ONE DOLLAR

Issue #1 / Fall 1980

feature: MAY 21 RIOTS
with previously unpublished photos

poetry: THE TOUCHES OF ANGELS

article: HARRY HAY & JOHN BURNSIDE:
A CALL FOR SANCTUARIES

plus cover-to-cover ART / GRAPHICS / WRITING
VOX Vortex: The New Vision

THE NEW ARTIST

EVERYWHERE THE OLD FORMS ARE HANGLING, APPEARING STRUC-
tures and traditional institutions are making last desperate displays of power before the last waves break like dis-appearing nova stars. The politics of the seventies have ended in an avalanche—promotion while promoting the death of individual consciousness and creativity over "collectivism". And spiritual movements and cults continue to promote the death of action to foster authoritarian father-images; all like Jim Jones leading us down the path to the eventual death of self.

In the 1980s art is the choice for life and creativity in a world of mindless conformity and role-playing.

Artists are the catalysts of the eighties.

Art is no pretty picture—no entertainment for the endless masses—no status symbol for class risers—no escape from reality—no décor-

art to hang around our minds. Art is the dynamic cutting edge of individual vision with the shattering realities of conformist social systems.

To be an artist is to adopt a radical lifestyle—a daily commitment to see the world in unapproved, uncon-

formed ways—to speak to that vision truthfully. The artist takes action through a creative process. Not willing to be "spoken for" by authori-
ties, movements, clergy,Grand

nases, ideologies or prevail-

ing social values, individuals today use art to speak for themselves.

Pre-christian and nature peoples use art as a magical tool for interacting with their environments—to survive through their "magical" identi-
fication with their worlds. The new artist today uses art to transform to assimilate to analyze the social and cultural environment. Art is magic in the hands of people. Magic is a weapon for survival. To be an artist is to take action with word and image...and to take control of reality itself.

THE NEW VISION

VOX Vortex is a forum for art-

ists and writers whose visions offer an alternative to the culture of nuclear families, scoreless racism, patriar-

chies, and materialism. VOX Vortex is a journal seeking the New Vision—the piercing light of

artists who question, who challenge, who see through the veil of heteroexist socialices—artists who question the value of heterosexual social structures. Arty projects, including con-

temporary drama, prose and poetry, graphics and photography, spirituality, criticism, his-
torical works in film and experimental forms—all have a place in VOX Vortex.

VOX Vortex is designed not by the forms we publish or the particular type of artists represented in it—VOX Vortex is defined by the emerging New Vision, the multitude of visionary forms of a multitude of people today living up to a form of conscious social, cul-tural alternative.

We are not structuring VOX Vortex around arbitrary cate-
hes such as "gay", "women", "third world". We will promote the New Vision whenever it is given to the vor-

er the artist is. We will actively seek out diverse writers and artists to pre-

sent the New Vision in all its facets.

We are stepping into the great limitless freedom of anarchy/spirit. We reject ex-

ternal limits; we challenge every assumption we abandon old comfortable forms. We call

to readers and contributors to give up faith to the ideas and dreams and fantasies to give free reign to your imagination and creativity. Join with us in exploring new possibil-

ities, new worlds, new ways of seeing and feeling...the New Vision.

A world without sexism, without domination of the powerful, without the world with no powerful, a world that cherishes nature and life force and does not seek to control it; a world where spiritual values are always higher than the material whirl of everyone is an artist, practicing magic of the imagi-
nation in the pure light flow seeking the mystery of individ-

ual spirit....

VOX Vortex.

VOX Vortex is intended to be an all-volunteer operation, without a formal structure or staff organization. At the same time, we want to avoid the over-reliance on the same crew that energize many people to coordinate all the numer-

ous tasks involved in produc-

ction. Most of us have already experienced that situation. Rather, we plan to develop an informal working group as an ad-hoc editorial board and production crew for each issue. We ask people interested in working on the group to merely commit themselves to one issue. We want everyone who contributes to VOX Vortex to share that which represents the greatest most re-

warding use of their skills. Anyone who identifies with the New Vision as organization tried to describe is invited to join us as we begin plann-

ing the next issue.

Our plans for the development of VOX Vortex are based on the following considerations and choices:

• VOX Vortex is not intended to be profitable only self-sufficient enough to cover the costs of production. Eventually we will incorporate as a non-profit arts organiza-
tion. Then subscriptions and advertising will constitute tax-
deductible contributions and we will have access to greater limited pos-
tional rates.

• The legal structure for VOX Vortex will be that of a membership organiza-
tion. So instead of purchasing subscriptions individuals will be mem-

bers, supporting VOX Vortex as a project. This distinc-
tion reduces record-

keeping work and allows us to tier memberships—individuals can support VOX Vortex to the level they desire and are able to give.

• The eventual sources of income for VOX Vortex will be: benefit parties; ad-

vertising; memberships; and sales.

• The expenses of VOX Vortex are limited almost entirely to the costs of printing. We are doing much of our production ourselves. The savings is considerable.

We plan to distribute a good number of complementary copies of the next issues to identify a solid readership. Every copy will contain a reply device asking readers to share feedback, asking them if they would like to continue to re-

ceive VOX Vortex. To do this, we are asking for any contribu-
tion of a dollar or more. If you would like the next issue of VOX Vortex should reach you in this copy and be sure to send it in.

CONTRIBUTIONS

As a non-profit and vol-

unteer project we cannot buy materials. We can offer excellent placement and treatment of your material and connect you with a diverse...
Steven Marks 4
Nightstick: May 21, 1979
photos: Richard Gallo

Bradley Rose 13
editor

A Call for Fairy Sanctuaries
Harry Hay and John Burnside
print: MRDR

Eva Lake 16
Planet Lake

Nona Collins 18
Sundown

H.B. Pony 19
Three Poems
drawings: H.B. Pony

Carol Queen 22
The Touches of Angels

MRDR 27
Sexual Criminals/Urban Refugee
illustration: Will Roscoe

Bradley Rose 28
Behind Me
graphics: Bradley Rose

Carol Queen 30
5.22.79

Cover Design: Will Roscoe
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Back Cover: H.B. Pony
At City Hall. There's a
crush of people at the top of
the stairs, around three hun-
dred. There's no
focus here. Chants pick up, and
pass through the crowd,
and passing one part to
another. "MUR-DER...MUR-DER..."
"MUR-DER..."
Nobody can speak,
the bullhorn doesn't work.
They're shouting to the
people behind the speakers,
at the doors of City Hall and
white lights sudden
and you see the tops of
people's heads moving
cially around a little space
to watch. The faces of our
gatekeepers, people in and out
observing, a parade in and out
speaking. Sally, Genevieve,
Harry Bell, Leon Kay, street of
Harmony, a lady in white
with a guitar, a sign that
Thomason even a priest, under a
leader of his men... no more
barrage of his men... no more
BULLSHIT... No more BULLSHIT...
I remember seeing Ruby Rodriguez the
caller telling everyone, "Now I want
everyone to stay calm and
got something to say to me."
and later standing on a car
everyone I can't even
by a sudden rush of panic
comes through the cops and
people start to smell into the
door. But no cops aren't coming in yet and the
movement outside..."
I had reached a logical intellectual conclusion that something must happen. And I felt a compulsion to take action, to be more than a bystander.

Robert is flushed with excitement. "We have to do something Steve. What will get these girls going?" The people with the bullhorn trying to speak don't think they can do the opposite—keep us from doing anything. They each take a turn to shout to the crowd. But you can't hear them for all the chants and shouting and confusion. Yet each believes it is quite possible the one the crowd will listen to they can convince everyone to go together, to leave the attention from the stairs of City Hall. But none of them succeed. They've always told us what we should do—to voice your money, to do this or that, year after year. You realize the attitude is not that they are going to teach you how to behave politically. Like we're not thinking for the whole time. They're always exporting us to do something that always serves their political needs (like elected). But there's resistance there tonight. A moment of silence. Then broken by noise or a chant from the top of the stairs, suddenly TV lights go on and there's a moment of shifts. There's a chart for Sally Garrett, "Let her speak! Let her speak!" for a moment it's quiet and she starts to say, "No one is more enraged tonight than I am..." and now we know the next part... Part Two... But... However... But... "Harvey Milk wouldn't be breaking these doors here, either..." And we shout up, "BULLSHIT! BULLSHIT! BULLSHIT!" How would she know what Harvey would be doing. In 1972 or 1975, when Harvey was considered a freak by the city's political establishment Harvey might be throwing the first rock. Or at least standing consentingly nearby with his wonderful sweet boy smile. Then, of course, Harvey the San Francisco Supervisor would probably have more been entitled to be the charismatic leader who turned by the angry crowd to the phone letter headers and telegram to elected officials the next morning.

Then there's a little light. A small light appears above the stairs behind the second floor balcony. People strain to see. Supervisor Carol Ruth Silfver trying to speak from a bullhorn. Can't hear her. People shouting. She keeps trying. We can't hear her. And the bullhorn is gone, appearing again at the top of the stairs, coming out from the broken windows of the doors. She's still trying to talk through her bullhorn, fiddling with the knobs, moving from one side of the steps to another, through the thick crowds. Robert says he wants to get the bullhorn. "I know just what to say to make these people go wild. Steve, can I get that microphone?" "I don't know. Maybe you could ask her for it. Nobody can hear anyway."

I look out over the crowd from the top of the stairs, where Robert and I are standing. It is dark now night time. The size of the crowd has continued to grow rings on rings of people and now there are a couple thousand people or more spilling out across the streets, to the edges of the Civic Center plaza. Robert and I wander around the top of the area for a while. I'm still anxious. I could look through the shattered glass looking for a forestation in the semi-attention, legs parted, sticks resting in hands, white head, dark blue jumpsuit, anonymous. Shifting weight, stepping aside coolly when a spike from the grill was slipping along the doors, sliding through the broken windows. There are a few people recklessly brazen a couple are drunk holding cans of beer in brown paper bags. They seem crazed, possessed. Suddenly yelling at the cops inside, screaming at them, calling them pigs. Then turning to talk to a friend or lover or dealer, laughing and smiling. Then arguing with some men in the crowd trying to tell him how bad it is for our image... "They killed Harvey. Fuck it, this shit." white head, around and one guy jumps up, pulls a piece of wrought iron grill, people step back for a moment as the iron flies up thrown at the highest windows still unshattered at the top of the doors. I'm afraid of shattering glass but Robert pulls me in closer. Leonard Matlovich pushing and shoveing some guy around, practically beating him up to keep him from being "violent". Others trying to form a line, linking arms in front of the doors to keep the "violent" ones away from City Hall but they don't have enough people to complete the line—they were all from the Advocate, Experience or some gay dance club—too bad later, when the cops finally came in, these fine distinctions of our "image" offered no line protection. Robert grabs me by the wrist. "Steve, what are we going to do? I can't believe these people are just standing around like this. This is stupid. I can't believe these queers..."

Karen strained her attention to the top of the stairs. What should she do? What was her responsibility? She had been one of Harvey Milk's aides and was almost appointed in his place. She's there with some man in wire-rimmed glasses who keeps feeding her with suggestions. But Karen's genuinely distressed. "What should I do? I can't believe this is happening. I can't believe it." And the guy with her trying to be detached and intellectual. "They're all crazy. They can't be dealt with. It's out of control. "Should I talk? Should I try to talk?"

If Dan White was black, Latino or gay to the gay cham- ber he'd be on his way—graf- fiti on Hayes Street: Two young Black women both with their hair straightened and cut off even right at the back of the neck. "Hey! What's hap- pening man? This is great... Yeah man, this is all on the radio far out!" For some it really is a party. They laugh and jump around. And I stare at them. They really don't have any reason to care. They laugh. It is a joke for them.

Five days before the riot I was at Carl's apartment in the Castro. He was counting out piles of flyers for the
Harvey Milk birthday celebration scheduled for May 22. Carl was checking off piles of things to do in his neighborhood and locations throughout the city. "I'm just afraid we're going to have trouble." Last weekend in Castro a cop with a reputation in the neighborhood for being an asshole tried to arrest some people for carrying a sign for stop leaflets up on telephone poles. It led to a full-fledged confrontation right there Saturday afternoon, hot spring day in the teasing Castro. Cops call in reinforcements, then face off by a crowd of several hundred gay men pouring out of the bars. A cop with a white was a cop! Dan WHITE was a cop!" And the cops end up retreating on Castro Street, each step back they take is instantly filled by a surge of the crowd, pushing forward.

Carl is on the phone now: "Listen that cop is back on the street today. Yes...he's on the beat again. I don't care. He said he'd be off the beat. It's the same one... yeah Tom. That's what he said. Well, he's out there right now. Listen we have a meeting that are not party next Tuesday. The verdict could come in then... Well you just tell him that it's Tom. I hope there won't be no trouble. A lot of trouble. Real trouble. I'm not kidding. Please help. I want to realize what's going on?"

Images of City Hall: walking back from the Strand Theater through UN Plaza out to Civic Center Plaza, and a full moon fills the corners of the sky with pure pale neon glow and the moon itself on the moon is shiny see-through pearl blue and City Hall is a hard edge cut against the blackness white light. Standing up, pushing up to the sky and leaning in and shreds of afraid that the windows were there trouble. A lot of trouble. I'm not kidding. Please help. I want to realize what's going on!

Terry stood with a small group of friends on the outer ring of the crowd. Leaning in horrified-fascinated-hyponotized by the shattering of glass! The lights! chanted continuously. A poet, a composer, a graphic artist, an anti-nuclear activist. At first they joined in the chants of "No more violence!" But Terry is thinking the whole time, "This is dumb! These people must be insane. They're not going to accomplish anything." But when the transfer of the doors of City Hall was broken and the sudden surge of energy crashing from the north and south sides of the stairs... then Terry's mood changed. If something was going to happen then at least it should be done right.

For a while flames from newspapers showed in under a large bush by the stairs tick up into leaves of a tree overheads. It doesn't catch on fire in the green leaves and the fire dies out. One of Terry's friends turns to him. "Well at least they're not going to waste time burning little trees. And Terry turns to him and despite his feuding in sixties nonviolence and seventies human growth he bursts out: "That's just a silly bourgeois ecological hang-up!"

"Now look! Steve here are all these people and they're ready for something. How do you want these things? What could we do?" "I'm afraid some of these fags would turn us on if we did anything" "Oh come on! Let's go over here." Robert drags me down the steps by my wrist, throng to the thick crowd and we slip behind the bushes to the north of the stairs. Some people sitting above us on the abutment look down as we rustle around. "Now let's find a rock. Look around in here for a rock." Robert disappears behind the bush and comes back with a block of wood with a nail sticking out.
of it and a small rock.

"Steve let's throw this rock. Come on let's do it together. What do you think will happen?" "Well maybe you could do it round there on the other side of the bush..." And Robert heads off around the bush again. I look around nervously but no one seems to be watching. I see the little rock fly up and bounce off the granite wall. Robert comes back panting. "FUCK, I missed. Did anyone see?" Then someone else comes around. I see through the bush someone trashing around, looking for something—a stick bounces off the window—then a rock hits and makes a small hole in the glass. Some guy wanders off. Nothing happens.

There's no more rocks here so Robert has us go around the steps to the other side. There's a long string of newspaper vending machines linked together with a chain. Robert and I slip behind the bush there. He hands me a rock. "Come on, Steve; it's your turn." And I slip all the way around the bush, taking glances behind me and throw my rock at the window but it bounces off. Heart pounding I come back, some people on the aburment above look at us. Robert throws a bottle that crashes against the wall and throws another rock and finally a window crashes. We slip out suspiciously from behind the bush—there are a few more people now milling around on the little strip of grass between the sidewalk and the building. Something else is thrown. And Robert is excited.

"It's snapped, It's been snapped. He grabs both of my hands. "I've got to find something else to throw..." and he's off looking for rocks. I turn around and the newspaper machines are right there.

I walk up slowly. The image of what I'm to do burning in my mind. Turn—walk past them—look around. Then I walk up and kick one, kick it over—walk a little ways—and push over another slam it down and other people now picking them up and throwing newspaper machines. Breaking the chain linking them. Smashing then open. One gets picked up carried overhead and thrown against the face of City Hall and someone's in the papers and papers thrown up in the air and flying around people standing on cars some guys gathering paper together into a pile.

And I notice they're all cute disco types in a circle, crouching down, match held to papers and the first flames of the night leap up. I lose Robert. Flames leaping out of a trash can on the corner. Then I see Robert; he's hunting a huge rock through a window, he spins around and suddenly falls, gets up leaping.

"They're coming! The cops are coming!" And a line of cops, helmets, visors, blue jumpsuits, run in quick from the Grove Street side. I feel like I'm running on air. They try to set up a line in front of City Hall but rocks start flying. I see cops sticks up, cops bent over they pick someone up and retreat under a barrage of rocks and rocks. Did they get someone? Was it Robert? Was he hurt?

When the cops retreat people move back in again. I see a group of women running along the front of the building by the huge window wells covered with steel grates. Newspaper torches flying over to the building then up and into the broken windows. Glass shattering, crashing, each window each piece, one by one. Inside they lower Venetian blinds after all the glass is broken out and objects start to thud on the floors of the offices inside, and the glimpse of white visors tips of the cop inside lowering the blinds draws a cry and a new barrage of rocks and bottles appearing out of nowhere. Some leather guys shaking a parking meter back and forth in wider swings until it pops out of the sidewalk and two men carry it off and throw it whole at the building others chipping away at the newly broken cement to make more rocks and missiles. In Grove Street in front of Larkin Hall, there's a roar of motorcycles. Cycle cops are coming in! But I look again and it's all leather men, Folson Street types running their bikes into a huge circle in the intersection.

At the foot of City Hall Robert is helping some women lift one of the steel grates from the window well and then forming a line to help women
I ran into Lanny standing on the sidewalk across from the front of City Hall. Riot activity swelling around us we can't help taking advantage of the camp opportunities—as if we were suddenly on TV: "Hey, Steve! It's all quite festive. And I almost missed it! Except I heard something on this guy's radio..." "Oh, yes— it's been officially declared a riot." "Well what are they doing over there? That's severe." Off by the side of the stairs a fire is started under a bush—flares up and for a while threatens the tree above. I start to tell him about the newspaper machines and what happened (I thought) to Robert and at that moment Robert walks up. He's exhilarated. There's a cut above his eyebrow—purple red blood partly dried. "Where have you been? I was afraid the cops got you." "Oh, I fell down and hit my leg here on my shin— really hard. Here— hold this. He hands me a chunk of cement. He tells us about helping the dykes get into the basement—and we joke about the stereotype type of lesbians and gay men not being able to work together. Then Robert is impatient and excited. "I've got to get rid of this rock." And he wanders off, I step off the sidewalk following. "What should we do?" I point out a stranded police car there on Polk Street. "Well, we do seem to have an unfortunately stranded police vehicle here. ..." Robert's rock bounces off the rear window. But then there are others. Other rocks and a parking meter rammed into the side and the front window and a guy with a garbage can smashes the top of the car, crashing can windows popping out, mirrors snap off, hood bashed in. Then there's ten guys trying to turn the car over Robert in the middle. Then from somewhere some guy tosses newspapers into the front seat and a book of matches. It went up so fast everyone was surprised. People gathered around the area, applauding and cheering. Then suddenly afraid of bailing out, going off or the gas tank exploding. Some people shout to get back. I catch Lanny at the sidewalk and stand across the street with him. I see one lone person—one of San Francisco's flasher gus dressed tonight like a boy in a sailor outfit—standing hands in pockets staring at the cop car burning, uncensored with explosions or bullets—it's a film we're all watching—parts we've seen long ago—we know how the story goes.

Activity fanning out from City Hall into Civic Center Plaza. Limb of tree snapped and broken off, set afire in trash can. Terrific crash of glass, an enclosure around an elevator to the underground parking garage below. Then there's a siren, lone wailing siren comes down around Allister Street. Little red fire engine to douse out the flaming police car. Just as it rounds the corner onto Polk a crowd surges out from the sidewalk and blocks off its path people jumping up onto the engine, breaking off the windshield wipers and the engine backs up and leaves.
Then at the corner of Polk and McAllister another cop car and an unmarked cop car are set on the street. And a white unmarked cop car a siren is triggered, sets off a long shrill wail floating up like smoke into the night sky. Then another cop car goes up in flames—then another—there's a whole line of police cars parked along McAllister against the State Building. A small squad of cops runs down the street, in a little chase. A police car stood by for a moment, but then the cops retreat. And people float back in, isolated individuals rush in and out around the police cars. A row of motor-cycling cops clubs swinging come down McAllister in some guy away from the cars, then circles around and pulls out. One of the cars down the street goes up finally eight in a row (a total of thirteen that night). All up in flames down row down McAllister, flames light night and sky and buildings around the Plaza.

And Ron stood hands in pockets sitting at cop cars going up in flames—when he noticed an earnest face on right by him. A week later I run into him at the baths: "Girlfriends, where were you Monday night?" "I'm not sure. You kind of burned a cop car." His contribution for the night, still somewhat cynical, is still waiting, ready. That and at one timeless moment to get caught in a photograph—standing in front of a friend and I think a brick at a cop and with an ear-to-ear grin that betrayed his loyalties. Last summer the subject of an interview at the Hall of Justice. I was standing with Lanny on the sidewalk across from City Hall when the tear gass came. There was a thud-pop sound, a low sort of popping sound. My eyes start stinging and watering. I'm blinking trying to focus across the street. Others who were closer to the tear gass fled to the pond in the center of Civic Center Plaza. Wringing their hands from a tear dropped into fountain to rinse out eyes breathless moment look up stop for flash sounds around, fall away the pause from the action suddenly exhilarated the thrill on your toes thinkingly blink up to see smoke of cop cars and sirens set off discordant pitches someone familiar in the corner of your eye.

Cops came in from both sides in a well ordered row. Straight line of cops running in batons held in hand rested in palms trot in to secure the steps of City Hall. What we expected hours ago but by now there's no focus there and people are dispersed throughout the Plaza area seeking out targets for trash and the torch. Some who pulled out early into the side with the first rocks were being thrown gathered on Polk and called up front of the cops Health Building, as if they could cross the invisible line and just be spectators. Some who pulled out early into the side with the first rocks were being charged clearly they were real anti-Democratic Club types. Alligator shifts and everything except tonight something was different: "Listen, something really happened to those boys, they were really getting into it.

...A SIREN IS TRIGGERED, SETS OFF A LONG SHRILL WAIL FLOATS UP LIKE SMOKE INTO THE NIGHT SKY. THEN ANOTHER COP CAR GOES UP IN FLAMES—THEN ANOTHER—THERE'S A WHOLE LINE OF POLICE CARS PARKED ALONG MCALLISTER—ALL UP IN FLAMES...FLAMES LIGHT NIGHT AND SKY AND BUILDINGS AROUND THE PLAZA.

Ron was standing farther down the street, near the Library, in some cops’ corner. Memorablers demonstrations in the sixties, but this was the first gay riot he had ever seen. This at least was a change of pace from the usual parade. He began to notice the gay rights activities these days. Ron once said that after his peace movement experience and after his labor movement experience the organized office workers and lead a strike and now in the midst of the antigay conservative backlash his only feeling about politics was one of betrayal. So now he organizes like to experience and sensation and movement. Spends his weekends in the Fricadero or favorite bathhouses. No guilt about bourgeois security but he still makes lone compulsive anarchic political statements. He was even investigated in relation to certain things. He's become quite through the mail towards certain public officials. Tonight he's hanging out with some friends from the Troc ("I'll never these guys were real Alice Democratic Club types. Alligator shifts and everything except tonight something was different: "Listen, something really happened to those boys, they were really getting into it.

Lanny and I stand on the sidewalk across the street. The next step would be for them to move out from the steps and cross Polk Street. Even now ranks swelling behind the first lines as other crowds move in. Front line steps forward. Is this it? Some people start to run. Then there's a cry to sit down to sit down in the street. And upon a crowd people are sitting there faced off against the police line. Like peace movement face-offs in magazines, long-haired men holding flowers, sit-in faced by helmeted cops, sticks resting in palms of hands. Only a cop a deputy chief tries to talk to the crowd shouting within inch of front in the sit-down back and forth face red exasperated pleading-ferocious. A gay man and is standing front now coaching people and leading chants then talking to the top.

We stand behind the people sitting down. A shower of rocks, bottles, stick starts to fly over the crowds into the police lines. Cops dropping here and there, pulled out and another steps forward. All this happening at once: gay crowd leaders telling people to be calm and sit down, leading chants and songs. A hundred people in the street. Swelling lines of cops come from into Polk. Deputy chief pacing and shouting. Hall of Stories from behind. It seems the tear gas still in air eyes wet.

I hoist myself up on top of a large concrete block to look into Polk Street. There were several other people on the block. I could see there watching the line of cops coming towards the cement block, wondering if they would just stop. I use it if I should stay there. Lanny was on the
THREE COPS STAND ABOVE FALLEN MAN CLUBS LIKE PISTONS IN THE AIR POUNDING DOWN IN RHYTHM.

...ground, looking up at me, what are you going to do? I don't know. Cops coming. Well, come on. Shit, I'm not a cop. I jumped down and Lanny and I started jogging into the Plaza. Lanny finds a big cement chunk and stops. Stick it up. People peeling off around us first one then another - then a whole street every direction crossing over clearing out of the Plaza. Lanny throws his cement and it hits a cop coming towards us and the cop goes down. "Come on Lanny," He turns and starts to run and I run and turn too. Then I realize he isn't behind me. I turn ducking to see through the mass of people running by. He's stepping out into the hole foot dripping looking around fast nervous whereabouts - he grabs him by the sleeve and we take off, catching up with the crowd. We reach Larkin Street and start heading towards United Nations Plaza. Lanny stops again just as we get across the street and grabs a newspaper machine chained to a light pole and rips it up. I lose track of him again for a spell the rocks crashing windows. Then I see Lanny; he's throwing the newspaper not the cop just behind him. I grab his sleeve again and we head out towards Market Street.

Spilling out from UN Plaza into Market Street. The cops don't follow here or instead they sweep back through Civic Center chasing people out past Library and up Larkin Street out towards Market and Van Ness. The ones who could be chased that is. The brunt fell on the fringes. Some who were never even in the Plaza area. Two guys waiting for a bus on Market Street cops came out roaming around on motorbikes club one of them down and then back over and laying in the street: Gay man waiting for bus "No! N. I didn't do anything..." In a coma for two months: Woman knocked to the ground pulled by hair "FAT WHITE BITON CUNT"—gash on cheek, broken rib, can’t breathe, skull fractured, concussion, black eye, eyes swollen from mace, kicked in stomach, puking blood. Three cops stand over fallen man clubs like pistons in the air pounding down in rhythm—Newspaper reporters waving press cards screaming, "PRESS! PRESS!" Mowed under stinger at a burning air charging cops out Polk to Market Street. Cops sweeping through Plaza clearing out demonstrators.

While cops continue "cleaning up operations" demonstrators scatter into the streets in every direction from City Hall. The trashbag continues but now purposeful and selective. Four banks, swank department store, federal buildings, spray paint blue on sidewalk of City Hall—AVENGE HARVEY—GRAFFITI on Market Street=EAT A TWINKIE KILL A COP.

On Market Street where Lanny and I spill out from UN Plaza people stop to catch their breath. Fires set in trash cans spilled out onto street people took to that street and fire can fires to Seventh Street. Lanny and I pile trash in the middle of the street and soon we have a fire going. Terry comes up to us and joins us in setting up a line to pass boards from a scaffolding to feed the fire. Unsuspecting cars come up Market Street to find the street blocked and a raging bonfire on the center line—some step on gas and drive over the boards, others screech up onto the sidewalk to drive around the fire.

Lanny and I wander off circling back around and heading up Golden Gate to Van Ness. Groups and pairs of cops—forms of police departments throughout from the Bay Area—wander throughout the area but none of them bother us. The Doggie Diner there at Van Ness is still open and we stop for hotdogs.

Castro Street filled with people sidewalks overflow like it does on big party nights—Halloween, Gay Pride Day or the Castro Street Fair or even like it does on a warm Saturday night bar-closing time. Extra litter in the street an occasional logout bottle or can gets kicked, rolls clattering down the street. But tonight it’s sunny and the store picture of Harvey Milk quickly put up. Graffiti: IT WAS MURDER. And on the corner of 18th and Castro spray-painted on sidewalk the day of the assassinations still not faded: the graffiti says WHO KILLED HARVEY MILK? The
question with the obvious answer still somehow meaningful, regardless still somehow needing an answer that now we will never get.

Lanny and I stepped into a bar on 18th and one beer. We started to play a game of pinball but before we finished someone rushed in to the bar and buzz went up: the cops were here, the cops had come into the Castro. Across the streets I could see a cop car parked. Lanny doesn't want to go outside, but I'm anxious to see I have a compulsion to know what's happening.

Up at the corner of 18th and Castro a large crowd had already gathered. And the intersection lit up like a football field at night. It's filled with cops. Line of cops facing off the crowd in all four directions. Line up, were setting up a defense right there. Another carload pulled up; we counted eight, and six more cops pour out, take up formation facing the Hibernia Bank. I don't understand. What is this? Why here? Is it something I can't see. Lanny hangs back in the back of a cab but I work up to the head of the crowd to the curb, straining to see if that's some focal point, some kind of activity. But it's just cops, sealing off the street. Cop leaders in the center of the intersection moving around, giving orders, an ambulance parked on Castro. I see one man, a short man, without a shirt walking bare-chested inside the lines of the cops holding a sandwich. He was drenched and splattered and some on his face. The bright lights are from TV cameras, the women on foot turn their spots on whatever particular activity they film.

I see myself rising above the scene above the crowd to look around and down at it all. I can see myself shouting at the cops at the line of uniformed anonymous cops taunting and screaming: "FUCKING PIGS! FUCKING PIGS! GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE! SIT ON YOUR FUCKING KNEES! GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!". Walking in front of the line bent over the barricades like they were win-
ing. And from the line of cops: "Fuck you queers...fucking queers" batons impatient tap bat. I keep hearing restless people shouting everywhere, faces from the sidewalk twisted red in hate to shout and curse, ready now, finally, not caring what could happen. This was the outpouring, the sense of anger than at City Hall. The presence of the cops in the Castro was a planned retaliation. And they were the final reminder that the cops were not only unre-
strained in general in the way they could treat an individual gay person, but they could enter at will the one sanctu-
ary we thought we had, our neighborhood. The invasion of the Castro—perhaps unwitting-
ly on the cops' part—blatant-
ly revealed the political na-
ture of police repression of gay people in San Francisco. The police get what they want—they just usually don't have to occupy neighborhoods to do it. But tonight was different. The order had to be restored.

Photo of that corner where I stood in the next day's papers: the faces trans-
formed by hate and anger—
leather jacket, cap, mustache, sweatshirts and tennis shoes, blue jeans and flannel shirt, all screaming for the cops to get out, to get the fuck out, to get the fuck out of here...

Harry Britte came through the crowd from the corner of the intersection. Unable to command attention at City Hall, his presence now seemed almost pathetically clear. He came in surrounded by a group of gay men arms around one another as they moved through the police lines. He tried to talk to some cops. Then he came over to the corner where I was standing and tried to speak through a megaphone. The shouting kept up, shouting for the pigs to get out, and anger directed at Harry, too—he was our gay leader, the symbol of the people working in the street and yet in blatant defiance of whatever Harry's position as supervisor carried in authority, were the cops con-
ducting a "policing operation" in the best tradition of Vietnamese era military tact-

ics.

A call to let Harry speak goes up and for a moment the shouting subsides. He starts, "In my opinion the police have no business being here tonight..." and that was all we heard because at the instant the crowd went wild—it was going to be another BUT statement—

wild at the very powerlessness of Harry's position—wild with righteousness, anger, the very anger of the cops invading our street. A chant comes up: "DAN WHITE WAS A COP! DAN WHITE WAS A COP!" Britte leaves the same way as he came, surrounded by gay people, lines moving through the police line on the opposite side of the intersection...

Then it happened. A charge up 18th Street in the direction opposite from us, police charging up 18th and down the Badlands Bar. The crowd is thick and can't possibly move fast enough to stay ahead of the cops moving up the street, clubbing people, half way up the block and then they pull back. One poor gay man trying to get in his apartment, coming down the street and a cop comes in his gate, up to his steps and starts to raise his riot stick over his head, "NO! NO! I live here!"

Then there's a cop, two cops chasing some guy up Castro Street, from the Elephant Walk, catch up to him at the Midnight Sun and soon there's three, four cops club-

bing him, clubs sawing the air and TV cameras and lights come in to flood the area with spotlights. It's a movie set. What's happening? What am I watching? Look back to see if the way is clear and with Lann-

y move down the street a little. A Mini jeep pulls up from behind us on 18th to help a bus stranded there. A woman breaks out of the sidewalk comes up from behind the jeep and slashes a tire, the huge wheel sinking and the jeep lurching to one side.

Line of cops sticks in sidewalk up to the Elephant Walk bar shouting "Bonzai!"

Are they chasing somebody?

People pressed to the windows inside cops pull up the door, butt of riot stick crashes through breaking glass and cops start to press in-
side.

"My god Lanny. It's a bar ra-

led. They're razing a bar.

It's a fucking police riot!" and

I'm talking like it's a movie we're watching but it's not, right there across the street I'm seeing it. Ten or more cops disappear inside. TV lights can't follow. Inside they swing clubs like baseball bats, kick tables over to get at people, scream for queers to get the fuck out but there's no way to get out of the bar to hurl stones at cops and beat up barten-
ders and beat, breaking glass and windows everywhere.

All sound had fallen away.

My memory is a bright edged photograph in black, grey, blue and white light. Mournful, cold, a death stick in tracer bullets. Facing reflections reach into past and future in timeless vio-

It lasted maybe only ten or fifteen minutes. They came out of the Elephant Walk, and as soon as the ambulance pulled away they started to retreat, very slowly, squad and careful at a time, shots falling around then the whole time. When the side streets were cleared the remaining lines retreated up Castro Street step by step; each small space evacuated instantly reclaimed by the crowd pushing up to the top of the street; an occasional beer can flying overhead. Finally, at the top of Castro, the remaining cops got into cars and pull away—in some cases, only after being physically shoved back from the crowd and into the car by their commanding officers. Then it was over.

It is not clear to this day who exactly ordered the cops into the Castro. It wasn’t the Chief of Police. Harry Britt tried to ask the question—but neither papers nor police seemed to pay any attention—a full fledged campaign was already underway within police rank and file to dump the police chief who wouldn’t let the cops beat more heads at City Hall—anyway soon enough, Harry was busy answering questions before a Grand Jury.

Robert ended up at Frank-lin Medical Center on Castro Street several blocks up from scene of the police action. He was in the waiting room when they brought in the people from the Elephant Walk and soon the room was filled with injured—bleeding, broken bones and ribs, some vomiting, some moaning and crying. Whenever any cop came through the waiting room—to get through to the examination area—or anyone with a uniform—the room suddenly erupted in shouts, taunts, curses: "Fuck-ing pigs! Fucking pigs!" Loose objects thrown and the cop or whoever having to jog through the room to the door on the other side—even the sickest one there would manage to get out some curse.

The next night the scheduled street party celebration of Harvey Milk’s birthday went off as planned. Over a hundred people appeared wearing t-shirts that read: Please! No Violence! I wanted to know who paid for them...

Memory being pushed back the best way is not to talk about it. I watched most of the street party from the roof next to the Castro Theater, cold night, black sky, some clouds blowing over Twin Peaks towards downtown and the Bay. Three women there and they had motorcycle helmets; one has a little can of mace strapped to her belt. Flyers on the streets already: your legal rights, what to do in case of a riot, what clothes to wear, suggestions for tactics against the police: Pushed back into the part of the mind where dreams are remembered. It was your image, what you saw, what you saw of others, what we know. It stays and waits. What we have learned. Our image, nightstick in the air, secret passion—secret desperation, the fear we all have—nightstick in the air—fight with our dreams with our image living in our underground yet to be linked again in this new and secret way.
The vision of Harry Hay and John Burnside inspires those of us who are exploring our identity as gay people. It was in 1951 that Hay brought together a small group of people that became the Mattachine Society. Mattachine recognized the need to find identity as a gay minority. McCarthy had been isolating us and attacking us. Against this, Mattachine became the first effective gay movement in the United States, successfully introducing into the language new words and definitions through which we could see ourselves, and be seen, positively.

Mattachine also addressed three questions which were keys to our identity as a gay minority:

1. Who are we gay people?
2. Where do we come from, where have we been?
3. What are we for?

But these were never fully answered. Membership in the Mattachine Society snowballed by 1952; it grew to more than two thousand people participating in Mattachine activities. Among these were many who trusted a false sense of security in numbers. They opted for assimilation with hetero-society and for respect according to hetero terms.

The first Mattachine was dissolved, and a second movement, which kept the name Mattachine, was formed—without Harry Hay, the Human Spirit and Vision. The second Mattachine was directed toward future for Radicals based on the belief that homosexuals could and should behave just like heterosexuals. This, for none of us, is the direction of all gay liberation up to the present; and it is the beginning of the route for gay consciousness.

Harry Hay and others, however, have continued asking themselves: who are we? Where have we been? What are we for? In the summer of 1972, Don Kimberly, John Burnside, Mitch Walker, and Harry evoked a Spiritual Conference for Radicals to be held in Arizona over the Labor Day weekend. There, from all over the mainly neglected and exploited homos, identity. And again, this past summer, another Spiritual Conference for Radicals was evoked, this one to be held in the City of Golden Rock, Colorado. Harry Hay introduced the subject of FAIRY SANCTUARIES at a special circle (under a tent and out of the rain). That circle was taped by Frank Brayton for Raven's Head Communications. Because of the special vision which they bring with them, VORTEX is presenting some of Harry's and others' spoken items, transcribed from that tape.

Among the subjects discussed were . . .

. . . The need for fairy sanctuaries:

Harry: "We've been talking about the need for a fairy sanctuary for a year or year and a half. We think of it as a place where people can come to work and study. We also see it as a core group from which many other similar groups can spring. We want to see a place where we can begin to learn to live together. And we feel that it must be of necessity a self-sustaining community. In this regard, we see it in the rural areas, and we see it as arable land. We feel among other things, that hard times are coming, and we feel because the gay community has the visibility that it's got in many situations we will be the first fired and the last hired, the situation which the blacks and chicanos en joyed in previous times, but which will now be our honor. And we feel that this time comes, this is the time for families, and in this our gay family, we have to recognize that we have people going to have to take care of ourselves and each other because nobody else is going to. So consequently, we must be ready to think in these terms whether we are in rural situations or in urban situations. We have to think about the idea of forming fairy families, groups of people who can nurture and sustain one another, economically as well as spiritually.

"It is envisioned that arable rural land would be secured to establish through Community Land Trusts, an intentional residential community for gay men in the country. The primary purpose of the community would be to provide a place for gay men to explore deeply the new family of gay spiritual politics, healing re-inventing ourselves as a people in the process. It would be a place of affirmation, common nurture, and healing; a place for developing new models of being with and connecting with each other and with Nature; a place where we can relearn to be stewards of the Earth. The residential community is seen as moving in the direction of becoming economically self-sustaining. From time to time, the skills and resources of the land trust community would be made available to the people every where. The community would operate on the principle of loving, sharing consensus to all its members."

. . . Our special fairy identity:

John: "There are certain traits that we have that are typical of us. One of them is very very essential as the basis of substantial relation to each other. This is: from early on in life, it's very typical of us to be very exploratory and to re- fuse to be limited. Could it be that the word specialization, couldn't it? Isn't the sex role definition a sort of specialization— and a lot of trouble that we get into is because we are resisting that. So that we have in our nature the movement towards becoming whole people."

"We don't like to feel that there are aspects of life they are completely blankly ignorant of. We're very curious people. We want to know how things are done. It's very typical of fairies to go right over into a field they don't know anything at all—about on which there's something's way done. It's a way of understanding how it's done, learning from mistakes, etc., etc. We have been taught never to leave a whole person, so that when you join with another, you don't come along saying, 'Oh darling, I'll take care of all your needs rest on me.' Or vice versa. 'Will you take care of all my needs and rest on you?' We don't need to do this. I know that in the gay world, since I'm a counselor, I see a lot of examples of that. I wouldn't put it down. But I think there's a way of relating that is peculiar to us is a lot easier for us than it is in the man-world, because here two complete beings come together. However they may decide to divide the labor, because of common responsibilities, they are free to divide it any way they like. Harry and I, for instance: Who cooks? Well, right now in our activities, each of us cooks on his own fourth night. But when we were just married, we had to work it out a little more accidently, and neither was committed to it; and if I did most of the cooking, it was because I en-
joyed it. I felt like it and wanted to—but not because he couldn’t, you see.

"In subject-subject relating two people come together in a supplementary way. They widen and expand each other. In subject-object, they are complementary; neither by himself is complete and it takes two added together to make up the whole person. And then there’s a jealousy around my part and your party you’re not appreciating what I’m doing for you and I’m not appreciating what you’re doing for me. In subject-subject that can’t happen at all because when nobody’s cooked the dinner at home Harry and I look at each other and say ‘Well do we eat or don’t we?’

“We are realistic, people; fairies are very realistic. We learn how to be realistic very early on. We need to. I think the generality of mankind out there live by myth. We live by reality. Here at the gatherings I heard one fairy say ‘I came out to my parents’ and they said ‘Well, don’t tell your sister’ and he said ‘Look, my sister’s known it for a long time’ and they said ‘Well, don’t tell your aunts.’ The mother and father and sister and aunts want to live on myth. Of course, no lives in the reality. We learn that when we are very little. And in fact, some of us still have memories of the lessons the experience, by which we learned the need to live in reality, where we made the mistake about the beautiful young man next to us, approach him the wrong way, etc.”

... Regional fairy gatherings:

Harry:

"From here on out what we should begin to do is to develop our own regional fairy gatherings which could be done around a core group which could be such a thing as a sanctuary and then when we have a series of sanctuaries across the country, the Southwest fairies can do a bash for the Southwest fairies and vice versa. But, if we have a sanctuary already built, if we have a house, if we have kitchens and if we have cellars and things of this sort we already have the core which was so expensive to bring out here and then people can bring their tents and be rained out as they are here, and go down in the potato cellar and have a wonderful time! But in this way it would be possible for us to have not what you would call a gathering, which becomes sort of a big, enormous event such as this one is, but smaller, more intimate gatherings, three or four times a year on a retreat basis, over a weekend where people don’t have to travel very far. Or even if they did have to travel maybe a hundred or two hundred miles they at least could get rides from each other; they could share; and it would be a way to come together and separate again. These are ways by which we could do then formally. Informally, whenever people need to come and heal, they may come; whenever people need to come and reach out or share they may come. These are things we want to do because however we separate it out, we are all the family and this is a cousin, and this is another cousin, and this is another cousin... and this is how I think we might be able to support ourselves and each other. But I am very powerfully motivated to feel that we must have core groups in places around the country, and I feel that some of these core groups must be places of, let’s say, fifty to sixty acres where we can grow large quantities of grains or get water and grow grass and soy as you know make the complete protein and we can keep people alive. And I have a feeling a number of our people are going to be in dire trouble not very far distant from now and we have to have space, our own spaces where we can have our own food so we can supply at least a minimum diet to most of our people. It is necessary; it is something we have to consider a real necessity.”
... Women and men making a sanctuary together:

Harry:

"We explored the idea of men and women living together in the same community — and what we came up with was this: We envisioned the idea of a square which could be divided into three sections. One section could be a working farm to be worked by both men and women, and then a section for the women, and then a section for the men, contiguous side by side; but a place where the women could retreat when they needed a place where the men could retreat when they needed a place — inviolable space, both side by side.

"Not only when brothers and sisters came to the space where they were able to volunteer to each other and where it would be full of trust in each other, there was the land out in front which would be farmed and farmed common. Oh — and it wasn't divided into little things; it was involved around the idea that the community was the reason that the land was involved around the idea which the land was the reason.

"As we begin to find out who we are, we will find out who they are. Now, they don’t know who they are. They’re it! They assume that’s all there is. We know better, the fact is that we will do much better for the sake of everyone an enormous service. We are maximizing the differences between us and then an act of love. A love for ourselves and a love for the society in which we belong because we are not suggesting at any time that we separate out and forget it entirely. We need them; we need them. We love them, and we love us, if they know who we are, but they don’t.

"This is our job now: We must begin to define ourselves to them as we wish to be defined, we must begin to define ourselves as we wish to be seen, and we must begin to speak as we wish to be heard. And we can make our own contributions to the back of the parent society, we will do it on our terms — but we cannot do this until we are a confident, self-assured people who speak a language which communicates to both of us — this we must do. We have all kinds of contributions to make. We’ve been making contributions all along which oiled the wheels of their society. We know it, but they don’t know what we are; and they don’t know what they are more importantly.

"We must begin to know who we are. We must maximize the differences. We must begin to love and respect who we are and what we contribute. When the parent society begins to appreciate what it is we contribute and recognize that their law is in great need against further contributions, they will change that law to their advantage. And this is our consensus; and that is our security because the ten percent is never going to swing the balance the way the tail of the tiger is never going to swing the tiger. The whole point about gay rights is an illusion. And because we can come right down to it, we can buy a legislator, but they can buy back twice as fast — and they do. There are ways and means by which we can relate to the political process, and we can do them beautifully. We can give them — the parent society — some of our courage.

... Our relationship with non-gay peoples:

John:

"You know I lived forty-five years of my life in the straight world before I finally came out. I found my gay identity a lot more culminating, a lot more common, and most of all, it wasn’t divided into little things. It wasn’t divided into little things, it was involved around the idea that the community was the reason that the land was involved around the idea which the land was the reason.

"We’re very unscrupulous in the libraries of this world. In the books that are written and well out in detail the stupidity, the arrogance, the cruelty, the blindness — the stupidness which we see all around us — all are spelled out by the straight people for straight people to be concerned with. So when we refer to qualities of this kind — we are speaking of general human beings of human failings; we’re not talking about one person or the other.

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SUNDOWN
Nona Collins

(November 1978, San Francisco: following the Jonestown massacre and the Milk-Moscone assassinations)

SUNDOWN I

What shall I say? That one of our eyes has been plucked? That the press covers only half the story? We stand here, stunned.

How small it seems to brush our teeth, eat our food, go on living...

Today I felt agony in my veins; stood poised, pivoting, awaiting the final word from myself.

And it came, that in an ocean of death I must live. It said one more: "life mattered: mine."

I live here, I said. And took the day by its stained remainings; I live here.

SUNDOWN II

I fought despair like polio in my bones. No sleep nor sound could stop the guests who must tonight be entertained, and all were spoken to in time...

In black and gray they came upon my walls, these grinning ghosts my many senses drenched, who took my voice, my sight, and clenched my soul in questions...

Creeping as in trance, slow motion dance to where the disbeliefing mourners stood, a stone paraded million candles thick in streaken silence...

Stepping and stopping where he stood, raising waxen idols to his memory; we were as far as one could look a sea of flames, stiller than the statues of our rage.

Down Castro then Market, for the hope we shared and the world he dared envision with his dreams...

We marched, and the questions marched, loaded guns in our minds aching nowhere, zeroed by the waste of these brutalities.

SUNDOWN III

We the remaining can choose between struggle or lunacy, flight or the die-plight of pills and platitudes, each of us knowing the way to our own destruction.

We the remaining can no longer swallow lies and especially the lie of no pain.

It is done, it is done, nowhere to be found flight from these atrocities our very streets are grieving.

It is done and the angels weep in unison above our soul’s reach, they cry for these fallen in mid-stride who tried for us.

As we leave the scene of the accident there is steel in our vision more fierce than fire and a thousand needle highs.

We will swallow no lies, especially that of no pain.
all these people walking
around the lines of the sky
they jet off into my eye the
sun shocking red playing
recluse argongo and "everything
tastes nice"
Landslide Landslide people
peeling off the skin only
my nose gets hit and turns
red the color of adventure
guyana argongo people squirmed
from cherry kool-aid slash
slashes above the eye red
red red wet the bed wipe
it up with Dan White's bread
Patti Smith corona type
white sheet black print
Patti the words, Patti the paper
P.S. codium my brain
come stomping come shrieking
black wind Ethiopiate
driven nade/shaman twirls
P.S. radios on
earth wind fire
wing black crow
twirls
twirls
museums—painted by
old ladies—fingers
the comment for the day
to play the game
to wake up dreaming
yr leather pants are fading
I'm not supposed to say anything
the walls are plastered
the ceiling decayed
will you paint me a smile today?
can I owe u/ one for tomorrow?
Place and time
little men may not be heard or seen
the hand of time
the bastard/he is my master
I'm always the slave
but some hold the reins
I will crush yr thoughts/wave/length
to regain the stark entry of my skull
All the drugs/tools/money will not teach u
What I've had to learn. Changes '79.
church when i was seven
was not a place to meet
god. i went there for the angels:
tall women (my angels
were always women)
in white gowns
whose long hair stirred
when their wings moved, wings
whose tips almost reach their ankles,
sleek wings made
of a million sleek white feathers,
my angels' voices all blended
(some deep, some high, all strong
and sweet and mighty), made a song
that filled me, tightened me up
like a harpstring
(ready for an angel's hand to touch me,
for the chance to add my little voice
to the force of the angels' chords).
no one else in the church sat stretched
like a string; no one else heard, the angels sang
to me, that was my first spirituality;
my heart picked that music up
like a call.

my idea of heaven was a garden
where i could sit curled at their feet, my
head on the knee of an angel.
(i went to church when i was seven
to be a little closer to those tall angels
than i could get in my room at night,
straining
for the sound of them, dreaming
dreams of sleek wings.
when i heard that the angels
in church were not beautiful tall women
but men in robes
i shut my ears to the sound of wing
beats and did not go back to church
again: i spent my sunday mornings
in the woods, hiding
from the gaze of the false angels
those men on whom god
pasted wings).
I began to learn about my angels' incarnations on earth:
tall women with flowing hair
meeting through the ages at night:
in covens of thirteen their power came
from the circle they made and the rays
of the moon which made their bodies gleam
as they held hands and danced.

I wanted to find them, to join them:
I wanted to be a wild dancer at a sabbat,
to chant wise strong chants with them:
I wanted a teacher
to teach me the lore:
the wisdom of herbs and moon phases,
the chants. I knew no one
whose apprentice I could be,
I was young and could not wander
the world in search of them
but when night after night I learned
out my window and studied
the moon's wax and wane I lusted
for that learning. I felt little
surges of power within me:
I knew
I was the daughter of something
I had to follow.

I got books:
I sent away for them and hid them.
My studies were secret, some will
I did not know I had become my
teacher; I bummed and felt my way
into a lonely sisterhood
whose temple was my room at night;
a witch's circle, a candle, the gaze
(strong light or soft) of the moon in the window.

I studied my books; they unfolded
my history before me, those women
I had dreamed about were priestesses
who guarded a religion so ancient
that it was old before god was born
and seized power; old as the spirit
of the earth and the ocean; old
as woman herself and as strong,
the wise women maintained
and defended the lore in the face
of death
by drowning
by burning
in chains in the cellars of prisons
death inflicted
by the cowardly priests of new
religions (invented by men to steal
the power of women)
death met
with silence with the gleaming eyes
of the women whose bodies crackled
and blackened and crumbled and whose spirits
fed the current of power
which bound (and still binds) the earth
and her women, one by one
women's bodies sizzled,
charred,
burned to ashes and with each heap of ashes
the flames in the heart of her survivors
leaped
and burned hotter and more clearly.

I sprinkled ashes solemnly, I blackened
my hands with them,
I was young
but I was learning
and the current fed by the wise women
began to feed me.
I chanted trembling,
for my dead sisters;
I chanted to identify
myself with them to accept
the danger:
A woman outlaw.
I felt the strength
of my body and my voice,
there is one honest spirituality for women;
we fill each other with it,
we teach each other
across time and space.
I was thirteen and trembling
but kneeling in my circle
the moon shone in
to a room filling with power.
there were other things to learn.

i was fourteen
and alone:
how do i share
my power,
how do i find
the others,
how will i know
their faces?
who will my lovers be?
whose is my young strength meant for?
i wanted to find
the touches
of angels

but the angels were gone;
there were no more wing
beats to listen for in the
night, the night
sky shone with stars but not
with faraway gleaming shimmering
sweeps of sleek feathers nearing
my window, coming to teach me.

i knew
without being told that
my outlaw ancestors had no husbands
or men lovers leaping off their horses
in the night to go to them and leaving
before dawn those women
did not need them or want them;
those women laughed in low
voices to each other: the books
did not tell me what the women did
on the eyes of the attacks on them,
when they knew they might
tomorrow be burning or bleeding
from rape (those men had to steal
what they could: thought
they knew
where the women's wisdom lay)
but i knew what they did
in the face of terror, of danger
they locked their hands together they found
protection
their lips found
each other they rocked
one another

the greatest wisdom those wisest
of all women discovered
was how to love each other
how could they burn with a greater heat
tomorrow
than they burn with
are fed with
tonight?

alone, then,
i understood what lessons
i had left to learn
I am ceaselessly trying to feed
my wisdom in the face of danger
and I have learned
what women have to teach.

There is one honest way
to stop the terror
to allay the danger:
one honest sexuality
for women; we fill
each other with it;
I have learned the lesson
I have been filled
cunt and breast and heart changed
by it;
I have been filled
by women who never chanted, never
dreamed they were priestesses
of a religion that can
not die
even if we burn one by one
our fire stolen by men
for heat or light; we women
with that wisdom
bring each other to life
even after we have burst in flames
sizzled blackened we have no need
for the touches of angels
we have our own touches each
other's touches
it is our current
what a wisdom what a power what a light
VORTEX
continued from page 2

SANCTUARIES
continued from page 15

conscious and receptive audience nationwide. More important, we can publish your work if you find that no mainstream or even gay publication finds it "suitable." If you do happen to be published in mainstream contexts we can provide a space for those more personal or experimental works of yours that might not be acceptable for those contexts.

We plan to spend a great deal of time communicating with writers and artists. If you send us material we will write back (in a reasonable amount of time) and share feedback with you. At least three people will review work. There will be no form letter rejections. We want to create a network of people involved in alternative visions, so if we happen to know of someone you doing similar work, for example, we may help you to connect. That is only one possibility.

Finally, if you want anything returned to you do enclose an envelope and postage. However, you may find that a xerox copy we can keep is cheaper than postage. We would like to have materials on file, so we can do the kind of networking described.

Aside from handwritten materials, we can handle variations in manuscript presentation.

As John Burnside says elsewhere in this issue: "One of the aspects of our work is to find all those people gay and straight alike, who are working toward new possibilities and things..." So with VORTEX #1 we launch this as a first link in that process.

CONTRIBUTORS
FRANK BRAYTON is a founding member of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and is a partner in Raven's Head Communications, an alternative media production business.

NONA COLLINS lives in Seattle.

EVA LANE's inspiration rose in the hallucinations which have visited her since childhood. Her art leads inside her soul through the sucking vein into the human taproot. She lives in Portland.

STEVEN MARKS is a pseudonym.

and shaped basically by the wonderful heritage of the DNA, or chemical genealogy which contains all that has ever happened to living matter along the whole line of development. The greater heritage is the heritage of the culture. The culture, in order to grow, has to be able to detach from fixed forms and move on to new forms and yet at the same time, since we don't know anything about how to function from anything except that culture, it's very important that the great understanding of the discoveries that have been made in the ancient past and all along the way of it be not lost. So we are constituted as human beings the vast generality of us, including us gay people, to be very conservative of that culture, very saving of its very valuing and treasuring of that culture. And you can see us at it. Gay people for example, relate to language with an extraordinary love and precision and care and concern; but we relate to the sex-roles with nothing like that care and concern. Now the generalities of mankind are the preservers of the culture. Even if some particular thing should have been thrown out long ago, they'll still preserve it; they don't know they're doing this. We do. We see it. To use Pat Sours' beautiful phrase, 'Our traits are those which propel the evolution of the cultural forms.' That is why they will never be comfortable with us—because the generality of mankind is suspicious of new forms. New forms are dangerous, you see. So we have to become the expert specialists in new forms. We take that responsibility. I ask you to look back on your own experience and ask yourself what you have been doing all life long if not this very thing.

"We are not the sole source of the evolution of culture, but we are one of the great supporters of that evolution in the aspect of the aspect of our work is to find all those people gay and straight alike who are working toward new possibilities and things... and this is why it is that nearly every one of us gay people has a ring around him of non-gay people whom he loves and cherishes, because we and they are engaged in that same work."

The fairy sanctuary is envisioned not as a crash pad for gay people running away from something, but as a nurturing place, a working and exploring place, a place in which to reclaim our rich heritage. For the reason of clarity, the sanctuary is being referred to as THE GAY VISION CENTER/ A Gay Community Land Trust. This community land trust, organized as a California non-profit corporation, has already been drafted. But several other steps in securing the initial fairy sanctuary have yet to be realized. Funds must be raised for the purchase of arable, rural land. Many kinds of skills and organizing work are needed. If you want to find out more, if you can contribute, please write...

MURRAY ORION, originally from Montana, is now traveling throughout the West. He works with graphics and visual art as well as poetry.

CAROL QUEEN likes to make love and to write; both transformations both extensions of Self. She lives in Eugene.

H. B. PONY is 24 or 23, was a service baby. Washes dishes for money three times a week, is also a visual artist and designer.

WILL ROSCOE organizes, observes, records, creates, records, observes, organizes. These connected occupations form the benzene ring that equates art and struggle that renders art a verb.

BRADLEY ROSE writes and re-writes on myths, history, color, number, music and shape. He grew up in Homestead and Hayward.

WILLIAM STEWART works on the publication Magical Blend, is a calligrapher and a graphic designer. He lives in San Francisco.
SEXUAL CRIMINALS/
URBAN REFUGEE

Like some surreal bleed thru from another physical probability/
reality, sissies fill doorways and curbs, wine bottles and
roaches scattered every which way. The girls are having
their mid morning rose with their inflatable fuck me
Steve Reeves dolls—how coy.
There's the one! That bitch! That cunt. The one with
the leather square dance dress trimmed in gold
bric-a-brac and set-in fake turquoise. She's
got a crystal shotgun, Vigil Ante Oakley:
"Everything is registered here," she says.
"If you don't cooperate I'll put a hole
in your vein the size of a golf ball be-
fore I flag you," Safety on the blade
of violence. Witness: The New Jeru-
salem. A neon sign rises above the
City—"Sexual Criminals: Commit
Suicide for Jesus!"

Try on Taxon Angle it up around elapine angel
Peel keloidal Put it in a box marked M
13th letter of the alpha
Smirk of clan vital tip
Metro-neo-political-daygown-boy
Jetin' down Tip-toes the banner past you
Black vinyl boy
Whoopy cushion on wheels
Keloidal peel
Cutting through dark arcades
Urban refugee
"Take your tags and give
yourself a knuckle emeab
honey"
Snatch those clan lips
Any wheat sprouts corn
starts
Local American boy
Come to town sets fantasy free
behind me
Bradley Rose

Two humans breed. The female produced a hop for the first. My name was Bradley, a monkey with a big head. "Goodo!" the parents said when it was born in 1957. "It will grow up intelligent." They moved it to Florida. You remember one night there. It is a black night. My father is 23. I have learned to walk. I have learned to climb up on Horse and to rock him. Your money and daddy put you to bed so they could start their party. It is a black night. My father will have been dead twelve years when you are 23. He listens to jazz. It is a drug. He spends his airforce money on jazz records. Horse has teeth and you put a hand between his teeth in his mouth when you rock him. He screams back and forth. And the night is black but you see a light. It's the window of our duplex, bright windows, bright room. You are walking to the light, watching everything. There are Joan and Jerry. Joan is wearing lipstick. Joan is the hostess. We are living in the airforce base down by Florida's tip. All the young couples on the airforce base know about the drug of jazz. All the young couples in the airforce listen to jazz. It is a black night. My father is a stranger. Where did he come from? Suddenly the night is black. Suddenly he is there, here. He has been away, and suddenly the night is black. I have a corner of a room, a corner of shade. I am black and gray. I have a bed and Horse. I hear him in the other room. Him and his jazz and his guests and their jazz. Do they know jazz is a drug? People are laughing. The night is black. They are laughing. They are laughing and they see us escape. I see it creep into things. It needs no light, the night can't stop it. I see it in my lips and tumbles. Clever steps. It slides, it walks, it takes forever to get to the liquor store. It lingers in doorways and rustles curtains in cocktail lounges. It makes the light red. It darkens the downstairs room. It gets into your food and into your brain, it sits in the driver's seat. It measures out the freeway, it measures out time. It measures out the loops of blood in your body and it pulls them tight, it grips you and there you are, the top is down, the parking lot is red, and there is jazz.

I leave a trail of paper. I have a past of paper-stacked up, written and rewritten. I squat back over it and mess on it with ink corrections. I go to look at the parks by the houses where I don't live anymore, I make trips to cities whose names I find in my paper trail. Here's a sheet that says I lived in Portland six months. I don't remember living in Portland. But here's a sheet that says I remember living there. And here's a sheet that says I remember the house I lived in. Here's an envelope addressed to my father in Portland, and an envelope addressed to my father in Hayward, and an envelope addressed to my father in Livermore. Here's a picture of my father at the beach. There's my mother in a movie. What kitchen is it? It's June, late June, and she's pregnant and there I am inside her. almost conscious, almost one of them, and she's happy pulling cans of things out of the cupboard, and she's dry behind the scenes from the camera. You will have a mouth like hers. It's beginning to wrinkle and pucker. She got her mouth from her mother. She got it from her mother. From your father you got dark eyes. You are your father's size. You are sitting opposite your brother in the bathtub in swirls of soap. Your father pulls his meat out over the toilet. It's a huge piece of meat. Neither you nor your brother have seen it before. It swings out over the toilet and the piss gushes out. It's a huge piece of meat. He wraps his pants back around it and goes out. You are watching everything. Everything becomes paper behind you. You watch monstrous yellow flowers on sunny days and huge peonies, you are beginning to do things at night. It is night, black and cool. Everyone is asleep. You are in the neighbors' yard, and you look at their plants. They found you there the next morning asleep. It's on paper.
There he was in the apartment, alone in the bathroom, alone in the apartment. I had come home late from the summer party across the park. I had walked around the park alone. He was peering, and he followed me from the peep room to the couch, and he hadn't put his pee thing back into his ass hanging, and his pee thing was becoming a fuck thing, and it was the fuck thing he had with him when he was taken between me to the couch, and I said no I don't want to fuck, and I said I'm really drunk, and he said he was drunk too. After the summer party I walked around the park rather than through it. I should have walked through the park. I should have lived dangerously. I should have been beaten up, but I wasn't beaten up. I didn't live dangerously. I didn't walk across the park. I walked around it. I hope to see a big cock on the stool at the counter between the legs of the man next to me or at parties or in movies or at bars or even in the shadow on the floor of the man wiping himself in the stall next to mine. Not that I could do anything with big cocks. They hurt when they are put up, and I gag easily, and everybody jerks off is boring, or at least one always jerks oneself off best (or better). What it all comes down to is fantasy. Ideas of things are better than things. A reflection of me is better than me, and a photograph is better than the photograph. I love the idea of the ocean. Ideas are what I play with. Will is Kitti and Kitti is a senator, and I say you're a slug senator. Squirm, you know what you are, you are a slug senator. Eat those slug pellets senator. You're all sweaty and slimy and green and you don't belong between the sheets senator. Get on the floor Senator. A slave thing is a fuck thing, and a master thing is a fuck thing. I am the master. I order the slave to be the senator, and the senator to be the slug, and the slug to be the boy thing, and I order the boy thing to get into the bathtub and piss on my face. Someday children will ask: weren't fags those people who changed their clothes several times a day?

The first night I worked at the baths someone taught me how to fold sheets and pillowcases and towels. My job was to wash and dry them and fold them and put them away for eight hours. I watched everything. I learned the formula. Take an old bathhouse. Sell it, buy it, burn it. Collect the insurance money. Redeckorate it. Hire young men to change the sheets on the beds. Put the ugly customers on the third floor in the dark corners. Color the lighting pink and red, and paint the window over. Don't stop the music, don't let the rhythm slow down. Check people into their rooms and lockers, and give them room and locker numbers, and call them by their numbers, and walk through the maze of rooms and rate the man in each, and consider how busy I am and how well do I look and how many towels do I have to fold and when will the washer be over, and fuck his face and fuck his ass, and let him stay a little overtime and give him a free locker pass when he leaves.

I began to rub the sheets between my legs when I was eight. I waited until everyone was asleep, and I pulled off my pajamas and swung one leg out over the sheets and kept one under, and I pulled the sheets tight against my juncture, and my sweat wet my crotch and thighs. In my first fantasy I was Robin's. Batman's son. We were captured and tied and slowly stripped in front of TV cameras, and the last thing they took off were our masks.
wrap your tongue around my tongue, steal into my center,
we have to stir up those waves tonight,
we must protect each other
tonight. There is poison in the air,
I shudder each time I breathe it in:

let me breathe you in instead. There is terror in the night,
I can taste it, oh open so wide
to me that all I can taste is you, calm me with that silken honey,
hold me:

you are all that stands between me & the spectres of the night,
there are so many spectres to fight,

passion in the darkness (lit by a candle to make our eyes glow with angry, hungry fire)
is all we have to hold them back.
GAY TAPES

Conversations with two authors on spirituality and our history. Arthur Evans (Hitchhiker and the Gay CounterCulture) and Mitch Sopher (Behind the Lines and Stonewall) (20 minutes) $8.00

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