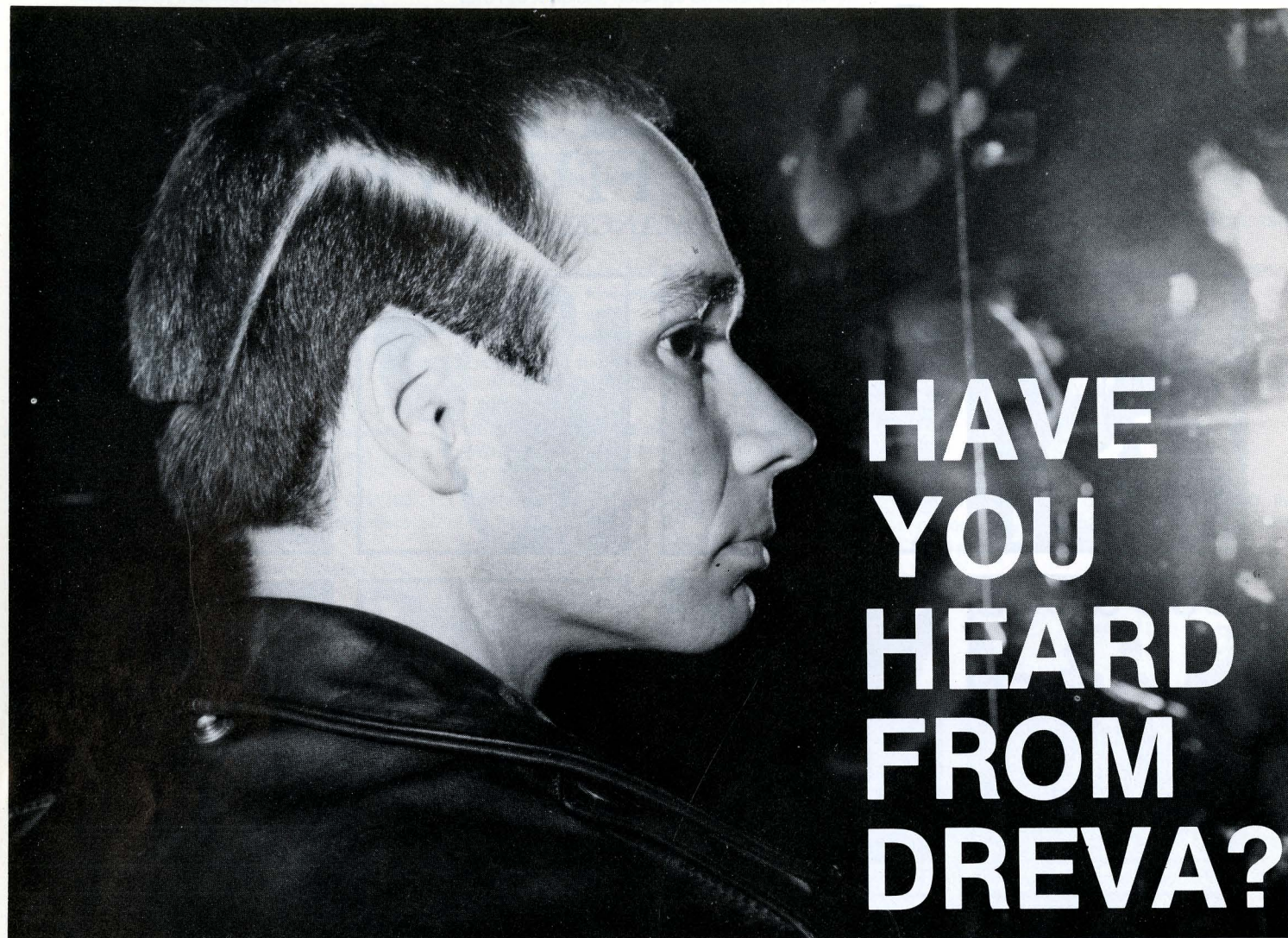


HIGH PERFORMANCE

\$2





HAVE YOU HEARD FROM DREVA?

SUZAN CARSON

Jerry Dreva

**Life Artist
Correspondent
Vandal
Journalist
Diarist
Fan
Hero**

An Introduction

If you *have* heard from Jerry Dreva, then you have been enrolled in the Eternal Network, a web of artists, writers, musicians and others interested in receiving each other's art through the mail.

For ten years, Dreva has been documenting his artwork and his life through correspondence with Mail Art figures like Ray Johnson, Guglielmo Cavellini, Robert Filliou and Anna Banana, as well as luminaries in the arts and politics like William Burroughs, Christopher Isherwood, Dick Higgins, Jack Burnham, David Bowie, Iggy Pop and Patti Smith. He has even elicited responses from Hubert Humphrey (who wrote to offer his condolences on Dreva's supposed demise), Elliot Richardson (who thanked him for his offer of help with Watergate), Buckminster Fuller (who declined an invitation to participate in a retrospective exhibition of Dreva documentation) and Cal Worthington

(who communicates through his secretary).

Why should all these people be so fascinated with the details of Jerry Dreva's life? What's so interesting about it? Everything, according to Dreva.

"I am interested in mythologizing the mundane," Dreva has said, "in celebrating the daily and transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary through the magic and power of art. I make art in order to survive, in order to make sense of my life, to give significance and confer meaning upon it. My art is my life. My art is a celebration of my life which I am presenting as a continual performance."

The performance began, then, on January 8, 1945. Jerry Dreva, who shares his birthday with Elvis Presley and David Bowie, was born in South Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He lived across the street from the Public Library and attended St. Mary's Catholic School. From the beginning, his sensibilities were rooted in

Catholicism and a love of the English language.

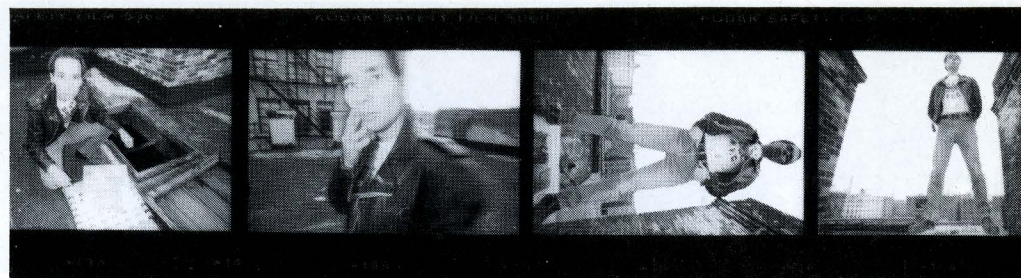
Dreva spent his high school years studying for the priesthood at a preparatory seminary in Milwaukee. "I had four years of Latin and no Driver's Ed.," says the artist. The seminary included the first years of college, but Dreva was expelled for being too radical a Catholic, "not genuflecting in church, lobbying for the English Mass, tearing up rosaries, etc." Jerry took no priestly vows.

He earned his BA in English in 1967 at St. John's University, a men's college and Benedictine Abbey in Minnesota. It was there that Dreva's eyes were opened to the intellectual avant-garde, including Fuller and John Cage. He cites Susan Sontag's *Against Interpretation* and *On Style* for showing him that "...art is style. What makes it art is the way you do it. A real artist doesn't need criticism, but appreciation. The proper response to art is art." (He also credits much of his early art leanings to faculty member Joe Gazzuolo who, among other things, collects religious art objects made of chocolate and owns a chocolate Last Supper.)

It was also during this period that Dreva became a political activist and a charter member of CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), dipping into the Sixties with both hands. He stopped reading Eugene O'Neill and started reading Artaud, "...the theater of pain, of action and feelings, strong images and emotions instead of words, words, words."

While working toward his MA in English at the University of Wisconsin, Dreva put his energy into teaching freshman composition. He saw that his students "hated English. So I dressed outrageously, assigned radio plays, performances. Every day was a celebration. I brought in records, taught Burroughs and Cage, Teilhard de Chardin, Artaud. They began to write diaries and letters about themselves. No matter what you're teaching, you transcend what you're teaching and teach yourself. You become a model."

It was in 1968, while still a graduate student, that Dreva began making collages and rubber stamp works and taking pictures of himself. He produced a "rainbow colored cock print" with poster paints in an edition of 100 and sent copies to Burroughs and Isherwood. "It was much later," he says, "that I



In preparation for this issue, Richard Newton thought up a few impertinent questions for Jerry Dreva and, appropriately, mailed them to him (five miles across the city). Newton wanted to know more about Dreva's commitment to a gay lifestyle and artstyle. The response, lengthy and diary-like, told all that and more, and it was vintage Dreva....

A Letter from Dreva

8 p.m. Sunday, February 17, 1980, in Los Angeles. The winter downpour continues as the Ronettes sing "Walking in the Rain" on KROQ radio. I'm listening to Rodney Bingenheimer's new wave program, one of the few bright spots on the current L.A. radio scene. Rodney's playing an inspired set of rain music: "Rhythms of the Rain" by the Cascades, "Rain" by the Beatles, "When the Rains Came" by the Sir Douglas Quintet, "Come on and Swim" by Bobby Freeman. Rodney and I go back to 1972 when his club on Sunset Boulevard was the mecca of the teenage glitter and groupie crowd as well as a required stop for visiting rock and rollers — primarily of the English persuasion. I've always been involved in the Los Angeles music scene — not as a performing musician, but as the ultimate fan, groupie, scenemaker. Rock and roll was my life during the Bonbon years in L.A. — 1972-1974. I found energy, excitement and enthusiasm in the music scene that was not readily apparent in the art scene, which I largely avoided. The Bonbons worked within the rock and roll context as artists-in-residence to the glitter scene. We were doing performance art, conceptual work, and serving as court jesters to the rock and roll royalty and as interpreters and exemplars of a style to the mass media. To hundreds of thousands of people who saw our photos in *Newsweek*, *People* and other publications the Bonbons became the personification of the glitter era, and later, the proto-punk era.

I returned to Los Angeles in 1979 after five years in Wisconsin largely because of the energy of the post-punk, new wave music scene. I still spend much of my time hanging out at the clubs and listening to the local bands. The big difference between 1972 and 1980 is that I now prefer the local bands to the so-called national or international groups. In 1972 there were no "local" bands — or if there were, they were playing high school dances in the Valley. Today it's the L.A. bands that I prefer. There's a great energy, youth and vitality in the music scene here. There are many good bands and several excellent groups. My favorites include the Plugz, Human Hands, B People, X, Germs, Monitor and a great Chicano new wave band from East L.A. called the Illegals. The Illegals were organized by Willie Herron, a colleague of Gronk, Harry Gamboa and Patsi Valdez in Asco, a multi-talented group of vanguard Chicano artists whose work during the past ten years has run the gamut from murals to performance art to film and video. Members of Asco also do photography, draw, paint, write and are among the best practitioners of "lifeart" to be found anywhere.



discovered people doing body art, like Acconci and Burden. I understood them immediately."

Radical politics and the gay liberation movement took up much of Dreva's time in Milwaukee during 1969-70. He did his first "urban alterations" during this time, spraying Viet Cong flags on mailboxes and writing political graffiti on walls. His correspondence art became "kiss prints, body prints on newspaper." Having spent a summer in London and seeing an impressive pop art exhibit there, Dreva began to look at artists like Warhol for inspiration.

"Warhol was the first person in our time who became more important than his work," Dreva reflects. "Films, the Velvet Underground, his whole world was his support system." Dreva also took inspiration from poet and radical feminist Barbara Gibson, a housemate in Milwaukee: "Barbara taught me the importance of using material from your own life to spin your work — self-exposition, the courage to tell secrets. In her work she tries to integrate sex and politics and art...unity. Life and work as a whole cloth."

Dreva moved to Los Angeles for the early seventies and was drawn to the energy of the music scene, for which he helped to create Les Petites Bonbons. The late seventies were spent back home in the small community of South Milwaukee, far from the glitter scene, where he worked as a journalist, anonymously reporting on his late-night "art-vandal" performances in the streets and concentrating on mail art. He began his Seminal Work/Books and continued his copious diaries (begun in 1965). These works are documented in the following pages.

Two major exhibitions in 1978 (in Milwaukee and Los Angeles) unveiled his Razor Crosses series and looked back over ten years of art/life. 1980 finds him again a resident of Los Angeles, planning a year-long series of events and actions to celebrate L.A.'s 200th birthday.

—Editor

Willie's latest venture into the new wave scene with the Illegals is going to be a great success. Gronk and the other members of Asco impress me as among the most interesting, challenging, innovative and important artists now working in Los Angeles. Of course, they've been totally ignored by the Anglo art press which does not seem to realize that the art of the future — and new wave of Los Angeles art — will be coming more and more from the Chicano community. There is a tremendous energy in the streets of downtown Los Angeles and East L.A. that Gronk and the Asco artists have captured in their work far more perceptively than any of the established Anglo artists. To me Gronk, Harry, Willie and Patssi's work is the art of the *real* Los Angeles — not the swimming pools of the elite, but an art that derives from the rich diversity of cultures, from street life, the neighborhoods that are Los Angeles. The Asco artists have wisely avoided the insular art scene and continued making their art largely outside the established art circles.

I could say a lot more about Asco, Richard, as I consider Gronk and the other members of the group to be important artists and exemplary persons whose art and lives have been a constant source of inspiration to me. I've known Gronk since 1973 when we used to meet at a Chicano gay bar called Butch Gardens.

Now Rodney's playing cuts off the new Selector album. They're great! Did you catch the Specials or Madness at the Whisky? They are the three top bands in the big ska/blue beat revival that's sweeping England. Wonderful, infectious joyful and danceable reggae-like music. They've all been taken up by the neo-Mod crowd.

Hope you don't mind these disjointed ramblings, Richard. This is the way I usually write in my diary at the end of the day. Tonight I'm just trying to direct my notes toward you and our interview for HP.

This afternoon I ventured outdoors. Took the bus to Hollywood Boulevard — one of my favorite places in L.A. — and caught an early screening of "Cruising" followed by turkey noodle soup at the Gold Cup. "Cruising" was a disappointment — not authentic, silly dialogue, slightly disjointed.

But soup at the Gold Cup was first-rate theater as always. The place was swarming with pimple-faced, low-rent hustlers who all sound like they just arrived from Oklahoma. The police are trying to close the Gold Cup down again as they periodically do. I had a long talk with the head waitress who is like mother to all the street boys. She told me the cops are really serious this time. Now Jello Biafra and the Dead Kennedys sing "California Uber Alles," a California punk classic. Have you seen Biafra perform? He's good.

Yeah, I've noticed the high visibility of the feminist and radical lesbian communities on the pages of HIGH PERFORMANCE. I can't say I'm entirely comfortable with everything I see coming from them. During the Sixties, I was deeply involved in the Civil Rights and anti-war movements. In the aftermath of the Stonewall

THE ART OF JERRY DREVA

1972-1974. *Les Petites Bonbons in Hollywood*. In collaboration with Bob Lambert, Chuck Betz, and others Dreva creates the Bonbons, a famous glitter-rock group that never cuts a record. Turning up in all the right places, the Bonbons are immediately consumed by the media and covered in *People*, *Newsweek*, *Phonograph Record*, *Record World*. Rumours of recording contracts/media infiltration and the creation of legend/conceptual performance/star-making machinery/lifestyle as art/Bonbons issue poetic licenses to thousands/Jerry Bonbon marries late Marilyn Monroe in the lobby of the Inglewood Forum and invites everyone to attend and "join with the dear departed darling of your dreams in holy wedlock"/friends of the stars/artists to the rock community/proto-punk/The Deccadance, Feb. 1974, as performance-party-happening in collaboration with the Western Front, General Idea, Ant Farm, Anna Banana and a cast of thousands/party for Iggy Pop at the Hyatt House as first of many party-as-art events by Dreva (guests include Lance Loud, Divine and the president of Columbia Records)/breakdown of barriers between art and life.

Everything they say we are, we are. Everything we dream we are, we are.

Les Petites Bonbons are becoming famous, that is, coming to understand more fully each day that we have always been famous. And so have You.

— Jerry Bonbon, 1972



Photo by Neal Preston

1974-1984. *Wanks for the Memories: The Seminal Work/Books of Jerry Dreva*. Dreva produces 1,000 orgasms for art. William Burroughs says, "Jerry Dreva's Seminal Work/Books should go down in history." As of 1980, 12 volumes of the work/books are completed — 650 individual semen-stained pages. The books are given to friends and archives, including Archive Hans Sohm (Germany), Genesis P. Orridge (London), Judith Hoffberg, Iggy Pop, Cavellini. *Studio International* describes the books as "a fusion of art, obsession and correspondence mailed to friends as completed."

LES PETITES BONBONS IN HOLLYWOOD.





*Just as the medieval church
was full of priests who should
have been artists, so our own
age is filled with artists who
would have once been priests.*
(John Fowles)

*The struggle which is not
joyous is the wrong struggle.*
(Germaine Greer)

*Art is the social license to be
obsessed.* (Ernest Becker)

*Everybody's a dreamer.
Everybody's a star.
Everybody's in show biz —
It doesn't matter who you are.*
(The Kinks)

Everything we do is music.
(John Cage)

riots in 1969 I became an outspoken gay militant. I spent three years working my ass off writing, speaking, and organizing on behalf of the gay liberation movement. I struggled with myself and agonized over feminist and radical gay issues during that time. We picketed, spoke to university classes, held meetings, and generally knocked ourselves out on behalf of the cause, which then seemed all important. At that time I probably found my primary identification as a gay man and tended to see my life and the world around me in terms defined by that identity. My writing, my art, everything I did seemed to be involved with and determined by the importance I attached to my gay identity. The highly politicized gay period gradually gave birth to the Bonbons in late 1971. The Bonbons were an overtly gay band of cultural revolutionary guerillas. We did not abandon our radical politics but began to realize that conventional radical politics was of its very nature an anti-gay medium — or at least *un-gay*, if not *anti-gay*. We began to feel that a new synthesis of art, politics and sex was needed. We aimed to be a walking exhibition of our beliefs. We followed John Cage, Norman O. Brown, Marshal McLuhan, Antonin Artaud, Marcel Duchamp and attempted to integrate our radical gay politics with a visionary tradition (going back to William Blake) that called for living the unrepressed life, integrating art and life and cultivating androgyny. Our Bonbon Anti-Manifesto was published in *Gay Sunshine* in 1972. During the Bonbon era I was consciously and overtly a gay artist making what could accurately be called "gay art." My art was definitely an expression of and part of my gay lifestyle. The entire concept of lifestyle as art that I champion and that I see as the art of the future was formulated during the Bonbon period. I owe a great debt of gratitude to Bob Lambert (editor of *Egozine*), Chuckie Betz and the other Bonbons who helped me formulate the concept of life/art which informs all my work. In many respects the Bonbons were the purest expression of the life/art concept. We were famous for being famous rather than for doing anything in particular. We were the world's first and greatest conceptual rock and roll band. We were grand chameleons who changed costumes and haircolor to suit the occasion. We joyfully celebrated life in Los Angeles and created our lives as works of art. We understood our lives and our art as revolutionary aspects of being gay. We defined "gay" much more in terms of liberated and liberating lifestyles, the unification of fantasy and reality, art and life, than in the limiting terms of sexual identity. Sexual activity took a backseat to the joyful celebration of self that we defined as gay. "Straight" meant rigid, unyielding, moribund, while "gay" meant diversity, flexibility, openness, change. My thinking was greatly influenced by Norman O. Brown's books *Life Against Death* and *Love's Body* which called for the unrepressed life, as well as John Cage's books *Silence* and *A Year from Monday* in which he repeatedly emphasizes the fact that "everything we do is music." Similarly, it seemed to me that for a person with the proper consciousness and attitude, everything we do is art. I began to take Will Shakespeare quite seriously and realize that all the world is a stage. I began to act accordingly.

THE ART OF JERRY DREVA

July 4, 1976. Bicentennial Self-portrait. What better place to celebrate the Bicentennial than in the K-Mart photo booth in Cudahy, Wisconsin? In this series of 16 patriotic photographs Dreva poses, in various states of undress, with Washington and Lincoln in a salute to the 200th birthday of the USA. During the photo session Dreva was threatened with arrest by the store manager and premanently banned from the K-Mart photo booth. Xerox edition 150.

October 1976. Hartman-Smith Campaign. Dreva livens up the most boring presidential election in memory with two flyers promoting the candidacy of Mary Hartman for president and Patti Smith for vice-president of the United States. Smith accepts nomination as "president of vice" during Milwaukee concert. Edition 1500.

December 11, 1976. Scott Johnson Fan Club. Dreva creates his first fan club-as-art to honor Patrick Lajko, a/k/a Scott Johnson, a 24 year old college graduate who successfully posed as a high school student and became a star gymnast at East High School in Wichita, Kansas. The original fan club flyer includes the UPI story detailing Lakjo's yearlong performance and subsequent discovery by school authorities. Edition 400.

February 14, 1979. Love Is Virus. Another in Dreva's series of anti-Valentines, this piece depicts Cupid with swastika tattoo on chest taking aim at the artist's red paste-on heart while the current cause of Dreva's infection looks on impassively. Edition 400.

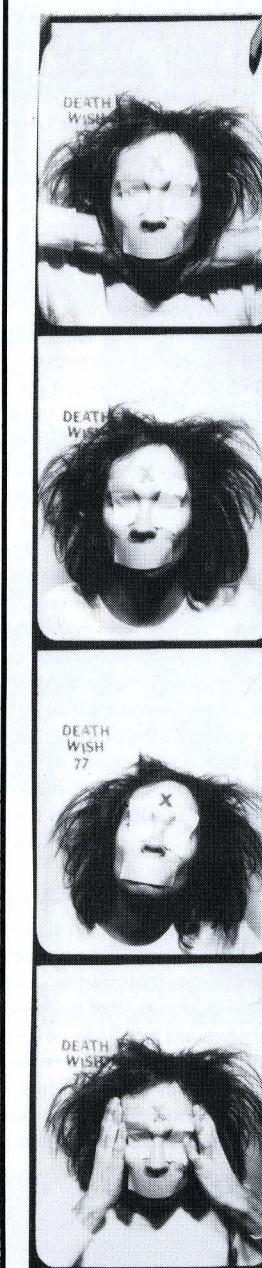
April 1, 1979. The Final Solution. The near disaster at Three Mile Island prompts Dreva, gun in hand and pointed at head, to say "I'd rather do it myself!" in this anti-nuclear April Fool piece. Edition 400.

1980

JERRY DREVA FAN CLUB

347 S. Westmoreland
Los Angeles, CA 90020

please write
please write



FANCLUB Athlete Excels at Con Game

Wichita, Kan. —UPI— For nearly a year Patrick Lajko lived a Peter Pan fantasy of youth eternal. The 24 year old college graduate posed as a high school student and became a star gymnast.

Said Lajko:

"There is in every one of us a bit that says, 'If I could only do it over again, wouldn't I do it differently?' I got caught up in that desire that is in everybody not to grow old, to return to something and do it better."

His masquerade started last January and ended this week.

Lajko, who was a four year gymnastics letterman at Iowa State University, was unmasked after an anonymous tip to East High School officials that the student who called himself Scott Johnson was really Lajko.

Officials intercepted a bus carrying the school swimming team, of which he was also a member, on its way to a meet and demanded his resignation. He readily admitted the masquerade. Assistant Principal Bob Lytle said.

Now the school's gymnastics team must forfeit five dual meets in regional tournaments and a trophy. Lajko had participated in any swimming meets, so that team was spared any forfeits.

School officials are investigating the deception, which involved a student aide who helped Lajko forge a high school transcript for "Scott Johnson" that the school needed for his his transfer.

Lajko said he set up the masquerade with three other gymnasts whom he met working out at the YMCA in the summer of 1974. He said they told him they had a long standing fantasy of enrolling a fake student just to prove it could be done. As Lajko explained it:

"I had the opportunity and I took it. Once it started the whole thing happened very rapidly and I was kind of swept up in it. I was happy here. The past months at East High have been the happiest time of my life."

"I really don't want to have to leave." DEC. 1 1 1978

FANCLUB

Scott Johnson Fan Club
JERRY DREVA
629 MADISON AVENUE
SO MILWAUKEE, WIS. 53172



Deep down I'm enormously lazy. I like living, breathing, better than working. I don't think that the work I've done can have any social significance whatsoever in the future. Therefore, if you wish, my art would be that of living; each second — each breath — is a work which is inscribed in NOWhere. It's a sort of constant euphoria. (Marcel Duchamp)

We have no art. We do everything as well as we can. (Balinese saying)

Only connect. (E.M. Forster)

A bit more on the Bonbons before I move on. What I really learned from the Bonbon experience — in addition to the primary realization that I could see the material of my own life as my art and that the creation of myself would be henceforth my major work of art — was the power of the media to create, define and distort reality. The media had a field day with the Bonbons. They used us and we used them. In a sense the "Bonbons" were a media creation. The papers and magazines defined us to the public because we refused to do so. It was an interesting experience. My life has never been the same since. In fact I became so fascinated with the power of the media to create and define that I returned home to Wisconsin to work on a newspaper for three years and research the entire phenomenon. Eventually I began to document my own life/art performances (many of them illegal) anonymously on the pages of the newspaper I worked for.

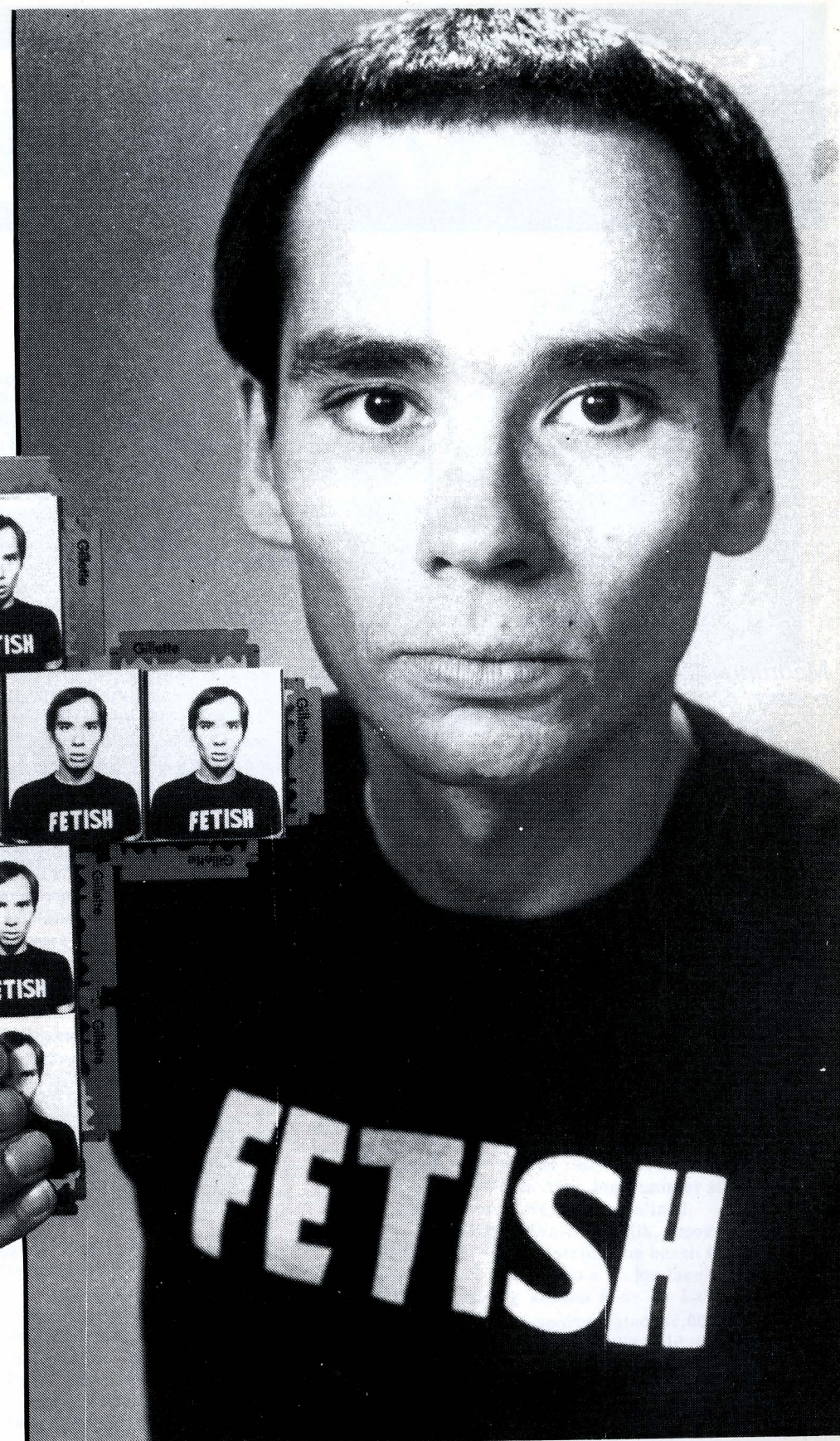
At any rate — about the lesbian and feminist artists I have mixed feelings. I am glad the women at the Woman's Building are doing what they are doing even though it sometimes seems to me somewhat dated in approach. It is important for them to be doing their kind of art. I think it is more important for *them* than for any potential audience. It is important to integrate the personal, the political and the artistic. I admire the lesbians and the feminists for making the effort to integrate their political/personal concerns with their art and to make art from their lives.

In some ways I have left that style of overtly political art behind. I worked out many of the problems concerning my sexuality and my art in the early Seventies and am no longer interested in pursuing those areas. My art still utilizes homosexual imagery occasionally although that is not my major interest. I cannot be defined or categorized as a "gay artist" as easily as I once was. I would not entirely reject that label however. It seems to me that a certain energy or attitude informs my work which is somehow related to my being homosexual. However, the best of my work transcends the "gay artist" category, just as my life itself, during the past five years, has grown beyond the gay identification. My homosexuality no longer occupies the central position in my life that it did ten years ago. Sex kind of seems to me little more than a bad habit. I am less and less interested in sex every day. As for "love," I agree with Fassbinder and Burroughs (both homosexuals) that it is a virus, a crippling disease to be avoided at all costs.

About the Bicentennial: The main reason I returned to Los Angeles when I did was to research and prepare a yearlong series of actions, performances, and exhibitions celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of Los Angeles. L.A. is a remarkable city with a rich diversity of cultures, lifestyles and ecologies. I'm especially excited by all the new energy I've discovered downtown since returning. The streets are teeming with life. Little Tokyo is thriving. Broadway is a world unto itself. On weekends it's possible to be on Broadway for five hours and never hear a word of English. Chinatown boasts some of the best music clubs in town. The

THE ART OF JERRY DREVA

January-December 1977. Art Weapon. 7x9 inch crosses of black and white photo booth self-portraits each edged with 14 razor blades. Edition 125.





*Meaning is new, or not at all;
poetry, or not at all; a vast pun,
a free play, with unlimited
substitutions. (Norman O.
Brown)*

*No more masterpieces.
(Antonin Artaud)*

downtown art scene is flourishing. The west side of town is looking like a futuristic space station. Main Street is like a scene from the Fifties. Harold's Bar and the Waldorf are incredible places. The black drag queens are great and the bars look just like John Rechy described them in *City of Night*. Every time I walk into them I expect to see Miss Destiny sitting on a bar stool.

There is much to celebrate in L.A. This city's been bad-rapped too often. I plan to spend an entire year celebrating myself in Los Angeles. I started out on February 14, 1980, when I was tattooed with my Bicentennial tattoo by Cliff Raven, L.A.'s premiere tattoo artist. It is approximately six inches tall and features a large palm tree with the heart-shaped letters "L.A." with "200" at the bottom. My relationship with L.A. is the current love of my life. I had her name tattooed on my arm on Valentine's Day, what can I say? During the coming year I will be hosting breakfasts at the Pantry, lunches at Philippe's, coffee and music at the Atomic Cafe, and get-togethers at the Gold Cup, Blue Nunn, Burrito King and other favorite restaurants. I'll be conducting tours of Hollywood, Rodeo Drive, leather bars. I'll be riding every bus in L.A. to the end of the line and documenting the trips; visiting a different church every Sunday; throwing a giant birthday party for Los Angeles. I'll be spending a week at the Hollywood YMCA, as well as at a downtown hotel, an East L.A. studio, a Beverly Hills home, a Watts hotel and a beach motel. I'll be interviewing people all around the city. I hope to do several performances on the streets, and perhaps occasionally in a gallery. I also am working with Suzan Carson on a photozine which will document old and new landmarks of Los Angeles.

Onward to the punk art issue before I go to sleep.

Don't label me a punk artist — however...I have used a lot of punk images in my work during recent years (or is it S & M — or are they the same?) I've felt very close to a lot of the classic punk (1977) attitudes — high energy, spontaneity, rebellion, the extremes of style, the risk and danger. My work transcends the "punk" label just as it transcends the "gay" label and the "catholic" label, but it certainly included a strong punk element for a time.

— here I fell asleep —

- DREVA



ARTFUL PRANKSTER decorated the walls of South Milwaukee High School just prior to the Aug. 13 Festival of Arts to greet early morning exhibitors with a blaze of colorful graffiti. 'Art only exists beyond the confines

of accepted behavior,' was painted on the brick wall of the school and 'Death to romance,' was scrawled on a retaining wall. Both were done with fluorescent spray paint.

THE ART OF JERRY DREVA

August 3, 1978. Heart Attack. After announcing his intention to do a guerilla art performance without audience Dрева uses stencils and spray paint to completely cover a 10x30 foot wall of a white wood beach house located on the shore of Lake Michigan with hundreds of multicolored dayglo hearts. The performance takes place from 1 to 4 a.m. and is elaborately documented with photos and a lengthy story praising the anonymous heart vandalism in a local newspaper (story by Dрева, reporter). Although his identity as art vandal remains unknown in South Milwaukee, the location of the performance, Dрева reveals his action to 200 persons throughout the Eternal Network who receive spray painted flyers, copies of press clippings and color Xeroxes of the heart mural.

August 25, 1978. Homage to Tut. Dрева joins the Tut-mania sweeping the country when he is wrapped in a shroud and placed in a coffin outside a Milwaukee gallery. The photographic documentation of this homage to the boy king, printed in an edition of 500, was trimmed in the shape of the coffin.

September 7, 1978. San Francisco Heart Attack. Dрева's August 3 performance is repeated on the West Coast by Lionel Biron who spray paints hundreds of hearts on the wall at the San Francisco Institute of Art.

Vandals paint beach house

Vandals with an artistic flair used multi-color dayglo paint to create a giant mural on the north wall of the Grant Park beach house Aug. 3.

The anonymous artist apparently worked through the night and used stencils and spray paint to completely cover the 10 by 30-foot white wood wall with hundreds of orange, red, green, blue and yellow hearts.

According to park officials, who discovered the mural when they reported to work Aug. 3, the meticulously spraypainted wall recalled a similar incident in 1975 when the same beach house was neatly painted with hundreds of dayglo stars.

Park personnel counted more than 250 six-inch hearts painted on the building. One park employee referred to the mural as 'Constructive vandalism' and said many of his fellow workers hoped park supervisors would allow the hearts to remain on the building for the rest of the summer.

Visitors to the beach were unanimous in their praise for the heart mural. Young children, who visit the beach twice weekly as part of an urban summer camp program, were especially delighted with the brightly colored painting.

The colorful and elaborate painting drew attention to the generally shabby condition of the beach house with its cracked and peeling paint and delapidated roof. The building was constructed during the depression as part of a public works project. Dressing room and shower facilities at the beach house were torn down last summer after the building was severely vandalized.

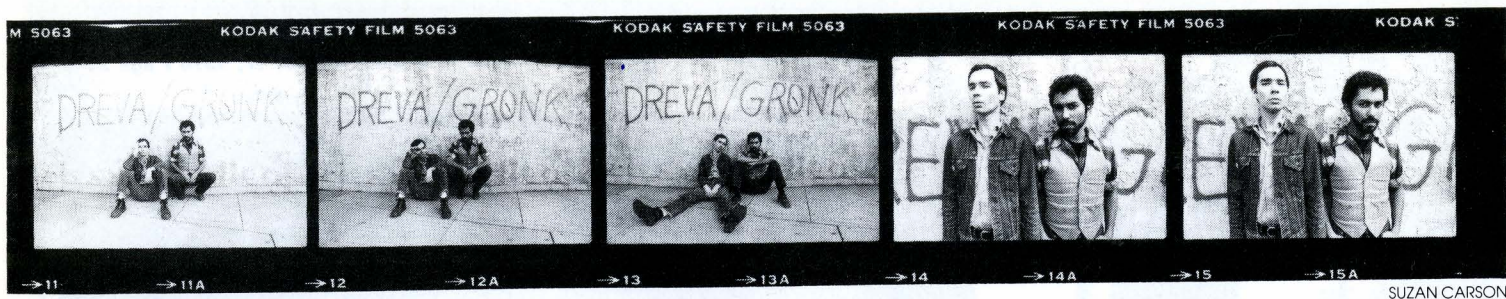
According to Walter Pytlik, supervisor of the Grant Park District, the beach house is scheduled to undergo a major facelift after the swimming season ends on Labor Day.

'The county appropriated \$9,000 to remodel the building,' Pytlik said. 'It will be getting a new roof and a complete paint job.'

Pytlik agreed the heart mural was far from the run-of-the-mill vandalism usually encountered in the park.

'It's certainly not offensive or destructive,' Pytlik commented. 'Someone obviously put a lot of time into it.'

Pytlik said the county park painting foreman will take a look at the beach house and decide if the hearts should be painted over immediately or if they will remain until the building is remodeled in September.



DREVA QUESTIONS DREVA

Some questions I'd ask Jerry Drev if I were interviewing him:

Q. What are the major influences on your art?

A. I'm influenced by everything I see. I'm a very impressionable person and tend to soak up new information like a sponge. I love reading newspapers and magazines and get most of the material for my art from the news. I work with information, with styles, with all facets of popular culture. My work celebrates the news, celebrates popular culture and pop heroes. It celebrates my world, my life and my friends.

Q. Who are some of the contemporary artists you admire?

A. There are many artists working in many different media whose work I enjoy. Among the lifestyle artists I think that Bob Lambert, who publishes *Egozine*, and Guglielmo Cavellini, the Italian master of autohistoricism, are interesting and important. Genesis P. Orridge's work, both with coum and more recently with *Throbbing Gristle*, is especially perceptive and always disturbing, which seems to me to be an important characteristic of the best art. I like the work of *asco* and Mexico's *No-Grupo*.

Q. What do you think of the Los Angeles art scene?

A. I'm encouraged by the new art community that seems to be developing downtown. There's a lot happening in L.A. right now. I think it's the place to be in the Eighties.

Q. Do you consider yourself a performance artist?

A. Some of the things I do might be called performance art, but what I'm trying to do is point toward a future when art will no longer exist as a category separate from life. I think that ideally the

time will come when all the people in the world are living and creating their lives as works of art. The great contribution of performance art is that it is helping to break down the boundaries between life and art.

Q. But most performance art is still done in a gallery for a small elite audience, isn't it?

A. That's true, and to the extent that it remains in the galleries it will fail. The best new art — you might more accurately call it *no art* — is taking place on the streets and is often unrecognizable as art. The art of the future will directly affect reality. William Burroughs talks about writing of the future that would have the power to kill the reader. The Pentagon already has infrasound weapons that can destroy the entire population of L.A.

Q. You're a writer as well as an artist. Can you tell us something about your diaries?

A. I don't make a distinction between my writing and my art. They are part of the same myth-making process. I've been keeping a diary for fifteen years and plan to publish the complete unedited diaries on microfiche cards in 1984. The fiche cards will be sealed in a clear plexiglass cube and published as an artist's multiple. The piece will be titled "Not for Reading," and will transform the confidential information contained in the diary to the public and concealing them by enclosing the fiche cards in plexiglass. Of course anyone who wishes to read the diaries can do so at any time by destroying the art work in which it is encased.



THE ART OF JERRY DREVA

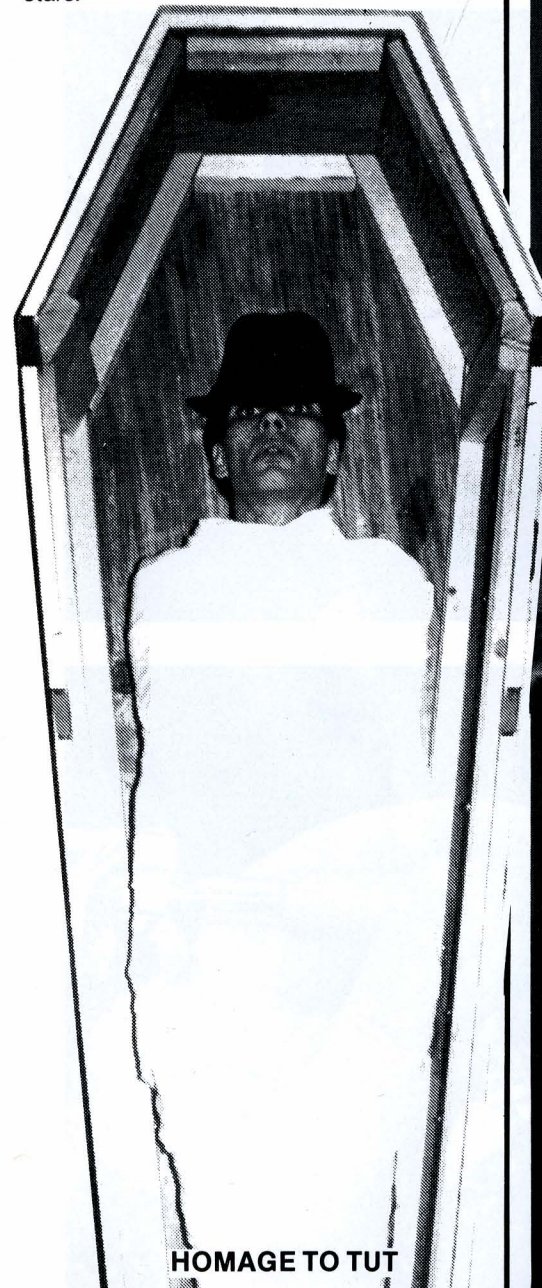
March 9, 1978. Art meets Punk. Drev and Grunk throw a party at the LACE Gallery in downtown Los Angeles attended by more than 1200 artists, punks, moochers and voyeurs. Free beer, wine and music by the Bags and the Last provide the necessary atmosphere for an evening of brawling, fun and destruction that was broken up by the L.A. police shortly after midnight.

June 7, 1978. Drev at 33 1/3. With searchlights sweeping the foggy sky outside Milwaukee's Water Street Art Center, more than 500 guests cram inside the gallery for the opening night of Drev's first solo exhibition in Wisconsin. Pills, beer, blood and sweat flow freely as local punks pogo to music by the Lubricants and Ruthless Acoustics. To commemorate the occasion Drev publishes a 20 page zine, *Drev and Friends at 33 1/3*, featuring photos of the artist with some of his friends, including Lou Reed, Alice Bag, R.J. Lambert and other stars.



ART MEETS PUNK

SUZAN CARSON



HOMAGE TO TUT



29



- * L.A. 200
- * Jerry Dreva and Cliff Raven
- * Valentine's Day 1980

On February 14, 1980, Cliff Raven tattooed a four-inch palm tree and the slogan *L.A. 200* on my right upper arm. The tattoo celebrates the bicentennial of the founding of the city of Los Angeles, which will be observed in 1981. It is the first in a yearlong series of actions, performances and exhibitions I will present to pay homage to L.A. on her 200th birthday. (All photos by Suzan Carson).

