fragment 8)

The city was beautiful, one prided as exemplary of man's triumph over obscurity through art and culture. I didn't care. We walked the streets without cultural, touristic or aesthetic purpose. I had no compass, no guidebook, no universal nomenclature. I marvelled, from time to time, at the cathedrals, the sad, heavy bridges, weighed down with centuries of footfall. I looked at them and smiled, 'oohed' and 'aahed,' knowing full well that my uplifted heart exulted not at the work and brilliance of dead men. I turned from these spectres of human achievement and triumph, one by one, turned away and looked on him – I would not kneel at the altar of civilization, whispering prayers in thanks to those who rose us gracefully from the mire. I seek to go somewhere with this boy-man – a quiet, plain, undernourished room – and regress, regress back before language, before culture, down, down into



the darkness – pitch dark – balmy night. I reach out through the blackness and touch his face and speak to him in extra-linguistic movements. He answers. The night passes thus.

(Fragment 9)

We are in here. They are out there. “We should go,” he says. “We’ve missed breakfast.” I am hungry.

(Fragment 10)

All the squares in this city are full of tourists, staring agog, taking photographs, joining queues. We pass them again and again in our forgetful circuit. Eventually we find ourselves sitting on the side of an empty, relatively dilapidated square. Opposite is a building which used to be a maternity hospital. It is called “Hospital of the Innocents.” I think of the pain of stillbirth. The Silence begins there, where I am sitting next to him, my head on his shoulder, my hand in his, under our elbows. There is nothing to say about an end drawing nearer. “Are you sad?” he asks. “Yes. Now I am sad.”

(Fragment 11)

Walking down a dusty brown street, we pass under scaffolding – he grabs me to him and kisses me. Short. Simple. I am disarmed by my disarmament. I do not cinematify. I smile involuntarily. I show my detested set of teeth. I feel beautiful.

(Fragment 12)

Back on the steps of the railway station. My bus doesn’t leave for quite some time but the wait is painful. We smoke a cigarette and I say goodbye without ceremony. Like jumping from a height, fazed by the vertigo, I hesitate. Finally, I close my eyes, grabbing onto a branch, looking down to the field below. I hesitate. I can’t believe I am about to jump. I have to. I must jump. I throw my cigarette down, twist it under my foot, kiss him on the cheek and turn and walk down the steps. Across the street, I look back briefly. He is standing at the end of a bus. Dwarfed by its magnitude. He smiles and disappears behind it. The stem is cut. The flowers bloom randomly on my skin, tingling, along my homeward journey. The stem is cut. The flowers will die, with time, one by one, but there is one – it is in my head – that will die the most graceful death.

Michaël David André's complete catalog and contact info can be found at www.michaeldavidandre.com

Hernán Bermúdez (35) is from Buenos Aires, Argentina. He now illustrates books, produces stop-motion animations and CD cover-art. He intends to draw and paint his entire life and show it to the world, even against its will. He is a professor at the National University of Arts, Buenos Aires.

Veronica D (27) is based in Boston but grew up first in Moscow until she was 13 and then Chicago. She is a grad student in anthropology and is also interested in video documentary. (www.livejournal.com/users/anthrochica)

Ronaldo Fraga is a Brazilian designer based in Belo Horizonte with boutiques there and in Rio de Janeiro. (<http://www.ronaldofraga.com>)

Daniela Goulart (34) is a photographer from Varginha, Brazil but is now based in Belo Horizonte. She also teaches photography and intends to pursue a PhD in photography in the future. She holds a Masters in Fine Arts. (www.danielagoulart.com.br)

Alexx Thompson (35) is based in Hollywood, California. He works as a scenic artist for the motion picture industry, painting sets and backgrounds for videos, commercials and feature films. He runs an artist collective called Central Elements with underground LA artists and their art, music, film and poetry. www.centralelements.com

Andrew Skinner is an anonymous contributor. His contact details are with the editor.

Felice E. Lau (34) is from Greenwich, Connecticut but is now based in Ann Arbor, Michigan where she is senior production coordinator at the University of Michigan Press and is the proprietor of Felix Press, a bookarts press. (www.personal.umich.edu/~felice)

Marie Lecrivain (36) is from El Centro, California but now lives in LA. She edits poeticdiversity, an online litzine for LA-based writers, as well as slogs her way through a series of temp jobs. She wants to learn to fence. She hopes to be back in school pursuing her BA by Spring 2006. www.poeticdiversity.org

Adriano Paulino (33) is from Belo Horizonte, Brazil and has cut stencils since 1997 when he began in a burst of 300 stencils. Since 2002, he expanded his work to prints and began collaborating with Brazilian designers and labels such as Ronaldo Fraga, Zoomp, Lei Básica and Zapping. (<http://www.omeninodavaca.cjb.net/>)

Michael J. Silber (23) is from Lexington, Massachusetts and now resides in Brooklyn, N.Y. He has studied art at Connecticut College and at the Scuola Internazionale di Grafica in Venice, Italy. (www.geocities.com/michaelsilber)

Marshall Weber is 40something and hails from Long Island, New York and San Francisco, California. The collage catalogs featured in *Æ* are available for exhibition and purchase via Brooklyn Artist Alliance or through the artist at mweber@brooklyn.org. He is now based in Manhattan and Brooklyn where he loves life, makes, curates and deals art, and tries to behave ethically. (http://www.brooklyn.org/artists/Marshall_Weber, N.Y., NY.php)

Don Duncan (26) is from Ireland and now lives in Paris where he is a journalist. He has studied literature and experienced a short-lived flirtation with fashion design circa 2003. He wants to write more and to put together books and magazines.

Peter Joseph works in the editorial department of Thomas Dunne Books, an imprint of St. Martin's Press in New York. He is an associate editor for *PopMatters* (www.popmatters.com) and departments editor at *Lost Magazine* (www.lostmag.com). A native of Massachusetts, he currently lives in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

Muireann Prendergast (25) is from Ireland but is currently in Argentina where she is working for the *Buenos Aires Herald*. She has studied English Literature and International Communications and Human Rights.

Sarah Rigaud (28), is a Franco-American who grew up in Montpellier and now works in publishing in Paris. Her studies include literature and web-editing.

Paul McNally (21), is a journalist and magazine layout whizz currently based in London. (<http://www.newsmonkey.co.uk>)

María Aguilar Calero (23) is a translator based in London. She is from Valencia, Spain. She wants, in the future, to translate more interesting things than she does now.

IF ANY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS INTEREST YOU AND YOU WISH TO FIND OUT MORE, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO WRITE US FOR CONTACT DETAILS: editor@ae-magazine.com, www.ae-magazine.com